



PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL MEETING  
VIA ZOOM  
FEBURARY 2, 2021

Present: Most Rev. William Byrne; Rev. Msgr. Daniel P. Liston; Revs. Thomas Shea, David Darcy, Robert Gentile, Jonathan Reardon, Mark Stelzer, Brian McGrath, John Connors, Warren Savage, Mark Mengel, Wayne Biernat, Piotr Calik, Frank Furman, Gary Dailey, Michael Pierz, Christopher Malatesta, Kenneth Tatro  
Not Present: Rev. David Aufiero

Meeting opened at 1:30 PM

Most Rev. William Byrne offered the opening prayer.

New members were welcomed and will be sent their Oaths of Office and Profession of Faith Documents. Bishop Byrne asked that simply a convenient person be asked to serve as witness, preferably but not necessarily the Dean or Vicar for their area.

Celeste Labbe reported on additions to the [Guidelines for Teaching Virtually](#). The members accepted the addendum and complimented Celeste on her work.

Minutes previously approved of the 6/2/2020 meeting.

Deanery Reports accepted as written.

Bishop Byrne brought up the matter of imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday since this was raised in a Deanery report. Discussion followed. Bishop Byrne expressed a preference for the traditional imposition of ashes. Some preferred Q-tip. Fr. Savage suggested that the ashes are not necessary and the interior disposition is more important. Sprinkling of ashes is what is indicated by the Holy See as is the case in many European Countries. Bishop Byrne ultimately recommended that we follow what the Holy See has indicated and use this as an opportunity for catechesis.

Bishop Byrne brought up the matter of reception of Holy Communion on the tongue. He prefers to leave it up to the local pastor to determine how to administer Holy Communion in his parish. This was agreed to by the members of the council.

Place of Marriage Policy: Msgr. Liston explained the background of our diocesan policy. Bishop Byrne stated that he was open to continuing this policy but wanted a discussion on the matter. Many members expressed support, although the opinion also was given that this has been unfortunate, particularly since Mass cannot be part of the celebration when the parties are both Catholic. Bishop Byrne noted that catechesis should be provided and that no food or drink should be served until after the liturgical component. Bishop Byrne will continue the policy and stressed the need for the priest to get to know the couple and to work with them.

Clergy Ed / Continuing Education: Fr. Savage brought to the attention of the members the prepared and distributed report and the desire for all to be aware of the many opportunities that are available. Honoring our jubilarians will have to be part of our 2021 schedule and will be discussed at greater length as the pandemic realities are mitigated. Bishop Byrne wants to add this into the Chrism Mass and the Mass of the Presentation of Oils, with a festive celebration to take place in the fall.

Personnel Updates: Fr. Gentile gave a report without mentioning particular priests, about parish and specific ministry assignments.

Bishop's Office Updates: Clergy Commission henceforth will convene at 11:00 AM and the Presbyteral Council at 1:00 PM to make the meetings a bit easier on those priests who serve on both boards. Bishop was heartened by the 14 priest who agreed to serve on Fr. Aufiero's committee on priestly spirituality. He will administer the Diocese with the help of a very active Vicar General. A review of the way the diocesan offices assist people will be undertaken. Bishop wishes to be "out of the office" as much as possible in order to be involved in the ministry of evangelization. A new approach to vocations was announced by Bishop Byrne. He will take on the role of Vocations Director with assistants associated with his leadership. Bishop brought up the many second collections and wishes to discuss the possibility of amalgamating some of them.

The meeting ended with prayer led by Bishop Byrne at 2:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Msgr. Daniel P. Liston