I begin my *eighth annual report* by reviewing the six broad areas of responsibility given me in my role as Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Pgh and W PA. (Please note that the position of chancellor remains a part-time position - all of this diocesan work is in addition to my responsibilities as full-time parish priest at the Holy Ghost Church in Ambridge.)

1. The ruling bishop assigns areas of responsibilities and scope of decision-making, but, in general, the ruling hierarch relies on his chancellor as a trusted assistant in the day-to-day administration of the diocese and holds him accountable in assigned areas.
2. The chancellor supports and/or guides the work of the various departments, projects, and committees.
3. The chancellor assists in the development and accomplishment of the diocesan goals, including such areas as budget and financial management.
4. The chancellor guides and/or supervises the work of the other members of the diocesan administration.
5. The chancellor serves as a voting member of the Archdiocesan Council and is responsible for planning the Council’s meetings and later for implementation of the Council’s decisions in cooperation with other members of the diocesan administration, committee chairs, etc.
6. The chancellor represents the ruling hierarch in religious and spiritual activities and acts with the blessing of the hierarch in his absence in dealing authoritatively with clergy/laity of the diocese as well as inter-Orthodox relationships and relationships with other religious bodies and laity organizations.

Here is a review of some selected tasks/activities done as chancellor since our 2018 Assembly occurred:

- Constant contact with ruling hierarch concerning diocesan administration
- Frequent contacts with Property Subcommittee, Meyers, Unkovic, & Scott (diocesan law firm), and Singer Properties that resulted in finalization of Cranberry property (partial) acreage sale to Singer Properties (development that has now begun)
- Meetings of Christian Associates of W PA Board of Trustees with the archbishop or as his voting substitute diocesan representative
- Preparations for Archdiocesan Council meetings (i.e. agenda/ compilation of needed reports/ meeting notifications, etc.)
- Meetings with investment firms BPU and FNB concerning diocesan investments accounts
- Coordination of the hierarch’s Archpastoral visitations, meetings calendar, and transportation needs
- Frequent meetings/ phone calls/ emails with the deans
- Meetings with local parishes concerning pastoral vacancies, assessment questions, etc.
Frequent communications with OCA Chancery staff and administrations of other Orthodox jurisdictions and O.C.A. dioceses concerning common administrative matters
Assisted two local parish priests in planning Hierarchical Liturgies, logistics, and subsequent banquets for two diocesan parishes
Coordinated funeral services at the Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Ellwood City) for the departed +Fr. Pitirim (Stehnach) [Memory Eternal to this dedicated servant of God]
Coordinated three Ordination Liturgies and event logistics within the Archdiocese
Numerous meetings/emails/phone calls with clergy and laity concerning problems, requests for assistance, transfers, conflicts, etc. in diocesan parishes
Frequent meetings & communication with Building & Grounds Chair Dn. Seraphim Trukley
Archdiocesan Youth Committee meeting and group emails
“Light of Orthodoxy” publications planning with Fr. Patrick Carpenter
Numerous conversations (phone/email/meetings) with Joseph Kormos concerning Parish Development Program + group emails to diocesan clergy and laity about the program’s goals
Frequent updates concerning the diocese to the clergy email list as well as to Archdiocesan Council members and parish councils
Supervised the issuance of scholarship checks to the SVS seminarian from our diocese
Attended (very successful) 2019 All-Parish Forum hosted by St. John the Baptist Church, Canonsburg, PA and chaired by Joseph Kormos
Meetings, phone calls, and emails with Deacon Alexander Cadman, Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy Coordinator + contacts with local priests & laity concerning policy implementation
Coordinated February 2019 retreat – OCA’s “Thriving in Ministry” – hosted by New Kensington parish
Coordinated diocesan survey response to Assembly of Orthodox Bishops constructed by A. Krenditzt concerning parish attendance trends
Coordinated the celebration marking the archbishop’s 10th anniversary of Consecration
Worked with webmaster Kristie Mertz to update the diocesan website
Regular chancery administrative duties (done at least once a week at the chancery office and at my Ambridge parish office during the remainder of each week)
Provided personal car transportation for the archbishop when other modes weren’t available

As an overview of the Archdiocese for those unaware, we currently have 43 parishes configured this way: Eastern Deanery (17 parishes); Northwest Deanery (10 parishes); Southwest Deanery (15 parishes); St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (no deanery membership). Thirty-nine of those parishes are considered “active” at some level with full-time priests, part-time priests, or services being periodically conducted by visiting priests or deacons. Four of the 43 parishes are considered “inactive” spiritually (and financially) since they are currently not having parish services - Duquesne/ Boswell/ Patton/ Masontown. Nine of those 43 parishes (i.e. approximately 21% of the total number of parishes) are without an officially assigned parish priest (Blairsville (Black Lick), Jeannette, Lyndora, Masontown, Monessen, Moundsville, State College, Steubenville, and West Brownsville) although there are pending appointments/transfers that may decrease that number.
We express our gratitude as a diocese to three long-time parish priests who requested release from their pastoral duties in the diocese to enter retirement since last year’s assembly - Fr. David Lesko (St. Nicholas Church, Duquesne), Fr. Joseph Oleynik (St. John the Baptist Church, Canonsburg, Fr. John Reeves, Holy Trinity Church, State College). May God’s Grace be with them for “many, blessed years!” This year was a joyous year with His Eminence having ordained three deacons to the Holy Priesthood for service in the diocese: Fr. John Parker (now St. Nicholas Church, Donora, Acting Rector) / Fr. John Kotalik (now St. John the Baptist Church,
Canonsburg, Acting Rector) / Fr. Michael Sochka (now attached to the St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral and serving as a “supply priest” as assigned by the deans or chancellor.)

The area dean becomes directly responsible for parishes spiritually and administratively on behalf of the bishop when no priest is assigned, assisted by other priests and deacons as the local dean and/or chancellor assign. The deans work closely with me concerning the scheduling of clergy to service these vacant parishes. The large number of vacancies spread far apart geographically causes much difficulty, but we do our best to service these parishes consistently and equitably. Fr. Mark Mehollick continues as Dean of the Eastern Deanery while Fr. Andrew P. Nelko became the Dean of the Southwest Deanery late in 2018, succeeding Fr. John Kopcha who was released from his deansship duties upon his request. (We offer our THANKS to Fr. Kopcha for his diligent efforts as Southwest Dean!) In addition to my duties as Chancellor, I also function on the diocesan level as Dean of the Northwest Deanery - with Fr. Thomas Soroka as Associate Dean.

**Items of Note:**

~ Of much importance in advance of the November 7, 2020 Archdiocesan Assembly will be discussions with the Archdiocesan Council and the diocese at-large concerning a review of the diocesan funding method. We are now in the third and final fiscal year using the revised methodology as approved by a previous Archdiocesan Assembly rather than the per capita assessment historically used previously. Archdiocesan Treasurer Alexis Parshook and I will be reviewing the financial results of that methodology thus far with you today. There will be needed discussion after those figures are reviewed and “digested” in the coming days and months since I am hearing a wide diversity of opinions concerning possible revisions of the current funding method.

~ After much time and work given by many people, I can report that the sale of the Cranberry property approved acreage to the Singer Properties development company was completed. As I previously reported in a diocesan group email update, all of the money received was immediately deposited equally in our two diocesan investment accounts as approved by the Archdiocesan Council. Please be aware that there will still be a couple of expenses associated with the property sale during this fiscal year, namely, final fees for our legal representation, as well as the price of a shed needed to store equipment since the garage and pavilion are no longer ours to use. The Property Subcommittee members (Claudia Steeb/Roy Glisan/Frank Namisnak) did an incredible job guiding this process - they are owed a huge “thank you.” I know personally they spent many hours of donated talent time for our benefit. (They are all probably breathing a “sigh of relief” that their email boxes are no longer cluttered by my many emails!) Also, Building and Grounds Chair Dn. Seraphim Truckley is truly an “unsung hero” here, spending an incredible amount of time in dialogue with me and seeing that the pavilion and garage materials were properly taken care of on our behalf.

~ In addition to my routine chancellor duties which require constant attention, out of administrative necessity I spent much of my limited weekly “chancellor time” during the past year dealing with two subjects: 1) closing of the Cranberry Twp. property sale and implementing the plan to vacate that property; 2) dealing with some rather severe internal parish issues within several spiritual communities. My goal in the coming year is (God-willing!) to devote more time to programmatic planning rather than just “management crises.” In
conjunction with Fr. David Vernak, we are attempting to re-focus what has been labelled the “Catechetical Program” into what may more appropriately be called in the future the “Christian Formation Program.” We hope this re-focusing will work well in tandem with the on-going Parish Development Program. By the way - - the Parish Development Program’s 2019 Parish Forum hosted by the St. John the Baptist Church, Canonsburg, was, in the opinion of many, the best two and a half-day conference since this major initiative was launched several years ago. I have received much positive feedback from the diocesan attendees - - whom we applaud for taking the time to come and enhance their leadership skills with other conference attendees from, literally, across North America representing numerous Orthodox dioceses and jurisdictions. The projected dates for the 2020 Parish Forum are July 9 through July 11, probably at a parish of the Diocese of the Midwest in the nearby Cleveland Deanery. Please plan to attend for clergy and laity must work “in concert for Christ” to make growth possible at the parish level. Diocesan programs are rendered irrelevant if this “energy” is lacking locally!

Conclusion

I thank everyone - parish clergy and laity - who have offered their devotion to the Lord and this Archdiocese by helping to strengthen this Body of Christ during the past, rather challenging, year. I thank the Lord for allowing me to offer my humble service for His glory; I thank His Eminence for his guidance; I thank all of the individuals in diocesan administration functioning in various paid and volunteer positions who work SO hard - but often “invisibly” to most others than me. Without you, my position as chancellor would truly be untenable.

We face many serious challenges in the coming years, but with God’s Grace we will face them TOGETHER as brothers and sisters united in Christ’s love - and - face them successfully! Let us “…be strong in the might of the Lord!”

I close with this quote I found a while ago during my private reading time. It has become rather a source of inspiration for me on those days when my “spirit fails:” “Christ did not tell us ‘to take up our easy chair and relax’ - - He told us ‘to pick up our cross and follow Him’ - - for being an authentic Orthodox Christian is NOT always convenient or easy!” AMEN!

“May God bless the work of our hands!”

Yours in Christ,

[Signature]

Archpriest William J. Evansky
Chancellor
Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania
Orthodox Church in America