



**Diocese of Green Bay**  
**PRESBYTERAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 6, 2015**

**Attendees:** Bishop David Ricken, Very Reverends Daniel Felton and Thomas Long, Monsignor James Dillenburg, Reverends Matthew Settle, Richard Allen, Joel Sember, Timothy Shillcox, O. Praem., Arul Joseph Irudamoney, Robert Kollath, Thomas Reynebeau, James Leary, OFM, Cap., and Deacon Timothy Reilly

**Excused:** Reverends Robert Kabat, Ronald Colombo

**Opening Activities**

- Meeting opened at 10:00 a.m.
- Father Dan Felton introduced and welcomed new members and explained changes in Council membership: Father Tim Shillcox was elected to represent Vicariate II; Father Arul Joseph Irudamoney was elected to represent Vicariate III; Father Bob Kabat was elected to represent Vicariate VI. Newly-appointed member is Father Joel Sember.
- Bishop Ricken led the Council members in the Liturgy of the Hours.
- Father Matt Settle solicited changes or additions to the agenda. A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented. Motion seconded and approved unanimously.
- A motion was made to approve and adopt the meeting minutes of June 2, 2015 as written. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

**Bishop's Opening Comments**

Bishop Ricken thanked existing and new members for their service on the Council.

**Update on Ill Priests**

Father Tom Long gave updates on health of ill priests and those in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Bishop asked Father Tom to define the difference between Grellinger Hall and the McCormick Home. Grellinger Hall is not a nursing home. It is an independent living facility but will provide meals, cleaning, and assistance with medications if requested. Three priests recently moved from Grellinger Hall to McCormick Home because of their need for additional care. A prayer was offered for the ill/aging priests.

**National Federal of Priests' Councils (NFPC)**

Monsignor Jim Dillenburg attended the NFPC convocation this past spring and had previously shared a report with the Council. Father Tom Long asked for a volunteer to attend next year's Convocation and to monitor the website of NFPC and disseminate any important information to our priests. Father Bob Kollath volunteered for one year. The website for the NFPC is: [nfpc.org](http://nfpc.org). Members were urged to check it out.

### **Overview of *Teach My People to Pray***

Upcoming regional presentations on *Teach My People to Pray Year II* will begin in August and will be given by members of the Bishop's Advisory Council (BAC). Catherine Orr and Father Dan gave an abbreviated form of the presentation asking for feedback from the Council members. A listing of dates/locations for the presentations was provided. Father Dan commented we are making an effort to get to some of the outlying areas of the Diocese. Presentations are geared to parish leadership but all are welcome.

Year II moves from Year I's emphasis on individual prayer and holiness to family holiness and households as a place of prayer and love. Highlights will be dedication to the Holy Family in December 2015 and consecration of our homes and families to the Sacred Heart in June 2016. A direct mailing will go to each household in the Diocese. The regional presentation is available on the diocesan website.

Father Richard Allen suggested it would be very helpful to communicate this type of information to senior priests who celebrate Mass in various parishes throughout the Diocese. It is difficult when help-out priests have no prior knowledge of diocesan activities/events scheduled for a particular weekend when they serve as guest presiders.

### **Relationship of Diocese and Parishes**

Bishop Ricken talked about the need to move our parishes from prayer to discipleship. He shared some information about a program he is considering for use in the Diocese. The program would not add more work or put more pressure on our priests/pastoral leaders or parishes. The program has an excellent curriculum built on Catholic tradition, is simple, and the presentations are done by laypeople. Bishop will be looking for input from pastors/pastoral leaders to help him decide if this would be a good program for us.

Bishop also mentioned his desire to meet with priests and pastoral leaders to have frank and meaningful discussions about any concerns they might have. Possible topics: concerns and worries of priests/pastoral leaders; discipleship; how do we partner and work together; how does the Diocese help priests/pastoral leaders; how do they help the Diocese.

Council members' suggestions to Bishop:

- Listening is first priority, second priority is discipleship
- Send personal invitation to priests
- Maybe begin with particular question/topic
- Build discussion into Clergy Congress each year
- Facilitator may be helpful

This is a priority for Bishop and his hope is that these will be quality listening sessions.

### **Clergy Wellness Recommendation**

Jennifer Buechel, Director of Human Resources for the Diocese, gave a presentation on clergy wellness. The Diocese wishes to start a pilot group of priests who will be invited to meet with

Dr. Suzanne Eickert, an expert who specializes in health education, coaching, and lifestyle medicine. Program will be run through Arise, the insurance provider for diocesan employees and priests.

Father Tom remarked that priests, generally, need help with wellness accountability because they have no one to check up on them. Dr. Suzanne would be the person to keep priests on task with their wellness programs. Father Tom is identifying a group of priests who may benefit from this program and will be contacting those priests to invite them to be part of the pilot program. Dr. Suzanne is not on our insurance plan but there are Humana Vitality monies available to help with costs. Would like to begin program in the next few weeks. There may be LBA funds available to help our senior priests who are not on our insurance plan.

### **Review of IRB and Social Communications Policy**

Since Jayne Stefanic (Diocesan Assistance Coordinator) and Matthew Livingstone (Social Communications Director) were not available for the meeting, Father Dan Felton presented the proposed *Safe Environment Social Communications Policy for the Diocese of Green Bay*, along with a cover letter from Jayne.

Rationale for policy: In spring of 2013, the auditors for the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, strongly suggested every diocese develop a social media policy to help in the protection of children and youth. At the same time, parish ministers working with youth were contacting the Diocese asking for guidelines with minors and social media.

The proposed policy deals with social networks and other digital communication and includes parental consent forms. While the need for a policy like this is certainly understandable and needed, there were concerns expressed about its practicality and implementation. Will it inhibit ministry? Will this address the issues we are trying to address? It was suggested a small group of priests who are active on social media be invited to meet with Jayne and Father Tom Long to discuss the policy further for possible reworking and rewording.

The Council does not meet again until November and the preference is to roll out the policy at the Leadership Convocation in late October. Council members will defer rewriting and approval of policy to the Safe Environment Department after they receive input from the small group of priests.

### **Process for Addressing Issues Raised by Supreme Court Ruling**

In light of the Supreme Court ruling on same-sex marriages, the Church needs to consider protocols, guidelines, and policies regarding transgender students and adults, gay students, and same-sex couples. The Diocese is currently looking at a list of issues that will need to be addressed. That list was shared with Council members with the request they also bring any additional issues/concerns to the attention of the Diocese.

### **Update on Chancery Transitions**

Bishop announced transition from Deacon Tim Reilly to Father Dan Felton is complete. Father Dan is now Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia. Bishop expressed his gratitude to Deacon Tim

and Father Dan for such a smooth transition. Deacon Tim will be retiring in January. Til then he will serve as Special Counsel to the Bishop. Father John Girotti will serve as Vicar for Canonical Services and Associate Moderator of the Curia and also as Chaplain at Carmel of the Holy Name of Jesus. Father Girotti will also be available for weekend help at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Manitowoc and St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Newton. Father Brian Belongia is now the Judicial Vicar, replacing Father Bob Kabat. Father Belongia is also assigned as the Pastor of St. John Parish in Seymour and St. Sebastian Parish in Isaar. Michael Poradek is the newly-appointed Director of the Office of Divine Worship. Tania LeFevre is Bishop's new Executive Assistant.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terri Wickman".

Terri Wickman  
Recording Secretary