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Minutes of the 776th Provincial Council Meeting December 12-13, 2007, Hales Corners, Wisconsin

PRESENT: Fr. Thomas Cassidy, provincial superior ; Fr. Yvon Sheehy, Fr. Jack Kurps, Fr. Jim Brackin, Fr. Vien Nguyen and Dn. David Nagel, councilors; Br. Frank Presto, provincial secretary, and Mary Gorski, minutes. Fr. Dominic Peluse was present for discussion of personnel matters.

- I. Minutes — During a conference call on November 19th, the council voted to approve the minutes of the 775th council meeting, with minor corrections. They also acknowledged the following information that was shared at the meeting:
 - A. Fr. Pat Lloyd — The council was informed that Fr. Lloyd will be a member of the Villa Maria community and staff as of January 1, 2008.
- II. Personal Sharing — Councilors took a few minutes to update each other on their lives and ministries.
- III. Administration
 - A. General Chapter — Councilors reviewed the November 12th letter from Fr. General regarding preparations for the 2009 General Chapter, as well as the November 22nd letter from the Preparatory Commission. The Preparatory Commission asks individuals, local communities and administrations to answer a variety of questions. The deadline for responding is December 15, 2008. The planning committee for the 2008 provincial chapter will be asked to facilitate the process for responding to the questions. It was noted that the responses to the questions for the local communities are to be synthesized into a two-to-three page document. The council suggested that since the length of the responses will be relatively short that they be made available to each province/region/district in their original language, along with the anticipated synthesis statement.
 - B. Province Chapter — Br. Presto said that the Pre-Chapter planning committee will have its first meeting after the holidays. Among the tasks that the committee will need to address: 1) establish a process for electing delegates (the provincial chapter is open to the entire province, but each participant must be elected as a delegate) and 2) develop a preparatory process to prepare delegates for the chapter. It was noted that a pre-chapter assembly was held with delegates last time; this was thought to have been very beneficial. However, since the entire province is now eligible to take part in the chapter, perhaps such preparation could be done on the local level.
 - C. Dehonian Animation — As noted at the October, 2007, Provincial Council Meeting, the Generalate is organizing a course — in English — that will focus on ways to animate SCJ religious life in communities serving in parish ministry. It will take place in July, 2008, in Manila (Philippines). A similar course was held in Buenos Aires last summer. Fr. Cassidy would like to have an SCJ from each of the province's primary geographic regions attend the conference. Names of participants will soon need to be submitted. Fr. Cassidy will write a letter to the membership about this.
 - D. Disposition of Goods — After reviewing research done by Fr. Wayne Jenkins, and speaking with another religious community and Fr. David Szatkowski (regarding canonical issues), Br. Presto prepared a draft of "Guidelines for the Disposition of Goods and Effects When a Member of the Province Dies." The guidelines were requested by the council to assist a

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local community when confronted with the death of one of its members. The Priests of the Sacred Heart, not family nor friends, should take charge of the review and disposition of goods. The SCJs are welcome and encouraged to give personal items to family members of the deceased, but decisions regarding disbursement should be up to the SCJ community.

Anything that an SCJ accumulates following first vows is considered property of the community, except for family inheritance that can be put into patrimony. A councilor asked about intellectual property, such as writings that may have been done during an SCJ's life. It is thought that such work also belongs to the province, but Br. Presto will clarify the question with the province attorney.

Related, a councilor asked if there are pieces of a deceased SCJ's personnel file that should be destroyed upon death. It was thought not, but again, the province attorney will be consulted.

The council voted to approve the guidelines that Br. Presto developed. They are attached to the minutes as Addendum A.

E. Ron Zeilinger

1. Ron Zeilinger, during his employment with the Priests of the Sacred Heart, established the "Friends of Theophane," a separately incorporated non-profit organization that shared information about and promoted the holiness of Fra. Theophane Prenderville. Mr. Zeilinger is no longer able to continue to maintain and cultivate the Friends. He proposed that the Priests of the Sacred Heart assume funds (there is a small account that pays for a newsletter), the membership list (there are approximately 850 members in the United States) and archive materials of the Friends of Theophane.

The council decided that since the organization is separately incorporated under the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, that the Priests of the Sacred Heart should not be involved in its disbanding. If Mr. Zeilinger is to close the organization, he should give all materials related to it to the archdiocese. The materials collected by Mr. Zeilinger were for an organization that the province did not establish. Fr. Cassidy will write a letter to Mr. Zeilinger and to the archbishop of Milwaukee, stating the council's decision.

2. Dismas Ministry — Mr. Zeilinger is executive director of Dismas Ministry, a Catholic outreach program for prison inmates, their victims, families and the larger community. He is requesting assistance or collaboration with the Priests of the Sacred Heart on a new project that would address the needs of youth — both those who are incarcerated and at-risk teens.

Mr. Zeilinger inquired about the possibility of using the facilities at the former Divine Heart Seminary. However, it was noted that the project is most likely not one that would be accepted by the local community there. Previously, a government-sponsored program met strong opposition in the area. Baileys Harbor was suggested — the province will most likely discontinue its retreat ministry there. However, there is concern that if the province leases or donates the property to such an organization that there will still be costs related to its use. Is it appropriate to become involved with this ministry when the province is facing a number of other commitments?

Fr. Cassidy will state in his letter to Mr. Zeilinger regarding the Friends of Theophane that the province will not be lending support to Dismas Ministries at this time.

- F. Meeting of North American Administrations — Br. Presto contacted the members of the Canadian Regional administration. He received replies from two. The council set the combined meeting with the Canadian administration for March 4. It was suggested that everyone arrive in Milwaukee by the evening of March 3 so that the group can have dinner together before their meeting.
- G. Sacred Heart Monastery — The council voted to appoint Fr. Jim Walters as first councilor of the Sacred Heart Monastery community.
- H. Praesidium — Br. Presto said that the province received its report from Praesidium and that for the most part it was very good. There are a few areas that have been flagged for further attention. The first concerns the expectations and training of supervisors. To address this, Br. Presto wrote a policy that outlines the expectations of the supervisors, including the requirement for training. The council asked that each person who has a safety plan have two supervisors — a primary and a back-up supervisor who will step in when the primary supervisor travels or is unavailable for any other reason. Both supervisors need appropriate training.

Br. Presto said that he would add this requirement for a back-up supervisor and send the draft of supervisor expectations to the council. It is hoped that it can be approved at the next conference call.

A draft of a response to Praesidium's concerns has been drafted by Fr. Rosinski and was reviewed by the council.

- I. Vision/Province Planning — Br. Presto reported that there were 23 responses to Fr. Cassidy's letter and survey request. A reminder to get the survey back to the office will go in the December 17 *Fridge Notes* and in Fr. Cassidy's final letter of the year.

Councilors talked about timelines. They agreed that all changes, especially those in which the province is withdrawing from a ministry, be done by the end of the current administration. Councilors hoped that if the province withdraws from a geographic area that permission to remain in the area is an infrequent exception. Members of the province should be in community. However, Fr. Cassidy noted that permission has been given to a few older members to remain in their present locations for an unspecified period of time.

This led to a discussion of elder concerns. How is an elder SCJ to be cared for if he lives away from community? Should members of the province be expected to "come home" at a certain time? Or, should they be allowed to retire independently with the knowledge that the province might not be able to assist them should they need care? If a retired man is unable to drive but lives in community, that community can assist with rides to doctors' appointments and other needs. They can also assist with daily living tasks.

The discussion then moved to the stress an elder or ill SCJ can place on a local community. The province needs to be mindful of this. There is a desire to adequately care for one another in the province, but there is also the reality that such care requires time and adds stress. When an SCJ in a non-retirement community has needs, the burden of those needs falls on the other members of the community who may already be stretched thin in their full-time ministries. It's a difficult issue that needs to be discussed as a province.

Official decisions regarding community ministry will not be made until the January meeting.

- J. Notary and Instructor — Generally, the provincial secretary serves as a notary and instructor for clerics seeking dispensation. However, to serve in this position, the provincial secretary must be a cleric. Fr. PJ McGuire will serve as notary on the current petition.

IV. Personnel — Fr. Peluse joined the council for discussion of personnel issues.

- A. Mississippi — Fr. Peluse reported on his individual meetings with SCJs in Mississippi. First, he noted that both in Mississippi and in Houston he was well-received; SCJs seemed comfortable sharing concerns.

In Mississippi there is a need for at least another SCJ who can speak Spanish, and preferably a second SCJ with or without Spanish skills.

Fr. Cassidy is in favor of the development of a pastoral team that would minister to parishes on the western end of northern Mississippi.

Bishop Latino has been informed that the SCJs are considered team-ministry. The bishop is in favor of such a change.

It was suggested that if needed, lay support staff be hired to assist with the parish workload. A religious sister currently helps with Hispanic ministry at Christ the King. Perhaps another person could be hired if needed, someone who could at least staff the phones part-time and answer questions for Spanish-speakers. This would be beneficial, but again, a Spanish-speaking priest or deacon is often needed for sacramental ministry.

Could Spanish-speaking ESL students be asked to "give back" by ministering in Mississippi for a brief period of time? Fr. Cassidy wrote to Spanish-speaking provinces suggesting this or perhaps simply an "on-loan" Spanish-speaking SCJ, but as yet he has not received a response. Fr. Cassidy does not want to require ESL students to do ministry, but he would like to further encourage it.

A plan needs to be in place soon for ministry in Mississippi, even if it means having one or two people helping out on a short-term basis before a long-term placement can be made.

Besides the need for a Spanish-speaker, there is also a need for someone to supervise the completion of the church in Hernando. Two parish secretaries do an excellent job of running the parish, but an SCJ still needs to be responsible for supervision of the construction.

Finally, in regards to personnel in Mississippi, it was noted that Fr. Speck and Fr. Thi Pham work well together. Fr. Speck is

a good teaching-pastor and it has been good for Fr. Pham to be mentored by him. However, Fr. Pham leaves the Mississippi community to become vocation director early in 2008. His presence will be missed by the community, especially at Christ the King.

B. Houston

1. Our Lady of Guadalupe — The council voted to present to the archbishop of Galveston-Houston Fr. Ed Kilianski as pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Houston. His term would begin March 1.
2. Community — Fr. Peluse said that while SCJs agreed that the rectory at Our Lady of Guadalupe was un-livable, the current apartment situation is not conducive to community life. Perhaps when Fr. Kilianski arrives in March he can look at the possibility of remodeling the rectory so the men can live as a community again.

The SCJ residence at Gold Cup Way is thought to be very temporary. Fr. Naglich will probably go to Mississippi, Fr. Kilianski is going to OLG. Fr. Tucker will most likely go on sabbatical. The residence on Gold Cup Way is leased for six months; at the end of the lease the residency needs of the community can be re-evaluated.

C. Future visits — Fr. Peluse plans to visit SCJs in South Dakota in January.

D. Miscellaneous Personnel Issues — The council briefly discussed the situation in Lower Brule. There is a frustration in that Lower Brule has been named as a province priority, yet it is very difficult to staff it. Fr. Cassidy said that he is going to write a letter to the membership at the beginning of the year once again reminding the province of its history and commitment to Lower Brule and the need for volunteers to minister there. Because of the remote nature of the ministry, it would be helpful to “over-staff” it if possible. Two SCJs in full-time ministry are needed along with perhaps one or two others to help maintain a good community.

V. Finance

- A. Budget Process — Dn. Nagel informed the council that the budget timeline has been established for FY 2009. Budgets are due to the provincial treasurer on March 26th. The council should be informed of capital expenses at its January meeting. Budgets will be reviewed by the Province Finance Commission April 1-3 and then by the Provincial Council at its April 30-May 2 meeting. Dn. Nagel said that last year’s process went very well.
- B. Milwaukee Property Management — A committee has been established to study housing for SCJs in the Milwaukee area by reviewing the value of present properties, examining current living arrangements, and suggesting possible ways to reconfigure communities through the sale of existing properties or the building of new facilities to best serve the needs of SCJs in the area. Members of the committee include Dn. Nagel, Fr. Brackin, Fr. Sheehy and Br. Presto.

The committee has not yet met, but some of the preparatory work is being done. Dn. Nagel has met with an architect to review possibilities. The architect said that because of its wetlands, the property on Woods Road would not be good for further building.

Dn. Nagel was happy to report that he heard from the Department of Transportation and that there is a good chance that the province can purchase the frontage land adjacent to Villa Maria. This would be an excellent place for further housing development.

The council will continue to be informed of the committee’s work and discussions.

- C. Benefit Packages — The Treasurer’s Office is initiating discussions in regards to a standardization of employee benefits throughout the province, as well as the possibility of sharing or collaborating in benefit packages (such as disability coverage).
- D. Merrill Lynch — There will be a performance meeting with representatives of Merrill Lynch on February 13th. Dn. Nagel said that he is generally pleased with the performance of funds.

VI. Upcoming Meetings — The council will meet to review these minutes in a conference call at 2 p.m., December 17th. The January 28-29 meeting will be in Chicago at the formation house.

Guidelines for the Disposition of Goods and Effects when a Member of the Province Dies

The following are designed to assist a local community when they confront the death of one of their members. It is necessary to remember that there are canonical (see Canons 600 and 668) and congregational (SCJ constitutions #45) implications that have precedent.

It is important to remember that patrimonial goods are those items which the person had declared prior to First Profession or by inheritance from family. All other temporal goods acquired after profession technically belong to the Province.

1. The local superior or his delegate needs to contact the Provincial Treasurer as soon as possible to determine if a legal will exists and if an executor has been named for patrimonial goods. This should be done before the disposition of any and all items.
2. If an executor has been named in the will, this person is responsible for the disposition of the deceased's patrimonial goods. If no executor has been named, the local superior or his delegate is to assume this responsibility.

Any personal property belongs to the province by the vow of poverty. The province respects the deceased SCJ's wish to leave mementoes to specific persons as named in the will.

3. Once the will regarding patrimonial goods has been fulfilled (when possible), the following protocols should be followed:

Items to be transferred to the Province Administration/Treasurer:

- Valuables that were not designated in the person's will such as, but not limited to, chalices, coin and stamp collections, jewelry, camera equipment and vehicles.
- Stock portfolios, bonds and other cash equivalents (such as but not limited to bank accounts [savings, certificates of deposit, checking], bearer bonds)
- Personal items of value (i.e. purchased artwork)
- Personal computer files

Items to be retained and sent to the Provincial Archives:

- Books, copy of academic theses, monographs, articles and publications authored or edited by the person
- Collections of homilies, spiritual reflections, presentations and retreat themes developed by the person
- Appropriate correspondence and/or journals [if these exist]
- Representative sample of artwork, musical compositions or other creative expressions of the individual (i.e. photographs, paintings, sculptures)
- Representative sample of items that would help future generations know the person (i.e. baseball card collections, specific personal effects)
- Diplomas, certificates, awards, recognitions, citations and news articles about the person
- Memorabilia from the person's family of origin.

4. After the above have been fulfilled, members of the family of origin should be provided with the opportunity to gather and acquire mementoes and memorabilia of the person for their own needs and descendants.
5. Those items that remain should then be disposed of at the local level. If the local community cannot use these items, then donate them for use by other charitable agencies (Salvation Army, Goodwill, etc). These possessions

may include:

- Clean and usable clothing, shoes and other apparel
- Other possessions that were not designated in the will or required as above.
- Books and recordings (music or other)
- Computer equipment (after the hard drive has been purged)

Other:

6. The Province Archives will also be the depository for the following:
 - The personnel file already in place at the Provincial Offices
 - Brief biographical sketch of the person (i.e. obituary notice)

CALENDAR

2008

January 28-29	Provincial Council Meeting (in Chicago)
March 3-4	Provincial Council Meeting
April 30 - May 2	Provincial Council Meeting (budgets)
June 16-20	Provincial Chapter (proposed dates)
July 15-16	Provincial Council Meeting
July 14-23, 2008	Educators meeting, Salamanca
September 8-9	Provincial Council Meeting

UPDATES

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FR. DAVID SZATKOWSKI

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Please note that the phone is based in Italy.

LOWER BRULE COMMUNITY HOUSE

The phone number that appears on p. 15 in the Personnel Directory is correct. However, under the individual listings for Frs. Burke and Wonch it is incorrect. The correct number for the community house is: 605-473-5487.

FR. ED ZEMLIK

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NECROLOGY

FR. JOHANNES VAN DEN NIEUWENHOF, a member of the Dutch-Flemish Province, who died December 3. He was born in 1917, professed in 1937 and ordained in 1948.

FR. THEODOR SCHULTE, a member of the German Province, who died December 10. He was born in 1912, professed in 1934 and ordained in 1939.

FR. TONY KELLY, a member of the U.S. Province, who died December 2. He was 64 and a member of the Priests of the Sacred Heart since 1966; he was ordained in 1973.