

INSIDE

Minutes of the
September 15-16
Provincial Council
meeting, p. 1

Calendar, p. 7

Updates, p. 7

Necrology, p. 7

Minutes of the 794th Provincial Council Meeting September 15-16, 2009, Hales Corners, Wisconsin

PRESENT: Fr Thomas Cassidy, provincial superior; Fr Yvon Sheehy, Fr Vien Nguyen, Fr. Jack Kurps, Fr. Jim Brackin and Dn. David Nagel, councilors; Mary Gorski, minutes. Frs. Mark Mastin and Thi Pham joined the council for discussion of vocation issues.

I. Minutes — The council acknowledged that they had voted to approve the minutes of the 793rd council meeting during a prior conference call.

II. Personal sharing — The council took a few minutes to update each other on themselves and their ministries.

III. Finance

A. Annual Meeting, Board of Directors of the U.S. Province — The U.S. Province is a Wisconsin corporation, and as such, is required to hold an annual meeting. During its annual meeting, held on September 14, 2009, the Board of Directors of the U.S. Province of the Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart voted to approve Schenk Business Solutions to audit the finances of the U.S. Province. The board also voted to elect the following officers to the corporation:

President:	Fr. Thomas Cassidy, SCJ
Vice-president:	Fr. Yvon Sheehy, SCJ
Treasurer:	Dn. David Nagel, SCJ
Secretary:	Br. Frank Presto, SCJ

B. Province Audit — Schenk Business Solutions is conducting the annual audit for both the development office and the province. Concerns that Dn. Nagel had about the organization's work last year seem to have been addressed appropriately. The field work for both entities is done. It is expected that the report will be done in October for review at the December council meeting.

C. Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake

1. Property transfer — The council voted to transfer 13.5 acres owned by the Priests of the Sacred Heart on Highway 100 in Franklin, along with an adjacent 1.5 acres recently purchased by the Priests of the Sacred Heart, to the Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake Corporation.

2. Financing — Dn. Nagel has met with a representative from Ziegler Capital to discuss financing options for the building project. The auditor from Schenk Business Solutions has also been asked for advice. Information will be shared with the council as it is received. The SCJ section will primarily be funded by proceeds from the sale of the farm in Baileys Harbor and money from Fr Justin Guiltmane's patrimony. The reserve fund of the province and development office can also be utilized if needed.

3. City of Franklin — Plans have been given to the City of Franklin for review. The city responded with an eight-page document of comments. Dn. Nagel met with the engineer and architect and with their help, has been able to respond to most of the comments.

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September 2009
Vol. L, No. 5

Reviews are still being done regarding the ecological impact of the project. Dn. Nagel does not foresee any significant concerns regarding natural resources.

4. Schedule — It is anticipated that ground will be broken on the project in November, 2009.
5. Specialists — Joe Stemper is being considered as an expert in liturgical design for Sacred Heart at Monastery Lake, and Tony Akstins of Sodexo (the food service organization that serves Sacred Heart Monastery/School of Theology) is being considered for consultation in regards to kitchen layout and design.

- D. Investment Committee — Dn. Nagel reported that the meeting with the investment committee went well. The next meeting will be November 10 with investment consultants. The committee includes Sally Smits, Br. Frank Presto, Br Ray Kozuch, John Kuxhause and Dn. Nagel.

Investments are beginning to rebound. Growth is up 28%. Dn. Nagel has moved some of the provinces funds out of cash and into mid-cap growth,

- E. Human Resources — Human Resource representatives for the province met on August 31. There is strong movement toward the development of a common insurance plan and coverage across the province. It is hoped that the details of the plan can be finalized in the next six months. Discussion needs to take place regarding employees' contributions to the health insurance plans. Most likely they will be asked to contribute more than they have previously. A new consultant has been utilized for long and short term disability, as well as life insurance. Dental has not changed.
- F. SCJ Medical — The contract for the SCJ medical plan is up on October 1. The current benefit administration organization is merging with another. There will be a change in insurance cards but there will be no re-enrollment of the membership. The SCJs' representative will be the same. The stop-loss policy will continue to be \$50,000 (if two SCJs reach this level in a year, the policy pays for itself). There is a projected shortfall in the SCJ plan of \$250,000 for the fiscal year unless premiums for members are raised. Dn. Nagel suggested that the premium level remain the same through this fiscal year and be re-evaluated at a later date. Shortfalls in the fund can be subsidized by Support and Maintenance. There are currently 51 SCJs with active contracts. The rest of the province has Medicare.

Councilors had questions regarding the operation of self-insured plans (SCJs are self-insured). How is it similar to a conventional plan? Dn. Nagel noted that the province — through its TPA (third party administrator) contracts with preferred providers for better rates. It was suggested that the province be better educated on the use of preferred providers for better rates.

IV. Administration

A. Vocation Department

1. Meeting with Frs. Mastin and Pham

- a. General Comments — The vocation team was invited to join the council in a discussion about the activities of Province Vocation Office. The council invited the team to determine if there were ways that the council and province membership could better assist the office in its ministry.

Fr. Pham began by noting that he is coming to the end of his second year as vocation director. During that time 30 people have attended Come and See weekends. Ten Come and See participants have applied for candidacy, but for various reasons, none have entered the SCJ formation program. He noted the challenges of vocation ministry. Parents with only a few children are hesitant to allow one of them to pursue priesthood or religious life. Fr. Pham noted that one of the most important tools for vocational development is the example of SCJs in ministry. Someone with a potential vocation will be more open to learning about the SCJs if he sees SCJs appearing happy and enthusiastic in their ministry.

Fr. Mastin noted some of the conferences and workshops that he has taken part in. He prepared a document to share with councilors that highlighted significant insights and suggestions on vocation ministry. He also noted the challenges of the ministry. It is difficult to get young men to commit to a time for a visit or phone call. During the school year students are busy with their studies. It is also hard to get permission to visit on many college and high school campuses since so many communities and dioceses are competing for vocations. Relationships need to be developed with an institution. Perhaps the province can make better use of its local SCJs and have them make frequent contact with institutions near their communities.

Fr. Mastin suggested that the province admissions policies be better individualized. Can there be more flexibility in the admission policies?

He echoed Fr. Pham's comment that what most attracts potential candidates is the example of those in religious life who have a sense of joy about their ministry and vocation. SCJ communities need to work at finding occasions to invite young people to spend time with them.

SCJ parishes need to better focus on vocations; parish vocation committees would be helpful. Also, more effort needs to be done in sharing SCJ spirituality at SCJ parishes through homilies and other means. The fact that a parish is ministered to by SCJs should be obvious.

- b. Responsibilities — Frs. Pham and Mastin were asked to talk about their responsibilities with the office. How do they utilize their time? Fr. Pham said that when he began he focused on visits to potential candidates. He asked Fr. Mastin to concentrate on the poster, web site and other promotional materials. Fr. Mastin said that he did a lot of traveling in winter and spring but during the summer he has focused on the poster and learning about web development.

Fr. Cassidy asked Fr. Mastin if it would be beneficial to have lay staff or outside services attend to projects such as the poster and web development. Fr. Mastin noted the benefits of having an SCJ knowledgeable in the areas of print, design and web-work.

- c. Numbers — Fr. Pham said that there are currently 49 active names in the office files and 138 people at the initial inquiry stage. He said that about 55% of the names come from the poster and about 30% from the website. Fr. Pham also reviewed the process of what happens once a person contacts the office.
- d. Come and See Weekends — Fr. Mastin noted that an extra Come and See weekend was added to the schedule because of inquiry demand. Fr. Pham suggested that perhaps too many Come and See weekends are being done in Chicago. Perhaps they could be done elsewhere. Fr. Mastin talked about the Come and See schedule — there is a good mix of community prayer, socialization with the formation community, touring, and time for personal reflection.
- e. Workload — Frs. Mastin and Pham were asked about the workload they experienced. Is it too much? If so, how can the province help? Perhaps an elder SCJ could assist with some of the response work. Fr. Pham said that with lower province membership all SCJs have to take on extra tasks. He noted that while he is vocation director, he is also filling in at St. Martin of Tours with the Vietnamese community while Fr. Francis Vu Tran studies Italian in Italy. It was noted that Fr. Mastin was not able to go to several vocation events such as CSE and Marian Days because of his workload. Are there tasks that he can delegate to others to lessen his load and free him up for other priorities in vocation ministry?
- f. Working Relationship — Frs. Pham and Mastin noted differences in their approaches to vocation ministry.

2. Second Meeting with Frs. Mastin and Pham — The vocation team visited with the council again on its second day of meetings. Fr. Cassidy thanked Frs. Pham and Mastin for their work and noted how valuable their ministry is to the province.

- B. Elder Care — Fr. Brackin presented an amendment to the Province Driving Policy (Addendum A) that would require SCJs to take a yearly driver's test each year following their 75th birthday. The tester would be one recommended by the province insurer. The provincial treasurer would oversee the process. If everyone is required to take such tests, no one person is singled out. All drivers are vulnerable to diminishment as they age.

The council made some minor revisions to the proposed policy and suggested that it be disseminated to the membership for input before the council votes on its approval.

C. Visitations

1. Villa Maria — Fr. Cassidy said that the Villa Maria community is easy to visit. Although there have been several deaths, the community is doing well. Fr. Brackin has been a great help to the community in processing the deaths expe-

rienced by it. Most of Villa Maria now supports the new building project; having Dn. Nagel meet with the community regularly to give it updates has been helpful. The old convent will be torn down soon in preparation for building. Because of this Fr. Brackin is moving to a nearby apartment complex and Fr. Michael van der Peet will live at the monastery. Fr. Cassidy noted that he was unable to meet with Fr. Ed Griesemer but hopes to do so soon.

Fr. Mike Burke is the most recent addition to the community. Fr. Jim Schifano will be moving to Villa Maria soon.

2. Sacred Heart Monastery — There have been many changes to the monastery community since Fr. Cassidy's last visitation. Fr. Charlie Bisgrove is back in the community, and Fr. Chuck Wonch and Br. Long Nguyen have moved to the monastery. Also, Fr. Zbigniew Morawiec, a Polish SCJ who would like to minister in the United States, is living with the monastery community while attending ESL classes. Fr. Cassidy noted the difficulty of living at Sacred Heart because in many ways there are three communities under the same roof: Sacred Heart School of Theology, Sacred Heart Monastery and the ESL program.

A consultation was to have been done for the local superior but the community asked that it be postponed until January. The community will work with a facilitator — Fr. Jack Kurps — to develop local community plan.

3. South Dakota — Fr. Cassidy said that he had a nice visitation in South Dakota; Fr. Bill Pitcavage is doing a good job as local superior. Fr. Anthony Kluckman has joined the community and was said to be very helpful with students and staff following the unexpected death of a houseparent.

Frs. Bernie Rosinski and Joe Dean are getting along well in Lower Brule. Fr. Rosinski is working on developing financial guidelines for several of the parishes. The bishop has asked that all parishes follow diocesan guidelines.

D. Personnel

1. Zbigniew Morawiec — Councilors asked what plans were in place for Fr. Morawiec. Fr. Cassidy said that Fr. Morawiec is open to any type of ministry and is willing to learn Spanish. He has taught theology and served in formation; he has served in Poland and India. It was suggested that he take cross-cultural courses next semester at Catholic Theological Union.
2. Fr. Christianus Hendrik — Fr. Hendrik's move to South Dakota has been delayed (though he will visit with the ESL program) because he needs to pass a driver's test before moving. Kathleen Dahlgren believes that his application for residency in the United States should be under review soon.
3. Br. John Monek — Fr. Cassidy noted that Br. Monek said that he and Br. Andy Lewandowski are happy in their new residence at St Francis.
4. Fr. Bob Tucker — Fr. Tucker is now in Mississippi. The new pastoral team is beginning to meet.
5. Br. Ben Humpfer — Br. Humpfer is settled in Pinellas Park and said that Fr. Jim Schifano has been helpful with the transition.
6. Fr. Steve Pujdak — The council voted to appoint Fr. Steve Pujdak as both local treasurer and second councilor for the Sacred Heart Community in Pinellas Park, Fl. His term will run concurrent with the local administrator.
7. Br. Ray Kozuch — The council voted to extend Br. Kozuch's term as administrator of Sacred Heart Monastery until January 1, 2010.
8. Fr. Byron Haaland — Fr. Haaland is working at Sacred Heart School of Theology. Fr. Haaland is scheduled to move to St. Francis on October 1; however, he is first trying to find a new home for his dog.
9. Fr. Dominic Peluse — Fr. Peluse will be leaving his parish on October 28 to have back surgery. He is not scheduled to return until December 17. Fr. Pat Lloyd will fill in at the parish during his absence.
10. Br. Leonard Zaworski — Br. Zaworski has extended his sabbatical program through the end of the year because of medical concerns (he had been hospitalized with an intestinal blockage). He is to return to India in January.

11. Fr. Jerome Clifford — His recent medical procedures went well and he is feeling good.
 12. Fr Michael van der Peet — He has recovered well since the stroke he had in June. He recently had a stent put in his left carotid artery. The procedure went well.
 13. Fr. Bernie Rosinski — He is being treated with medication for a blocked carotid artery.
- E. Dehonian Parish Model — Frs. Richard MacDonald, Chuck Wonch, Lenny Elder and Tim Gray submitted a working paper outlining possibilities for helping SCJ parishes become more “Dehonian.” The four had taken part in congregational workshops on pastoral ministry in SCJ parishes (Fr. Bob Tucker and Fr. Quang Nguyen also took part in these workshops) and had drawn from that experience in preparing the document. It was suggested that since several of the people who prepared the paper are or have been ministering in Mississippi that a model be drawn up and implemented there. The model can then be extended to other SCJ parishes in the United States
 - F. January Province Gathering in St Louis — The Planning Committee will soon be meeting in preparation for the next province gathering. There is concern that something needs to be in place to help the process continue between the gatherings. It was noted that the Mississippi community has decided to continue having deeper conversations on the issues brought up at the last gathering and is planning for a retreat in February; any SCJ will be welcome to take part in the retreat. The Planning Committee will be asked to develop something to share on the local level to help the process continue. This should be done by the end of October.
 - G. International Vocation Program (IVP) — Fr. Vien Nguyen said that the next meeting of the IVP Committee will be on October 13. They will discuss the recruitment process and try to better define the program. Frs. Yvon Sheehy, Thi Pham and perhaps Joe Dean will be invited to take part as they have expertise in the province admissions process.

Fr. Cassidy stated that the work of the committee is to clarify how the program could best operate. Strengths and weaknesses of the program should be identified.
 - H. United States Catholic Mission Association (USCMA) Mission Conference — Fr. Cassidy has asked Fraters Duy Nguyen and Greg Schill to attend the USCMA Mission Conference in October. It will be held in New Orleans.
 - I. Formation Community — Fr. Vien Nguyen noted that the formation community is doing very well. SCJs and candidates seem very engaged in the life of the community. All members have pitched in with kitchen chores while the cook recovers from a car accident.
- V. Next Meeting — The council will next meet by conference call at 1 p.m. on Thursday, September 24.

ADDENDUM A

Proposed Province Driving Policy Amendment

In the calendar year following the year an SCJ celebrates his 75th birthday, the SCJ will take a yearly driving test to be administered by a tester recommended by the province insurer. The Office of the Provincial Treasurer will oversee the policy.

Following the test, the tester will recommend to the provincial superior or his delegate one of the following:

1. The SCJ continues to exercise a member's full driving privileges without restrictions;
2. The SCJ refrain from the exercise of a member's driving privileges in certain circumstances (night driving, etc.);
3. The SCJ is restricted from driving and member's driving privileges are revoked.

Effective date: Month/Date/Year

CALENDAR

2009

October 26-27 Provincial Council meeting
December 14-15 Provincial Council meeting

UPDATES

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NECROLOGY

FR. FEDERICO CASTELLINI, a member of the North Italian Province, who died August 13. He was born in 1921, professed in 1939 and ordained in 1947.

FR. ANTONIO AGUILERA ALAMO, a member of the Spanish Province, who died August 20. He was born in 1920, professed in 1940 and ordained in 1947.