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U.S. Province Priests of the Sacred Heart

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August 2020
Vol. LXI, No. 5

Minutes of the 900th US Provincial Council Meeting June 11, 2020, Hales Corners, Wisconsin

*Due to travel restrictions and social distancing guidelines in light of COVID-19,
several councilors were present via video conferencing.*

PRESENT: Fr. Ed Kilianski, provincial superior; Fr. Quang Nguyen, Fr. Jack Kurps (video conference), Fr. Christianus Hendrik (video conference), Fr. Vien Nguyen and Br. Andy Gancarczyk (video conference), councilors; Dn. David Nagel, provincial treasurer; Br. Frank Presto, provincial secretary; Mary Gorski, recording secretary.

I. Formation

- A. Novitiate — Due to the fact that only one person is proposed for the next novitiate class, the council decided not to have a novitiate during the 2020-21 academic year. This will allow for a larger class in 2021-22, with peer support among the novices.

The council voted against Celsus Robert's request for entrance to novitiate for the 2020-21 academic year due to the fact that there is to be no novitiate until 2021. Fr. Kilianski was to contact Mr. Robert by phone to inform him of the decision.

Celsus Robert will remain in postulancy; he will not "re-enter" postulancy in preparation for the next novitiate year. It is anticipated that three others will be ready for novitiate for the US Province next year.

- B. SHSST VP of Formation Programs — The priest who was to take the position of VP of Formation Programs at Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology is no longer available (he took another position). The seminary has begun a new search to fill the position; the current VP, Fr. Zbigniew Morawiec, is going on sabbatical.
- C. Vow renewals — The council voted to approve the vow renewal requests of Fraters Paul Phong Hoang, Hubert Liassidji and Henry Nguyen. Fraters Liassidji and H. Nguyen requested that Fr. David Szatkowski receive their renewals in Mississippi on the feast of the Sacred Heart. Both are doing summer ministry there. The council was in favor of this.
- Frater Hoang has asked to renew his vows in Hales Corners with Fr. Ed Kilianski; he will schedule the renewal between August 3-13.
- D. Request for first profession — The council voted to approve Novice Hung Pham's request for first profession. He will make his first vows on August 15, 2020.

II. Administration

- A. Virtual meetings — Currently, the Provincial Conference Room uses a proprietary teleconference system. Br. Presto investigated the possibility of using Zoom with the system. There would be costs in making the adaptation. The council and the Provincial Treasurer's Office had been satisfied with the system in place. The council decided not to make any changes.
- B. Dehonian Associates — Mike Shuler, an alumnus of Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Lenox, will become coordinator of the Dehonian Esprit de Coeur following David Schimmel's retirement in October. David will work with him during the next few months to prepare for the transition. This is a volunteer position that focuses on maintaining contact among the alumni of SCJ seminaries.

Also, Fr. Jack Kurps volunteered to continue to work with the Dehonian Associates program in Mississippi, and Br. Diego Diaz has been proposed to work with Schools in Collaboration. He has already been active with the schools in Mississippi.

- C. South Dakota — The pastoral team based in Lower Brule decided not to immediately include Fr. Praveen Kumar Richard in its ministry assignments due to recent COVID-19 outbreaks on the reservations, and checkpoints related to those outbreaks.
- D. Fr. Richard Johnston — An apartment has been found for Fr. Johnston; it is 10 minutes from Our Lady of Guadalupe in Houston. The council is open to Fr. Johnston moving to the apartment with the stipulation that another SCJ live with him.

Minutes of the 901st US Provincial Council Meeting July 8, 2020

PRESENT: Fr. Ed Kilianski, provincial superior; Fr. Quang Nguyen, Fr. Jack Kurps (video conference), Fr. Christianus Hendrik (video conference), Fr. Vien Nguyen (video conference) and Br. Andy Gancarczyk (video conference), councilors; Dn. David Nagel, provincial treasurer; Br. Frank Presto, provincial secretary; Mary Gorski, recording secretary.

- I. Franklin Property — Ken Servi, a Franklin developer, has approached the Priests of the Sacred Heart about purchasing a property adjacent to land that he owns and hopes to develop for housing. His initial request was for five acres of land along Forest Home Avenue for \$80,000. He would now like to purchase 7.175 acres of land and has offered \$100,000. The province had the land appraised; the market value of the 7.175 acres was estimated at \$163,000. Dn. Nagel said that the property is primarily wetlands and that while there is not a strong need to sell it, there is also no significant reason to keep it. Over the past 20 years its value has remained about the same; it is not expected to significantly rise in value. Because of its wetlands designation, the province would most likely not develop the land.

The council voted to authorize Dn. Nagel to counteroffer \$175,000 for sale of the land and to not negotiate any lower than the estimated market value of \$163,000.

- II. Fr. Duy Nguyen — Fr. D. Nguyen has requested a one-year leave of absence for the purpose of vocational discernment. He told Fr. Kilianski that he does not want to leave the priesthood or the Priests of the Sacred Heart, but instead, wants to discern his religious, priestly and ministerial vocation in general.

Before he begins his year of discernment Fr. D. Nguyen and Fr. Kilianski will state in writing their mutual expectations for the year, including the start and end dates (the anticipated start date is August 15). Expectations will include financial arrangements and responsibilities, as well as who his contact person will be and the communication expectations with that person.

The council voted to accept Fr. Duy Nguyen's request for a one-year leave of absence for vocational discernment. Fr. Kilianski stressed that this is not exlaustration.

- III. Formation — Due to Fr. D. Nguyen's departure, another SCJ needs to be named to the formation team.

Fr. Kilianski stressed that this is a critical moment in the province. When a key person, such as a formation director, is unavailable, the province does not have the personnel to adequately fill the position without considering the possibility of reducing province ministries.

Minutes of the 902nd US Provincial Council Meeting August 12-13, 2020

PRESENT: Fr. Ed Kilianski, provincial superior; Fr. Quang Nguyen, Fr. Jack Kurps (video conference), Fr. Christianus Hendrik (video conference), Fr. Vien Nguyen and Br. Andy Gancarczyk (video conference), councilors; Dn. David Nagel, provincial treasurer; Br. Frank Presto, provincial secretary; Mary Gorski, recording secretary. Mark Peters, province director of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation, joined the council for discussion of JPR issues (video conference); Fr. Joseph-Thien Dinh was with the council for an update on formation; Fr. Raúl Gomez, SHSST president-rector, joined by video conference for an update on the seminary.

- I. Check-in — Councilors updated each other on themselves, their ministries and communities. Many noted the challenges of the pandemic, both in regard to ministry and to daily living. In community, it can be difficult to balance caution alongside the equally important need for interaction with fellow religious at prayer and meals. Other items of note:
 - A. The death of Br. Andy Gancarczyk's father — Fr. Kilianski extended his and the council's sympathies and prayers on the death of Br. Gancarczyk's father. He noted how challenging it must be for Br. Gancarczyk to not be able to be in Poland and with his family at this time.
 - B. Sacred Heart Monastery / Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology — Fr. V. Nguyen said that he has been in contact with leadership in the Sacred Heart Monastery Community regarding ways in which the SCJ community can be further engaged with SHSST, especially in creating a welcoming environment for seminarians from outside of the SCJ formation program. Casual interaction can be a way to share SCJ spirituality with others.
 - C. Mississippi — Although it was adapted due to the pandemic, the student program in Mississippi went well. A few members of the Sacred Heart Southern Missions staff have tested positive for COVID-19; procedures are in place to address this. Both Sacred Heart School in Southaven and Holy Family School in Holly Springs are now open. At Sacred Heart, approximately 75% of the students are on-site with the rest opting for remote learning. At Holy Family, approximately 55% of the students are doing remote learning. The community recently welcomed Fr. Hendrik Ardianto; he has joined the team that serves six parishes.
 - D. South Dakota — There continue to be cases of COVID-19 on the reservations; Fr. Hendrik recently had a COVID test as a precaution. He tested negative. The South Dakota community had its last meeting together approximately three weeks ago; there was some confusion regarding use of excess community funds (should they be used for community projects or returned to the province; this was addressed later in the council meeting). Fr. Praveen Richard has been active in outreach programs with St. Joseph's, including food and book distribution. There have been in-person liturgies with approximately half of the usual number of parishioners attending. Students are returning to school at St. Joseph's Indian School.
 - E. Texas — Our Lady of Guadalupe continues both in-person and live-stream liturgies. The parish office is open for regular hours; a new person (religious sister) has been hired to do faith formation. Teachers are getting ready for the new school year; school will begin remotely at the end of the month. Dn. Nagel noted that the province's \$55,000 grant for the school was recently sent. Fr. Richard Johnston is in the process of moving into the newly rented house; it is approximately a 12-minute drive from OLG. It is anticipated that another member of the community will join him there soon. If he is able to move to Houston as planned, most likely Fr. Jerzy Mordalski will move in with Fr. Johnston. Both Fr. Wojciech Adamczyk and Br. Gancarczyk hope to take some vacation time soon. Travel is complicated not only by the pandemic but also by visa concerns; both are in the process of updating immigration documents.
- II. Administration
 - A. Minutes — The council voted to approve the minutes of the 900th and 901st Provincial Council meetings. They will be included in the August *Cor Unum*.
 - B. Admissions Board — The council voted to re-appoint Br. Duane Lemke, Br. Frank Presto and Br. Brian Tompkins to three-year terms to the Admissions Board.
 - C. 2021 Province Election Assembly — It is hoped that the province election can take place in assembly. However, other options need to be available in case the pandemic continues to get in the way of large in-person gatherings next year. Fr. Kurps will speak with Sr. Cathy Bertrand about what other communities have been doing; he is aware that some have used Zoom to hold assemblies. Several councilors said that they prefer not to have a mail-in election as was done in the past. Fr. John van den Hengel has agreed to be moderator of the 2021 Election Assembly.

Br. Presto shared the list of key tasks and timelines, as well as the proposed bylaws of the election. These will continue to be updated.

Fr. Kilianski said that a format soon needs to be chosen for the State of the Province report. He suggested that Mary Gorski brainstorm some possible ideas.

- D. Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology — Fr. Raúl Gomez, SHSST president-rector, joined the council via video conference to share updates about the seminary. New and returning seminarians arrive on the SHSST campus August 16-17; they will self-quarantine for their first week on campus following a requested one week of home quarantine. The Formation Department has organized a retreat for those in quarantine; Fr. Tom Knoebel will lead the retreat.

Because of the pandemic, several events have been cancelled or postponed, including the Dehon Lecture and graduation. The new tentatively scheduled date for the 2020 spring graduation is December 11. It is still hoped that the Collegial Gathering of Bishops will take place at the end of October. The Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, has committed to the event, as have six bishops (more are expected). This is to be the second annual bishops' gathering hosted by the archbishop at SHSST. The participants stay at the nearby Hampton Inn and hold their gatherings at Sacred Heart.

The SHSST Opening Mass, which will only be open to those on campus and the local SCJ community, is scheduled for September 2.

The number of resident seminarians has diminished, but the overall number of students, including lay students, is steady. There are several potential students in process for admission into the ECS program, including two from Louisville. The student visa process has slowed because of the pandemic.

A virtual tour of Sacred Heart is being put together to help potential students and sponsors become familiar with the campus and its programs without an on-site visit. Seminary staff remain in regular contact with vocation directors to maintain relationships and answer questions.

Sacred Heart has a four-phase process for reopening in light of the pandemic. It is currently in Phase II; the seminary hopes to move to Phase III by the week of August 24. If this happens, staff will be brought back on campus for Rector's Day. Depending on the rate of infection in the general community, SHSST might be able to move to Phase IV in October. However, if there is a need to move to a fully online educational process, the seminary is better prepared than it was in spring during the initial stay-at-home mandate.

Fr. Gomez noted the Title IX regulations required of the school; this is mandated because several students receive educational loans under Title IV. He thanked Fr. Vien Nguyen for his willingness to serve as interim VP of Formation Programs with assistance from Dn. Steve Kramer. The priest who was originally slated to take this position withdrew from it two weeks before he was to begin.

There was brief discussion of the postponed renovation. Fr Gomez suggested that spring of 2021 would be a good time to do the work. In light of the pandemic it is important to offer the possibility of private baths for all students.

- E. Dehonian Associates — The Dehonian Family Ad Hoc Committee will have a meeting August 24; much of the meeting's discussion will focus on David Schimmel's retirement in October and how the committee's mission will continue. This will be a topic of the September Provincial Council meeting.
- F. US Ratio Formationis — Fr. Kurps and Br. Presto will collaborate on completing the Ratio prior to the September council meeting.
- G. Province celebrations — The First Profession ceremony will be livestreamed on the US Province Facebook page. Fr. Francis Vu Tran, district superior of Vietnam, delegated Fr. Ed Kilianski to receive the vows of the three novices from the district. Fr. Joseph Quang Tran will represent the Vietnam District at the ceremony. The 2020 Province Jubilee Celebration will be postponed to 2021; jubilarians will receive their gifts via mail within the next few weeks. Those celebrating jubilees this year include: Br. Bernard Taube (70 years), Fr. Byron Haaland and Br. Ray Kozuch (50 years), Fr. Christianus Hendrik and Fr. Andrzej Sudol (30 years), and Fr. Joseph-Thien Dinh, Br. Andrzej Gancarczyk, Fr. Quang Nguyen and Fr. Ed Zemlik (25 years).

H. Formation — Fr. Joseph-Thien Dinh joined the council for updates and dialogue on the formation program. Such meetings between the formation team and the council take place throughout the year. Fr. Dinh said that it is challenging not having a second formation director with whom to collaborate and seek input. Fr. Duy Nguyen began a leave of absence earlier in the summer; Fr. Zbigniew Morawiec will be on vacation until the end of August. Fr. Morawiec agreed to postpone his sabbatical year to serve on the formation team. Although there were challenges, as in any community, Fr. Dinh said that in general, the 2019-20 academic year went well. The formation team tried to set up opportunities for good dialogue among the students. Speakers were regularly brought in to present on a variety of topics.

Some of the challenges of the year included communication between the various entities such as the wider Sacred Heart Monastery Community and SHSST. Each entity, including the formation program, has its own needs and concerns. It is a constant balance to address the concerns of one community while being mindful of the needs of another.

I. Justice, Peace and Reconciliation — Mark Peters, province director of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation, met with the council via video conference. Several weeks ago, he informed Fr. Kilianski that he plans to retire next year. Fr. Kilianski suggested that in preparation for that it would be beneficial to survey the province to help it determine how it wants to address Justice, Peace and Reconciliation in the next decade. In collaboration with the JPR Commission, Mark Peters prepared a draft survey. It included questions to help the province determine priorities for the future, as well as questions about the JPR Office and Commission. What has worked well? What has been beneficial? What has been challenging? How can the issues of JPR continue to be addressed? Are there other methods than what has been tried?

Using the council's input, Mark Peters will work with the JPR Commission and Mary Gorski to rework the draft. The revision will be presented to the council at its September meeting.

Mr. Peters was thanked by Fr. Kilianski for his work and that of the commission in promoting and educating the membership on JPR issues.

III. Finance

- A. Spending reductions — In light of the pandemic's impact on the economy, ministries and individuals within the province have been asked to be more conservative in their spending, and if possible, reduce their approved budgets. Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology reduced its budget by 10%; the Foreign Missions budget has also been reduced by 10%. Other options are being considered depending on the continued impact of the pandemic on province income.
- B. Province Development Office — As is typical, donations have slowed during the summer months but were steady prior to that. Due to a variety of operational changes, office expenses are lower than previous years.
- C. Franklin property — Developer Ken Servi originally offered \$80,000 for a section of land alongside Forest Home which is owned by the province. He later met with the City of Franklin and revised his request for purchase from 5.6 acres to 7.175 and increased his offer to \$100,000. The province investigated the value of the property, which is set at \$163,000. The province offered to sell the property for \$175,000; Mr. Servi has until November to respond.
- D. Annual meeting of the Board of Directors — During the annual corporate meeting of the Board of Directors of the US Province of the Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart the following items were addressed:

1. Officers — The following officers were elected:
President: Fr. Edward Kilianski, SCJ
Vice-President: Fr. Quang Nguyen, SCJ
Treasurer: Dn. David Nagel, SCJ
Secretary: Br. Frank Presto, SCJ
2. Corporate resolution — The following resolution was endorsed:

Be It Resolved, that the Priests of the Sacred Heart, a Wisconsin religious corporation, hereby authorizes Dn. David Nagel, SCJ, Corporate Treasurer, to execute any and all documents on behalf of the corporation in connection with corporate financial matters, including but not limited to, applications, authorizations, agreements, purchases, account transaction and stock transactions.

- E. Investment procedures audit — The procedures audit has been completed by the firm of Clifton, Larson and Allen and shared with stakeholders. It was delayed due to the pandemic.
- F. Financial audit — The firm of Clifton, Larson and Allen has been engaged to conduct the audit of the province and of the Province Development Office. The audits will begin in August and are expected to be completed by the end of October.
- G. Payroll Protection Program — As a part of the CARES Act to assist organizations in the midst of the pandemic, the province received assistance to cover two months' of wages and benefits for its employees, as well as employees of the Province Development Office. The terms for loan forgiveness are being finalized with the bank.
- H. Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology — Dn. Nagel reported on a meeting that he had on August 6 with representatives from SHSST and the Province Development Office in regard to fundraising for the seminary. Among the topics discussed were legacy gifts (estates, often from alumni, gifted to the seminary), grants, and greater collaboration between the Development Office and SHSST (for example, a donation button will be added to the SHSST website which will link to the Development Office website). In general, the province will continue to focus on raising funds for the operation and maintenance of SHSST. The seminary will direct its efforts on educational needs, often through grant requests.
- I. Excess community funds — Fr. Mark Mastin wrote a letter to Fr. Kilianski in the name of the South Dakota community. The community has accumulated \$160,443 in excess funds and suggests that the money be used for several capital projects (maintenance and updates). The council appreciated the efforts of the community but noted that excess community funds are to be returned to the province. The projects suggested for use of the funds are ministry projects that should be incorporated into the budgets of those ministries. St. Joseph's Indian School can review, approve and fund the projects as needed.

Dn. Nagel will write a letter to the South Dakota community — cc'ing Mike Tyrell of St. Joseph's Indian School — stating that \$130,000 of the excess should be sent to the province. The community should keep \$30,000 for emergency expenses. The review, approval and funding of projects for ministry should be done by St. Joseph's Indian School.

- J. Houston — The council voted to approve a \$30,000 subsidy request from the Houston community to cover the expenses of renting a house approximately a 12-minute drive from Our Lady of Guadalupe. As noted earlier, Fr. Richard Johnston is moving into the house; it is anticipated that another SCJ will soon join him. Fr. Johnston has approximately \$5,000 - \$6,000 in an account that can be used to purchase furniture.
- K. Thank you — Dn. Nagel and his staff were thanked by Fr. Kilianski for their continued work regarding province finances.

IV. Membership

- A. Fr. Thi Pham — Fr. Pham is in the process of finalizing his proposed plans and budget for the rest of his sabbatical.
- B. Br. Clay Diaz — Br. Diaz is now receiving disability income from the State of Wisconsin, as well as healthcare (Badgercare). He recently began working at the Province Development Office, assisting with mail preparation.
- C. Fr. Juan Carlos Castañeda Rojas — The superior of the District of Ecuador has arranged for a plane ticket for Fr. Castañeda to fly from Colombia to Ecuador on September 1 if the borders open as scheduled.
- D. Fr. Richard Johnston — As noted previously, Fr. Johnston is in the process of moving to the rental property in Houston.
- E. Members who have isolated themselves from community life — The pandemic has presented many challenges, including social isolation. As noted at the start of the meeting, it can be difficult to balance caution alongside the equally important need for interaction with fellow religious at prayer and meals. When “stay-at-home” orders were given by government officials at the start of the pandemic, many assumed that there would be a one or two month highpoint of the pandemic but that its spread would slow and that society would find ways to protect citizens while also allowing some return to “normality.” However, the pandemic has been more pervasive than was initially imagined. There won't be a return to “normal,” but the pandemic cannot be a reason for an SCJ to disengage from his community.

It is understandable to be apprehensive at this time. But steps need to be taken to help those who have isolated themselves to begin to once again engage with their local community, even if it is in a limited way. It is also important that the pandemic not be used as an excuse to ignore the obligations of religious life. Perhaps a member of the community is apprehensive about eating in the community dining room during the pandemic. It is hoped that steps can be taken to make that person

more comfortable, perhaps dining with just one other SCJ at first. However, even if he continues to eat in his room, the person does not need to purchase his own food to do so. Food is provided for the community by the community. There is frustration in seeing an SCJ who isolates himself from his religious community go out in public to shop and/or visit with others.

Fr. Kilianski will contact other religious superiors, as well as CMSM, to find out how other communities are addressing this issue.

- V. Provincial Council meeting schedule — The September Provincial Council meeting was originally scheduled for four days (September 15-18) to allow for the Dehon Lecture and the General Visitation. Since both events have been postponed, the council meeting was shortened to September 15-16. The rest of the council meeting dates:

August 19 (conference call at 1:00 p.m. central)

September 15-16

November 10-11

December 15-16

January 26-27, 2021

March 9-10

May 4-5

June 8 (conference call for advancements in formation)

Election Assembly (evening meeting to be scheduled during the week of July 26-30)

September 14-15 (transition meeting with new administration)

CALENDAR

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|---------------------|---|
| September 15-16: | Provincial Council meeting |
| November 10-11: | Provincial Council meeting |
| December 15-16: | Provincial Council meeting |
| January 26-27, 2021 | Provincial Council meeting |
| March 9-10: | Provincial Council meeting |
| May 4-5: | Provincial Council meeting |
| June 8: | Provincial Council conference call to discuss advancements in formation; time to be determined. |
| July 26-30, 2021: | Provincial Election Assembly |
| September 14-15: | Provincial Council meeting (transition of out-going and in-coming administrations). |

NECROLOGY

+Fr. Osnilo Carlos Klann, SCJ, a member of the BRM Province, died on August 14. He was born in 1937, professed in 1957 and ordained in 1964.

+Fr. Constant Botter, SCJ, a member of the GBI Province, died on August 15. He was born in 1932, professed in 1954 and ordained in 1960.

+Fr. Bernardus Verbruggen, SCJ, a member of the Dutch-Flemish Confederation, died on July 17. He was born in 1926, professed in 1946 and ordained in 1952.

+Fr. Julián Sola de Andrés, SCJ, a member of the Spanish Province, died on July 18. He was born in 1934, professed in 1950 and ordained in 1959.

+Fr. Ladis Jadowski, SCJ, a member of the Franco-European Province, died on July 1. He was born in 1959, professed in 1980, and ordained in 1986.

+Fr. Miguel Moreno, SCJ, a member of the Brazil – Sao Paulo Province, died July 8. He was born in 1929, professed in 1952 and ordained in 1957.

UPDATES

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Fr. Duy Nguyen, SCJ
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Frater Thien Nguyen, SCJ, Frater Thuan Nguyen, SCJ, Frater Hung Pham, SCJ and Frater Truc Van Tran, SCJ
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