

Minutes of Meeting of Deacons (West Region)

November 9, 2005

Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Sudbury

Twenty deacons (see attached list) from the West Region met for Evening Prayer, dinner, and discussion at Our Lady of Fatima, on November 9, 2005. Bishop Walter Edyvean led us in Evening Prayer and was with us throughout the evening. A special word of thanks is in order for the organizational work and wonderful hospitality shown by Fr. Michael Bova Conti, and Deacon John Nicholson, and others at Our Lady of Fatima who hosted this gathering.

The purposes of the meeting were to foster fraternity and to facilitate communication among ourselves and with the bishop. In particular, Guy Spiri and Bill Koffel, who are the representatives of the West Region on the Deacon's Council, wanted to report on the last meeting of the Council and to gather people's thoughts and concerns to take back to the next meeting of the Council on December 6, 2005. The minutes from the March 16, 2005 meeting of the Deacon's Council, which was attended by Archbishop Sean, were distributed. [Note: These minutes are available in the "Deacons Only" section of the website, which is discussed below.]

A number of those in attendance affirmed the benefit of fraternities of deacons. Some have participated in fraternities made up of deacons only, and some have participated in groups that included both deacons and their wives. Others mentioned the value of participating in Emmaus groups. There seemed to be a desire for more opportunities to gather together. In the West Region, it is our goal to meet quarterly with as many deacons as possible. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, February 15, 2006, at St. George Parish in Framingham.

A request was made to schedule clergy functions that are intended to include both priests and deacons at times that will enable deacons who work during the day to attend. It would be desirable to have several functions during the course of the year that convene in the evening, so that a stronger relationship can be fostered between priests and deacons.

Communication can be fostered not only by personal gatherings, but also by better use of the website for Deacons, which is managed by Deacon Charlie Cornell. The website (www.bostondiaconate.org) contains valuable information and links to other helpful websites. There is a "Deacons Only" section on the website that can be accessed with the password "Hardcastle." Additionally there is a "bulletin board" (<http://bb.bostondiaconate.org>) where information can be posted and shared. Charlie also described the possibility of using "blogs" so that deacons can communicate with each other on various topics. If you have any interest in this, you should send Charlie an email (cac@mmcom.com).

Many of the deacons present at the meeting have been impacted by the Church reconfiguration process. One deacon believed there should be more assistance for deacons who need to be reassigned due to parish closings.

A number of deacons were concerned about the adverse impact of the Archdiocese's financial difficulties on the Diaconate Office and its programs, particularly the formation program. Some suggested that parishes be requested to pay tuition for candidates from their parishes. Others suggested the possibility of establishing a charitable trust for scholarships. It would be helpful if the Archdiocese could clarify what deacons might be able to do to provide financial assistance in these areas in a way that does not violate any general policies on funding for programs.

More opportunities for ongoing formation were requested by some deacons. Specific mention was made of training for services at wakes and funerals. A clearinghouse for programs that might be beneficial for deacons was suggested, with the observation that the website could be used more effectively for this purpose.

Real concern was expressed for the Catholic community in Boston in these most difficult times, with special mention made of doing all we can to support parish priests. Guy Spiri suggested writing state legislators urging them to oppose passage of the proposed bill concerning compelled financial disclosures by churches.

The meeting concluded with a brief prayer at 9 p.m.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15, 2006, at 6:30 p.m. St. George Parish in Framingham. All deacons in the West Region are invited to attend. Those who were present at the first meeting will tell you what a good opportunity it is to gather together and share friendship and experiences.

Minutes prepared by Deacon Bill Koffel

Attendees Deacon Meeting (West Region)

Our Lady of Fatima Parish

November 9, 2005

First	Last	Wife	City	State	Phone (H)	E-mail	Year of Ord
John	Bortz, Sr.	Elizabeth	Acton	MA	978-263-2109	bortz.jack@verizon.net	2000
Richard	Brennan	Patricia	Foxboro	MA	(508) 543-1474	richiepattib@verizon.net	2002
James	Callahan	Joann	Newtonville	MA	617-527-8035	Callahan15@comcast.net	1980
Paul	Cloonan	Kathleen	Wellsley	MA	781-237-0755	mypalally@aol.com	2000
Charles	Cornell	Elizabeth	Stow	MA	978-562-7447	CAC@MMCOM.COM	1992
Eugene	Counihan	Irene	Acton	MA	978-263-2139	ENEGC@comcast.net	1977
James	Crump	Lee	Natick	MA	508-653-6216	WIEWN@TIAC.NET	1977
Francis	D'Ambrosio	Jennie	Concord	MA	978-369-9181	NONE	1977
Joseph	Delaney	Patricia	Dedham	MA	781-329-2376	jlddeac@aol.com	1976
Robert	Hoaglund	Pauline	Hudson	MA	978-567-9399	bphoaglund@AOL.COM	1983
Joseph	Holderried	Elizabeth	Westwood	MA	781-329-3587	NONE	1976
William	Koffel	Dorothy	Framingham	MA	508-877-6839	bill@koffel.org	2002
Leo	LaBrache	Frances	Waltham	MA	781-891-4215	NONE	1979
Neil	Lacey	Genevieve	Framingham	MA	508-877-4775	nflacey@verizon.net	1977
Richard	McLaughlin	Maureen	Burlington	MA	781-272-4991	DNDICK@RCN.COM	1992
Eduardo	Mora	Ana	Allston	MA	617-254-0474	emora36763@yahoo.com	2001
John	Nicholson	Claire	Marlborough	MA	508-481-3667	JDNICHOLSON@COMCAST.NET	2002
Thomas	Smith	Mary	Wellesley	MA	(781) 235-6442	SMITHUM@AOL.COM	2002
Guy	Spiri	Barbara	Framingham	MA	(508) 877-3185	dgpspiri@verizon.net	1983
Francis	Tremblay	Virginia	Canton	MA	(781) 828-6529	FRANKRT@YAHOO.COM	2002
Richard	Vaughn	Janice	Medfield	MA	(508) 359-8323	BEARSBIG@AOL.COM	2004