

**Presbyteral Council Meeting Notes, Diocese of Scranton
May 11th 2021**

Call to Order: Fr. Lopera called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Bishop Bambera, Msgr. Muldowney, Fr. Shantillo; Monsignors Van Loon, Delaney, & Bendik; Frs. Albert, Beck, Burke, Cirba, Czachor, Doris, Evanko, Fox, Hvozdovic, Langan, Lopera, Michelini, Polednak, Polmounter, Ricciardi, Tudgay, and Wasnock.

Excused: Frs. Edwards, Loughney, McGlone, McCreary, and Quinnan.

Absent: Fr. Kaminski.

Call to Prayer: Midday Prayer – Special prayer intentions were offered by several members of the Council.

Minutes: The minutes from the April 6, 2021 meeting were approved.

I. Suppression of Holy Family Parish, Sugar Notch:

- Dr. Butel presented a summary of information from her recent meetings with the Holy Family parish community. The pastor, Fr. Joseph Kakareka will be retiring this summer. It was noted that the parish campus is in good repair. Current financial reports reflect a reasonable stability. However, a declining population in a rapidly changing neighborhood, the proximity of a neighboring parish along with the critical clergy shortage led the community to recommend suppression of the parish. A linkage with St. Leo the Great Parish was not deemed feasible for the future.
- A letter was mailed to all registered families about the recommendation to suppress Holy Family Parish into St. Leo the Great Parish in Ashley. There was a town hall meeting held at Holy Family parish in the spring to discuss the rationale for such recommendation and respond to questions offered by parishioners.
- Following discussion and questions by the Presbyteral Council a vote was taken on the question of suppression of Holy Family Parish, Sugar Notch into St. Leo the Great Parish, Ashley. There was 22 “Yes” and zero “No” votes to the question.

II. Reduction of the Subsidiary Church of St. Mary of Czestochowa, Nanticoke:

- Dr. Butel offered details on the life and condition of the St. Mary of Czestochowa Church worship site in Nanticoke. It is currently part of Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish, Nanticoke. It was evaluated at the recommendation of CTHM in 2012. Questions were raised at this point about the long term viability of St. Mary’s. It was reevaluated in 2020 and it was noted the building is in disrepair and the cost

to refurbish is not warranted given its close proximity to the main worship site in Nanticoke. The building has not been open since March of 2020 because of the Covid-19 Pandemic. It became very obvious the additional worship site was no longer needed to meet current parish needs. The main worship site is more than sufficient for the future.

- Father Nash was invited to promote the closure before he retires in the summer of 2021.
- A vote was taken on the question to close the worship site of St. Mary of Czestochowa Church in Nanticoke. There was 22 “Yes’ and zero “No” votes to the question.

III. COVID Update:

- Fr. Lopera began the conversation thanking Bishop Bambera and his team for their work on all Covid – 19 Guidelines offered to the parishes of the Diocese over the past year. Eric Deabill, Diocesan Secretary for Communications, offered insight on upcoming guidelines for May 31, 2021 implementation. A lively discussion followed. Mr. Deabill concluded his presentation with some key considerations.
 - We need to allow sufficient time for the welcome and return of our parishioners.
 - The Pastor’s personal invitation is crucial.
 - We must expand our technology efforts using digital communication tools.
 - We must be flexible and ready to adjust plans to accommodate current needs in new ways.

IV. Remarks by Bishop Bambera

- Bishop Bambera offered his evaluation of the priest personnel meetings that were held in the month of May. Bishop thanked the Scranton presbyterate for their cooperation and openness to the obvious need for change.

Closing Prayer: Evening Prayer – The meeting was concluded at 4:38 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Fr. Seth D. Wasnock, Secretary