

COPY

The joint meeting of the Parish Councils of the three Wisconsin Armenian parishes was called to order at Holy Resurrection Church, South Milwaukee, on May 22, 1980 at 7:50 p.m. by the Midwest Regional Council President, Sam Avakian.

A list of those present is attached.

PURPOSE: To come to an amiable arrangement of sharing a priest three ways as an interim arrangement until permanent arrangements can be made as requested by the Primate.

Sam Avakian set forth ground rules so as to conduct the meeting with dignity and respect to all those who were present.

FIRST PROPOSAL: The priest should be permanently assigned to one parish and shared by the other two churches once a month. The permanent parish would be responsible for the moving costs. The advantages would be that the priest would have a permanent residence and there would be minimal problems in scheduling. The sharing would be only for the Sunday and not for the time during the week.

SECOND PROPOSAL: All three churches should work together on a temporary basis according to the Bishop's guidelines. If one church does not wish to participate in a three-way plan, the two remaining churches should work together.

THIRD PROPOSAL: Since the church is in a desperate situation, the parishes would be willing to participate in sharing a priest three ways on a temporary basis. There should be some kind of assurance that they would not be locked into a permanent arrangement with no way out. Perhaps a time limit could be included in the final resolution.

A great deal of discussion followed on different aspects of the different proposals. Various comments were

The Bishop would not allow one priest to serve three parishes on a permanent basis.

The problem with a "permanent" priest making visits to the other parishes is that it is a burden to the permanent parish. If the priest is to be shared by three parishes, the costs must be split three ways. If a priest is shared between churches, each must pay half.

The Bishop's directive does not preclude any parish getting its own priest at any time.

The three parishes have the opportunity to make new arrangements (other than those proposed by the Bishop) if it is agreeable to all three churches.

If a temporary priest is accepted, it will be just that much more difficult for any parish to get a permanent priest.

Racine indicates that a permanent priest may be coming to the Midwest soon. South Milwaukee would like Racine to have the priest, and the other churches would help defray the expenses.

If Racine is confident they can get a priest, Greenfield will go along. However, it seems Racine does not have anything definite or promising.

It is not practical to think that one parish can get a permanent priest and share with other churches, because even if there is a full agreement between the Parish Councils, the priest himself may not agree to it.

Each parish must determine what is expected of the priest. Racine would want him involved in the choir, the Sunday School, the Armenian School, training acolytes, etc. Other parishes may not demand as much.

All parishes are looking for a priest who is a motivator.

Racine presently is in an acceptable situation. They have their church open every week with Divine Liturgy once each month. Their situation will not be improved much by sharing a temporary priest. South Milwaukee and Greenfield look forward to having no services and very little activity in their churches without a priest. Perhaps the best solution would be to have Racine continue to have services as it is while continuing to look for a permanent priest and have South Milwaukee and Greenfield share a priest on a temporary basis.

It was decided to take a break at this time during which all delegations could discuss this idea. Recessed at 9:25 p.m.

The meeting was recalled to order at 9:45 p.m.

All three churches gave favorable reports from their caucuses.

Discussion followed during which questions such as "How long would this temporary arrangement be in effect? What if one church is unsatisfied and wants to discontinue the arrangement? Should we put a time limit on the final proposal? Do we have any choice as to which priest comes?" The final conclusion was that these problems would be faced as they arise and that a time limit was unnecessary and unwise.

Some time was taken to get the wording of the final proposal agreeable to all those present. The final draft is as follows:

**FINAL PROPOSAL:** The three Wisconsin parishes, Racine, South Milwaukee, and Greenfield agree that Greenfield and South Milwaukee will share a temporary priest on an equal basis with approval by the respective Parish Councils of named priest.

The vote was as follows: APPROVING - 20, DISSENTING - 1.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Kaishian