

Ven. Sisoës the Great
July 6, 2005
No. 143

To the Diocesan Delegates to the All American Council:

Beloved in the Lord,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Recently, you received a copy of the letter from our Diocesan Council to Protopresbyter Robert Kondratich, regarding financial information to be presented to the Council in Toronto. Enclosed with this letter, please find a copy of the response that I received from Father Robert.

Certain phrases in this response (which I have underlined) particularly attracted my attention, and I would like to share my thoughts with you before we convene in Toronto, since we might want to discuss these matters at our Diocesan Assembly on Wednesday of the council week.

First, although it is true that the Metropolitan Council “establishes the budget...” (OCA Statute, Article V, Section 4c), it is the All American Council that is “[t]he highest legislative and administrative authority within the Church” (Article III, Section 1). So how can it be “inappropriate” to present a detailed accounting of the church’s finances to the highest legislative and administrative authority in the OCA, and, furthermore, how can it be that the highest legislative and administrative authority in the OCA must obtain the approval of the Metropolitan Council, which exists by virtue of the All American Council, and exists to “[implement] the decisions of the All American Council...” (Article V, Section 4a)?

Second, the All American Council is called upon to approve funding—which usually means an increase in the per capita assessment—but is not given the task of reviewing the budget that is being funded. Is this good stewardship?

The questions I have posed above are important questions, and they are important for us to consider as a Diocese as well as individuals. (After all, the Diocese of the Midwest will provide roughly one quarter of the so-called “fair share” income of the OCA.) Let us pray that the Lord will inspire us to God-pleasing deliberations and decisions.

With every good wish as we prepare for the All American Council, I remain

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+Job
Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest