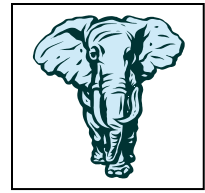


ELEPHANTS IN THE LIVING ROOM DISCUSSING WHAT NEEDS TO BE DISCUSSED

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February 9, 2006

Rev. William Tindall
President, Presbyteral Council
c/o St. Michael the Archangel Parish
11441 Hubbard
Livonia, MI 48150-2786

Dear Bill,

Cardinal Maida's recent letter to the presbyterate disclosing the archdiocese's financial commitments to the John Paul II Center and St. John's was most welcome. We do see it as a step toward the full disclosure of the archdiocesan financial situation that was part of our September 2005 "[Call toward a More Healthy, Scripturally Based and Open Church.](#)"

However, its timing (issued just before an NCR article) gives the unfortunate impression that it was motivated more by a corporate-like concern for damage control than by a sense of fraternal sharing.

Nevertheless, we write to call upon the members of the Presbyteral Council to encourage the Cardinal towards even fuller financial disclosure: What is the amount the archdiocese has had to spend so far in dealing with pedophilia cases? In the annual archdiocesan report, what is the amount that goes to places and projects outside the archdiocese (e.g., the Vatican, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops)? In what companies does the archdiocese have stock investments? What is the amount of the present archdiocesan support of Orchard Lake Seminary?

Perhaps Cardinal Maida has already fully informed the Presbyteral Council about these financial matters. In [your letter of November 7, 2005](#), you said that the Cardinal has been "most open with the Council" on our financial state. If so, we question why such information should not be available to the entire presbyterate and, indeed, the entire Church of Detroit. We are convinced that openness and transparency in archdiocesan financial matters is far preferable to guardedness and secrecy and, in the long run, is more appropriate to who we are as Church.

We write with the consent of the executive board of the Elephants in the Living Room.

Fraternally,

Tom Lumpkin

Tom Lumpkin

Gerry Bechard

Gerry Bechard

Cc: Members of the Presbyteral Council

We are an organization of priests of the Archdiocese of Detroit, strongly supported by participating laity, who seek renewal of the Church of Detroit. We do this by offering opportunities for education and creating an open forum for discussion and dialog that will lead to developing and advocating more collegial solutions to the challenges we face. We firmly believe these efforts will contribute to a greater solidarity among priests and a renewed Church of Detroit.