

November 17, 2005

Rev. William H. Tindall
St. Michael the Archangel Church
11441 Hubbard Avenue
Livonia, MI 48150

Dear Bill,

I'm writing a personal response to your letter of November 7th, hopefully presuming it expresses the collective mind of the 70 signers of "the Call."

We will accept the proposal of the Presbyteral Council's Executive Committee to give the Call's concerns to its ad hoc study committee only because, at this point, after more than a year since our request for a conversation with the Council about the Call's concerns, further insistence seems fruitless.

Our dissatisfaction with the Presbyteral Council's response comes from two reasons:

1) The sense that the Presbyteral Council's present self understanding of its role is more limited than it needs be, given the purposes stated in article II of its bylaws. Specifically, we would argue that there should be a place within the presbyterate where a number of priests (whoever they may be – us, or e.g., a group of recently ordained,) who share common concerns about the direction of the archdiocese can collectively express them to a representative group of its peers, and that place, given the Council's bylaws, is best located in the Presbyteral Council.

2) A conviction that what we need at this time is conversation. Letters listing concerns are good as a starting point, but a real extended dialogue is a far better way to support and challenge one another. (For example: in your letter you speak to our concern about the lack of openness in financial accountability by saying the Cardinal has been "most open with the Council." This begs for an elaboration that a conversation could effect.)

Having said this, I will share your letter and this response with the Call's signers. I close with the sense that as a presbyterate and a Church, we are not as healthy, open and scripturally based (e.g., the New Testament church's way of relating to its Jerusalem leadership could and should be the model) as we once were, and with hope that we can yet become so.

Sincerely,

Tom

Tom Lumpkin