

Bellarmino Advisory Committee Minutes
Jan. 5, 2005

Present: Jim Brown, Karen Hurley, Mike Marrero, Janet Neidhard, Rita Prichard, Wanda Smith, Andrew Thompson, Connie Widmer. Staff: Richard Bollman, S.J.
Guest: Debra Mooney

The Advisory Committee Meeting opened at 7:00 P. M. with “A Prayer for New Year’s Time” provided by Connie Widmer. All present then identified a gift received during the Christmas season that wasn’t purchased, wrapped, or under the tree.

A discussion followed concerning what we had learned during the open meeting focused on lay leadership held on December 1 and during our discussion held on December 5 with Ed Schmidt, the Jesuit Provincial, regarding the future of Bellarmine Parish.

From the December 1 meeting:

It seemed obvious those attending the meeting welcomed the opportunity to discuss the issue of lay leadership. There was passion evident in the group as well as challenge to do some visioning. Some parishioners would like to have a plan on paper. Comments submitted by a parishioner after the meeting regarding the need for involvement of young adults raised an issue needing further consideration. The Advisory Committee needs to sort out what is asked of us as a result of the December discussion. It was noted that the last chapter of Paul Lakeland’s book Liberation of the Laity gives a good summary of the text, with ministry as the organizing concept. This might be helpful to us as we consider how to move ministry forward.

From the meeting with Ed Schmidt, S.J., on December 5:

The overall reaction to the meeting was that it reaffirmed that future decisions regarding Bellarmine will be made with the involvement of the parish community.

Next Steps:

It was decided, following Richard’s suggestion, that we would form two small groups, each of which would prepare for consideration a model of what Bellarmine might look like in the future, emphasizing a clearly shared leadership among pastor (whose role, however, may change), staff, and parishioners. The two groups consist of: 1) Andrew, Connie, Karen, and Rita; 2) Janet, Jim, Mike, and Wanda.

All agreed to read the last chapter of Lakeland’s book for background before formulating their models. These models will be discussed at the February meeting of the Advisory Committee. Jim offered to provide us with copies of some existing models for parishes of the future. After initial work by the committee, input will be sought from the parish.

Karen Hurley volunteered to work on developing a Pastoral Communication Plan; it was agreed that this would need to follow work on some of the other issues.

Discussion with Debra Mooney, Director of the Ignatian Program at X.U.:

Debra Mooney joined us for a discussion of how we might root ourselves, as a parish, in Ignatian spirituality. Debra explained that her office focuses on helping faculty, administration, and staff be rooted in Ignatian spirituality; the office at X.U. has existed for the past 17 years. Its purpose is to help maintain the Jesuit character of the university.

Debra made the point that people often are already working within the Ignatian vision, but do not have the vocabulary to formulate the vision. Faculty often recognize that they incorporate concepts of Jesuit Pedagogy, without identifying them as Jesuit. Debra referenced two books, "Do You Speak Ignatian?" and "Do You Walk Ignatian?" as being helpful. Richard will obtain the former booklet for committee members.

The discussion turned to how this program might relate to the parish and to our leadership discussion. Discussion centered on both preserving the Jesuit spirit and being able to articulate the Jesuit mission.

Action Step:

As a beginning step, we decided to begin each of our meetings with a half-hour devoted to our assimilation of some Ignatian materials that we will read and consider ahead of time. Debra offered to be of assistance to us in any way she can as our efforts proceed.

Wanda, Richard, and all thanked Debra for coming and sharing her insights with us.

Mike Marrero volunteered to prepare the prayer and act as scribe for the February meeting, which will be held on Thursday, February 10.

The meeting concluded with the joining of hands for silent prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Widmer
Jan. 8, 2004