

Bellarmino Chapel Advisory Committee
May 4, 2005
Minutes

1. Prayer –Janet led a prayer for Wisdom
2. Check in – We discussed how each of us is responding to the voice of the Holy Spirit as Pentecost approaches
3. Conversation with Stephanie Beck-Borden, Director of Social Mission
 - Stephanie updated us on the recent progress of the Social Mission Core team, including a statement of mission, purpose, and responsibilities that the team developed at a retreat in October.
 - Bellarmino’s current monthly outreach collections are all for direct service organizations. The Social Mission Team decided to have one collection each quarter that is focused on an organization that works toward systemic change. A collection will be combined with a teaching opportunity and an invitation to action. (March: Bread for the world; May: Network)
 - Stephanie invited the advisory committee into a discussion regarding whether the parish should have a process for deciding when/whether to take an official parish position on issues. Some thoughts that were shared included:
 - Discomfort with taking a stand either supporting or not supporting a stance of the US bishops.
 - Is it wise to make a statement when it’s impossible to represent the views of all parishioners?
 - Could we solicit input and represent a majority?
 - If Bellarmino made a statement, it would cause people to pay more attention and learn more about the issue themselves
 - Is the point to draw the attention of our Bellarmino community, or to add weight to an issue and to draw the attention of a wider circle?
 - Could have more impact with issues closer to home.
 - Our parishioners often have validly different points of view on controversial issues – would taking a stance divide the parish?
 - Though there was discomfort with the concept of taking an official stance, we talked more about getting involved in systemic change in other ways:
 - start with something easy – not divisive
 - applauded the idea of a quarterly collection with education
 - Parish history: Sanctuary movement (approx 1985), Eucharist – more internally focused
 - Catholic Campaign for Human Development – works for systemic change – do people know that?
 - We agreed that we don’t have a process for deciding how to create a process
 - Conclusion – support for the concept of becoming more involved in systemic change, though hard to get our arms around how. Look for ways to create congregational discussion around issues.

4. Advisory Committee Membership
 - Richard shared minutes from a subcommittee meeting
 - Recommendations/decisions that were made about the process:
 - Make an announcement in early June
 - Ask for nominations by June 30
 - List the names of people who have self-nominated, without asking for comments
 - Invite interested people to come together two evenings in July: July 13 and 20
 - First session informational, second session more oriented toward discernment
 - Focus on discernment (Jim shared an example of a remarkable discernment process at another parish.)
 - There is still a need for much discussion on who we are and how we work, and communicating that message to the parish. . .

5. Parish Forum – Discussion: From what point of view, what assumptions or themes of parish life could we benefit from exploring? As the earlier discussions ran over their scheduled time, we agreed to table this discussion, although we do support the idea of some form of parish forum. VOTF calls for an open meeting of the parish, with reports from various committees. Richard suggested we do this around stewardship time in the fall. Karen H volunteered to put together a summary of our discussions this year. We will put this on the agenda for the June meeting/party?

6. June meeting: Continue the discussion regarding the idea of a parish forum and have a party. Richard, Wanda, and Janet to plan and notify everyone.