

Bellarmino Advisory Council
Notes
May 21, 2008

In Attendance: David Kitchings, Suzanne Kammer, Sally Fellerhoff, Debbie Weber, Karen Brandsteter, Fran Harmon, Tony Dardy, Doug Brausch, and Richard Bollman.

Absent: Kinny McQuade and Jessica Stieritz.

Celebrity Guest: Connie Widmer.

1. **Opening prayer.** Provided by Doug.

2. **Reflection Question.** Stories of summer thankfulness and inspiration.

3. **Parish staff needs and structure.** With Stephanie moving on, how does Bellarmino most usefully move forward? To give everyone a good idea of the existing staff and their inter-workings, Karen presented us with a chart that effectively presented responsibilities and their way of collaborating. Three of the positions are half time while the rest are full time. Here is a list of the existing positions and their responsibilities:

1. **Pastor.** Richard Bollman.

- Liturgical life of Parish.
- Sacraments
- Supervision of Staff
- Counseling/ Spiritual Development
- Leadership Committees (Advisory, Finance, Worship)
- Bellarmino Small Communities
- Spiritual Development
- Staff Development
- Issues of concern or need
- Official Canonical Authority for the parish.

2. **Pastoral Associate.** Karen Brandstetter.

- Weekend Liturgies
- Office systems
- Supervision of some staff
- Socials, like the parish picnic, Parents' Nite Out, etc.
- Leadership Committees (Advisory, Finance, Worship)
- Bellarmino Small Communities
- Spiritual Development
- Staff Development
- Issues of concern or need
- Welcoming process for new parishioners

3. **Director of Faith Formation.** Jim Crosby.
 - Religious education. Tuesday nights, summer VBS, “Celebrations for Intergenerational program”
 - Sacramental Preparation
 - RCIA/ Liturgical events and weekly dismissals
 - CLOW---Children’s Liturgy of the Word
 - Volunteers---recruiting, training and supporting for all programs
 - Child Protection Policies of the Archdiocese
 - Religious Education programming for Families

4. **Director of Youth Ministry.** Sue Antoinette.
 - Junior High: kids, parents, volunteers
 - BYG (Bellarmine Youth Group): kids, parents, volunteers
 - Service Trips---COAP and Young Neighbors in Action
 - Confirmation Preparation
 - Volunteers---recruiting, training, and supporting for all youth programs
 - Child Protection Policies of the Archdiocese
 - Religious Education programming for families with Teens Family

5. **Director of Social Mission.** Connie Widmer.(acting director)
 - Outreach: Parish, St.Vincent de Paul, Alternative Gift Fair
 - Education: JustFaith, Moral/ Ethics Issues
 - Social Mission CoreTeam, 3rd Sunday outreach collections, Social. Mission Fair, Community Of Care
 - AMOS Project
 - Systemic Change Issues
 - Tithing, Health Care, Election preparation---“*Faithful Citizenship*”

6. **Business Manager.** Liz Keuffer.
 - Finances: Money Handling, Bookkeeping, Finance Committee
 - Communications: Bulletins, Website
 - Office Mgmt: Supplies, Interface with Xavier for all facility needs/repairs
 - Programs for special occurrences/ funerals

7. **Ministry Assistant.** Kathy Kohl.
 - Support for religious Ed. :Sacrament Prep., VBS, RCIA
 - Support for Junior High, BYG: Youth Activities
 - Weddings: Schedule, Organize, Communicate with families
 - Office Support: Monday and Friday

8. **Assistant Pastor.** Kent Beausoleil.
 - Weekend Liturgies
 - Weddings, Funerals, Sacraments
 - Para-liturgical services
 - Administrative Committees

9. **Director of Music Ministry.** Scot Buzza.

- Sunday Liturgies
- Holy days
- Funerals
- Musicians and Music preparation

10. **Sacristan.** Patricia Boone.

- Care of Chapel
- Preparation for liturgies
- Supplies for liturgies
- Decorations, Plants
- Wedding preparation

Karen nicely arranged these positions in a circular format displaying the information and responsibilities flowing around Richard and Karen in the center. It emphasizes the idea that Bellarmine strives for a collaborative working environment that isn't overly hierarchical.

Two meetings were held that invited parishioners to offer input concerning replacing Stephanie. The meetings were lightly attended, with some additional email input directed to Richard. Some concerns from these meetings:

- Are we overstaffed? We seem to have a lot of staff for a small parish. The point was made that many of our positions exist no matter the size of the parish.
- How does staff work together? Karen's chart proved very helpful.
- Eliminate position? Can we effectively meet social justice needs by committee?

Concerns from Advisory meeting:

- Position of necessity or philosophy? The general feeling was that social mission and outreach is core to our Catholic identity and therefore a necessary position.
- What do other parishes do? A few parishes have paid positions that are similar to ours. Most do not. Committees generally handle these responsibilities in the absence of a paid staff member.
- Increasing emphasis on Faith Formation. More attention is being focused on faith formation, young and old. Should this be taken into consideration in modifying the position available.
- Needs dictate change. Example of Youth Ministry: Hiring a full time staff member for this position is a relatively new idea. This seems to apply to incorporating Social Mission with Faith Formation.
- Hiring for the position. During Richard's tenure at Bellarmine, hiring has been all local. There has been some local interest for the position. We are placing the job description in the Catholic Telegraph to reach a wider audience.
- National Study of Youth and Religion. The fact that Catholic teens performed so poorly in this study was brought up to emphasize the need for a greater priority to be placed on faith formation.

Resolution: Everyone found the discussion very helpful in understanding the responsibilities of the parish staff. All were in agreement that the job description to be placed in the Catholic Telegraph seemed to speak best to our needs:

“Bellarmine Chapel, Cincinnati seeks Pastoral Associate for Social Mission and Adult Formation. This full-time person will join a pastoral staff of six, with primary responsibility to foster our mission of social justice in the broad context of adult conversion and formation in faith. He or she would work collaboratively to support and evaluate current programs, and to call us all to walk our Gospel faith with understanding and commitment. We are a Jesuit parish at Xavier University in Cincinnati, a congregation of choice for about 700 households.”

4. **Family Liturgy.** David and Suzanne brought their reflections on the first family liturgy at Bellarmine. Both had mostly positive things to say about it.

Reflections:

- Good start, about 75 people attended
- Children present in liturgy- not a “circus” with too much adult interaction
- very “human”
- Timing a concern. Next fam. Liturgy at 4 pm, August 4. See if this pulls in larger attendance.
- Exclusive perception. Some people thought it was just for young families. Get word out that it’s for everybody. Have kids pass along invitations to others.
- What’s this about? Some people were confused by the family liturgy. Why do we need a separate mass? Possibly need to explain a little more next time.
- Kids involved had a positive experience. Not used to spotlight, but still good experience.

5. **Issues of Communication.** Debbie met with Liz Keuffer concerning the Bellarmine website. The meeting went well. Debbie learned more about Liz’s involvement with the site, her ideas for it and her capabilities. Debbie presented a number of improvements that could be made that were generally well received. Liz really enjoys working on the site and has invested much in its design. She would love to do more with it, but is limited to Friday afternoons to work on it. Where to go from here?

-Major Issue: Should Bellarmine’s website be focused solely on information or be used as a communicative tool?

*Information based. Needs to be made more useful as to keeping parishioners up to date with Bellarmine activities. Kinny emailed some concerns: (1) more current times and events taking place (2) pictures of new parishioners (3) pictures of parish activities (4) news about parishioners such as promotions, awards, anniversaries, etc. (5) news about campus growth and building (6) news about parish projects like the Douglas school, etc. Kinny makes the point that a lot more information could be on the site. The lack of information points to the problem of time. Currently, there isn’t

enough time to spend updating the site. Expertise is an issue, too. More know-how could improve information handling on the site.

*Communication based. Should Bellarmine's site be interactive? Could small faith groups communicate through the site? Could staff use the site as a tool to better do their jobs? Possible trial: Have Sue come up with some ideas on how best to use the site to further Youth Ministry at Bellarmine. Sue would come up with the vision and have technical help to implement her vision. Give a certain amount of time to see if it proves helpful.

***Reactions/ Concerns**

- Most seemed leery of an interactive site. There were concerns about what could be posted on the site and what kind of over site could be instated. What are the responsibility/ liability issues?
- Find out what expertise we have available to us in the pews. We need more help (time, talent, and treasure) to get us moving along. See what is available to us in our congregation and then decide if we need to look into hiring professional help.
- David agreed to check with Phil Roberto to see if he is possible resource.
- Fran could contact Bill Maloney- possible professional resource.
- Student resources at XU? Could be of help. Problem arises when their time is up. Needs to be more constancy behind the site.
- How much time will an improved web site require? Will this all end up in Liz's lap?

6. Transition Issues. Sally, Jess and Kinny are all finishing up their 3 year terms. We need someone to speak at all 3 of the masses to let people know there are vacancies to be filled. On June 22nd, Doug is signed up to speak at the 9 AM (however, Tony will soon be cajoled into filling in for Doug.) Suzanne will speak at the 11 AM and David will speak at the 7 PM. We will hold interviews on July 16 at 7pm. David, Doug, Suzanne, Debbie and Fran all said they would be able to attend on the 16th. Our final meeting for the year is June 24th at Fran's house. She will get in touch with us concerning what food to bring. Dinner will probably be chicken.