

April, 2018

Dear parishioners and friends of Bellarmine,

Each year, every Jesuit meets with his provincial superior for what is called an “account of conscience”; a practice which dates back to our founder Ignatius Loyola. The purpose of this practice is to assure that our superiors know the strengths and weaknesses, the gifts and limitations, of each individual Jesuit under their direction and care so as to govern the Society of Jesus effectively. It is also a mutual conversation in which the provincial speaks to the individual Jesuit about the needs of the province.

Roughly a year ago, in January 2017, I asked our provincial, Fr. Brian Paulson, if he would consider replacing me as pastor of Bellarmine Parish. This request did not flow from any discontent whatsoever on my part but only from the humble realization that I no longer possess the kind of energy required to oversee one of the major parish works of the Midwest Province of the Society of Jesus. The provincial listened carefully but, given the lack of available candidates at the time, asked me to stay on for one more year. I have been very happy to do so.

At this time, the provincial is prepared to name Fr. Tom Lawler, S.J., as interim pastor for the coming academic year. Tom promises to be the ideal person to guide Bellarmine at this time. His experience as a retreat director, his training in social work, his years as vocation director and more recently as provincial of the former Wisconsin Province are some of the wonderful experiences and skills he will bring to assist our parish through the discernment leading to the identification of a new pastor for 2019. Tom will begin his new assignment this summer on July 1st. He and I will have a couple of weeks to overlap in June to ensure a smooth transition. There will be times and opportunities to say “goodbye” and “welcome.”

In July, I will return to Loyola University Chicago where I’ll help out with the academic formation and spiritual direction of our young Jesuits who are in studies there. If time permits, I will also assist pastors in the Chicago area who are trying to respond to the growing needs of the Hispanic community.

Over these past six years, Bellarmine Chapel has been my spiritual home. Our liturgies, faith formation and social outreach have provided a trustworthy source of inspiration for me. I never cease to be amazed by the steady prayerfulness, the unfailing generosity and the competent service that I consistently witness here. I will miss each and every one of you very much. You can be sure that I will thank our God every time I remember you.

Sincerely in Christ,

Dan

Dan Hartnett, S.J.
Bellarmine Chapel
Xavier University
3800 Victory Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45207