

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT June 1978 - May 1979

Belmont Abbey College has experienced the presence of the Lord many times during the period of this Annual Report, from June of 1978 through May of 1979. Sometimes that experience was direct, at other times through the medium of human instruments or events. All of these experiences coalesced into the success story of Belmont Abbey College 1978-79. It is my privilege to share with you our good news. At the time of my appointment as President, I described my role as a co-worker with God in realizing our Father's plan for an institution. As I have come to know the people associated internally and externally with Belmont Abbey College, I realize that the Father has shared some of His finest with our College as Trustees, Advisors, Faculty, Administrators, Employees, Students, Alumni, parents, and friends. Daily I thank Our Father that your lives and your generosity have touched our College.

The monks of Belmont Abbey remind us daily of our Benedictine heritage, rich in faith and learning. We are blessed with them as teachers in the classroom, as Trustees in the process of policy making, as administrators in our offices, as liturgical ministers in the beautiful Abbey Church, as campus ministers touching our lives when we most need it. Their presence in the daily life of our collegiate community reminds us that we exist first and foremost for the greater honor and glory of God; their presence calls us continuously to the values which we have from our Christian, Catholic, and Benedictine roots; their presence calls us back again and again to the value of an education in the liberal arts and sciences. Their presence is complemented by the dedication of lay persons and secular priests who continuously call us to Christian life and learning in the contemporary world. It is this blending of the sacred and the secular that makes the Belmont Abbey College experience unique in higher education.

In an effort to re-emphasize our rich religious and intellectual heritage, I gathered a community of planners to develop long-range plans for our institution. Our efforts this year centered on the development of fourteen institutional beliefs which provide a connection with our past and a foundation for future determination of purpose, function, resources, assumptions, goals, objectives, and programs. These beliefs from the Long-Range Planning Committee were the topic of discussion for the luncheon meetings with the Board of Advisors in the springtime. The input from this advisory group, whether directly or through Trustee committees, continues to significantly influence the future direction of Belmont Abbey College.

Our Board of Trustees experienced a first when Mr. Basil Whitener became the first layperson to chair the policy-making board of our institution. He was ably assisted by Mr. James Babb as Vice-Chairman and by Father Jerome Dollard, O.S.B., and later Abbot Peter Stragand, O.S.B., as Secretary-Treasurer. Abbot Peter became an ex officio member of the Board when he was elected Abbot of Belmont Abbey. The terms of Father Jerome Dollard, O.S.B., Father John Oetgen, O.S.B., James G. Babb, Jr., Edward J. Dowd, Jr., Edward F. Gallagher, and Dr. J. Ralph Scales on the Board expired. Newly elected members are Dr. Edwin Wilson and Father Lawrence Willis, O.S.B. Elected for another term were Father John and Messrs. Babb, Dowd, and Gallagher.

Our Board has fulfilled well its responsibilities in establishing institutional policies appropriate to the College's mission, in providing direction for our growth and development, and in monitoring our progress and financial condition. The Board through its committee structure has been revising a report on athletics at the Abbey, as well as a proposed Constitution and By-Laws for Internal Governance.

The newly created office of Provost is filled by Father John P. Bradley, the immediate past President. He is active in public relations and fund raising and doing outstanding work as is evidenced in a later portion of this report. On our Tuesday visits in the local business community, he was kind enough to introduce me to many of the loyal friends of the College.

At the time of my arrival on campus, a search was underway to select an academic dean to replace Father James Solari, O.S.B.; Dr. J. Patrick Lee was selected and took office on 1 August 1978; in the interim, Dr. George Herndl of our faculty served as Acting Academic Dean. In the springtime, after the resignations of Mr. Warren Clark and Father Richard Burton, searches involving students, faculty, administrators, and Advisors were undertaken to fill the positions of Vice-President for Institutional Advancement and Dean



Fr. Neil W. Tobin

of Students. Mr. Harry Creemers was appointed to the first position, and Miss Rose Horman to the other; they assumed office on 1 June 1979. At the same time, the Academic Dean, the Business Manager, and the Dean of Students were promoted to Vice-Presidents. During the summer of 1978, the chart of administration, as well as job descriptions, were reviewed and revised.

A most significant accomplishment for the College this year was the reaffirmation of our accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools at its December meeting. The reaccreditation was granted for a full ten-year period. A large measure of credit for managing the self-study and reaccreditation process must be accorded to Dr. Herndl, the director and editor of the self-study.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

One of our blessings was an increase in student enrollment; in the fall of 1978, 699 students (671 full-time equivalent) were enrolled; in the spring there was an enrollment of 642 (605 full-time equivalent). This represents an increase of 32 students, with a gain of 56 full-time equivalent students for the year. At our Commencement exercises on 13 May, bachelor's degrees were conferred on 113 graduates. Sister M. Michel Boulus, R.S.M., Charles A. Crutchfield, and A. Kenneth Pye, our Commencement speaker, received honorary doctorates.

Our faculty consisted of 27 full-time and 33 part-time teachers. Fifty-five percent of the full-time faculty held doctorates; forty-eight percent of this group are tenured. The average number of student credit hours generated by all faculty members was 247 in the fall and 220 in the spring. In general, it can be said that the Belmont Abbey College faculty are superior teachers. On a 4.0 scale, the students rated their teaching 3.27, and the value of the course as 3.10. During this year, the Trustees granted tenure to two, promoted three to Associate Professor, and extended emeritus status to three. Four faculty members reached retirement age: Fr. Anselm Biggs, O.S.B., Fr. Anthony Cahill, O.S.B., Dr. Gilbert J. Farley, and Mr. J. P. Smith; with the permission of the Board, two of these will continue to teach in the College next year. A leave-of-absence for one year was granted to one faculty member.

In addition to the teaching faculty, the College has twenty-four full-time administrators and five who are part-time. Leaves-of-absence have been granted for one year to two administrators.

Our faculty and staff combine the goodness of their persons with outstanding professional preparation. Together they join our employees in manifesting genuine concern for our students and for each other, and our whole community is the richer for it. I wish especially to compliment our faculty for the growth we have noted in the program of academic advisement.

The teaching of our faculty is well supported by a library of 69,000 volumes, audio-visual materials, and instructional computer resources, all of which are administered by our Director of Learning Resources and her staff.

Under the direction of the Academic Dean and our Academic Affairs Committee, there was a systematic review of all the academic policies and programs in preparation for the publication of a revised *College Bulletin* which incorporates academic matters and the student handbook.

A major accomplishment was the adoption by the faculty, the President, and the Board of Trustees of revised requirements for the Bachelor's degree. It includes a core of fifteen credits to develop effective communication in critical reading and thinking, as well as oral and written expression; a student with excellent high school preparation may obtain all these credits through waiver or testing. There is also a general education component with some specified courses including 24 credits in humanities, 12 credits in social and behavioral science, 13-14 credits in mathematics and natural sciences. The area of concentration and electives complete the minimum of 130 credits required for graduation, an increase of ten credits.

The mutually beneficial cooperative arrangement between Belmont Abbey College and Sacred Heart College continued this year as our students took 898 credits at Sacred Heart, while their students took 443 credits at the Abbey; the imbalance is compensated by a financial reimbursement. This arrangement allows our students to take majors in art, psychology, education, and special education; our majors are also available to Sacred Heart students. The students of our College also share in joint student programs and activities arranged through the College Union Board, composed of representatives from both institutions.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

In the area of student affairs, the College continued the traditional student services, through its residence life program, campus ministry, counseling services, career planning and placement, the College Union, intramurals, and health services. We do provide good student services for a college our size. The Christian and Catholic identity of our College is furthered especially through the varied programs in campus ministry: daily Eucharistic liturgies, availability of the sacraments, spiritual counseling, weekly ministry by students and staff at the Dallas Correctional Unit, small prayer groups, Christian experience weekends, participation in the Encounter With Christ program sponsored by the Diocese of Charlotte, as well as in the Pro-Life March in Washington. This year a program of individual and group counseling services was introduced, with a staff living in our three residence halls; our students utilized this service well. Services in career planning and placement include senior planning conferences, preparation of placement credentials, graduate study conferences and use of Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory interpretations to initiate career planning with freshmen and sophomores. The College Union sponsored sixty-three events ranging from Friday evening entertainment to a classical piano recital which attracted 5,691 participants; in addition, sixty-three movies were shown. The intramural program continues a quality program involving 419 games and 1,138 participants; we need to increase the involvement of the Abbey women in this program. The health needs of our students are handled daily by the College nurse and by the local medical community. In our residence life program, we articulate an adequate philosophy, though its implementation needs our continuing attention.

INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Earlier in this report I shared the enrollment statistics which indicate that our admissions staff has been performing well; there was a 34% increase in new students in the fall.

During the last year, our alumni were involved in welcoming incoming students, in a campus career day, in recruitment of students, in athletic events, and in the activities of local alumni chapters. Nearly 200 alumni participated in the 1979 Alumni Weekend, when Mr. Smith and Dr. Farley were honored with the establishment of two scholarship funds totaling \$14,000. We continue to broaden the base of our alumni support as 560 alumni contributed to the Annual Fund and 146 to the Centennial Fund; our College was a finalist in competition for the United States Steel Award for increased alumni giving.

Our Public Relations Office introduced a weekly campus bulletin to facilitate internal communications, as well as industry-sponsored basketball games when the College honored the employees of American and Ebird Mills, Pharr Yarns, and Ti-Caro, Inc. Special friends of the College were invited to two stress workshops.

We had a successful year in athletics. Our basketball

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