

DISTRICT ASSEMBLY ON MISSION EVALUATION

Comments and Suggestions

- ❖ It was a challenge to digest all of the proposals and other documents that were given to the delegates. Possibly what is needed is a slower pace and/or fewer reports. *(Gary Flinders)*
- ❖ The Secretariat is to be commended for the Herculean task of managing the flow of paper. Their very hard work was effective – it made the rest of us look good. Suggestions: Post all of the passed propositions (Acts?) onto the Website. Keep the Assembly delegates in the loop while the Brothers' District Chapter follow up (or fails to follow up) with the work of the Assembly. *(Brother Lawrence Haley, FSC)*
- ❖ We need to better identify what propositions are appropriate at the “30-50 thousand foot level.” Some of the propositions that were considered really belonged on a lower level. Along with this, we need to better respect and understand the structures that are in place to handle the day to day and the year to year matters. This might help us better understand what the content should be for matters that we consider only every four years on this very special level. Along with this, our day to day and year to year structures may need to do a better job so that their responsibilities are not pushed up to the Assembly. Ideally, matters should always be worked out at the lowest level possible. With this in mind, what are the matters suitable for the Assembly level? *(Brother Edmond Larouche, FSC)*
- ❖ A huge thank you to the District Leadership team for being so open and forthright with the District information – warts and all. I felt that the Leadership team “put the skunk out on the table” for all to see. We heard about the good, we heard about the bad, and we heard about the ugly. I felt fully like a partner (lower case on purpose here). *(Mark Warren)*
- ❖ If it is democratic (according to parliamentary procedure), perhaps limiting each committee to a maximum of three propositions/reports: to assist the committee to make only propositions of the highest priority, to enable District Leadership or any of the other administrative entities to realistically and effectively implement all the three projected goals of that committee. *(Brother Joseph Fabiano, FSC)*
- ❖ I feel honored to be included in this historic Assembly. I was especially enthusiastic about the dialogue concerning Saint Mary's College and its reaffirmation of “Mission.” Of even greater importance was the continuance of my own understanding and appreciation of the larger scope of the Lasallian vision locally, District-wide and internationally. Thank for this opportunity to deepen my sense of vocation and to share in the shaping of our collective future. P.S. Great parting gifts!! *(Ed Tywoniak)*
- ❖ See you in four years!

- ❖ We need to focus the propositions – they need to be at the “30,000 foot level” and clearly focused on change and/or advancement. A number of the propositions should have been reports. *(Rudy Schulze)*
- ❖ It would be hard for me to put in words fully how deeply moved I have been by participating in this Assembly. I want to assure our Brother colleagues that while we may have stumbled a bit, the first day or two of Assembly work (as we experienced the procedures, etc.) I can tell you that we will bring the mission to levels and works that are beyond our fondest dreams! Thank you. *(Greg Schmitz)*
- ❖ This was an extremely valuable experience for me in that I was able to hear the articulation of Lasallian passion. Should there be a filter for personal agendas? I felt that my school’s social conscience was being overly “legislated”, whereas, as CEO I do not speak for. *(Bruce Shoup)*
- ❖ Thank you for allowing the Partners to participate in this wonderful experience. Well done. *(Bertha Ortega)*
- ❖ Food excellent – in a way too much variety. Organization – excellent. Lodging – blankets were inadequate I had to sleep in sweat pants and shirt.
- ❖ I thoroughly thought this Assembly went well compared to the Brothers first two District Chapters. Roberts’ Rules of Order needs to be given to each participant. Documents of importance that called for action should be given to all participants, i.e., campus ministry, CLASP. *(Brother R. Philip Thez, FSC)*
- ❖ With all the money raised at Saint Mary’s College, please have Brother Craig investigate the use of mattresses that are not made with plastic covers. *(Gary Cannon)*
- ❖ The use of reports should be favored (and better explained) over legislation. Action items affecting the secondary schools should include the SSAA – this would eliminate the confusion between LEC schools and shared charism schools with respect to how the proposition gets implemented. I wonder what (if any) effort will be made four years from now to respond to the challenges articulated in the reports endorsed by the Assembly. Also, when these documents are reviewed by the District Chapter, attention should be paid to how the Capitulants modify them so future Assembly delegates can be guided by that experience when it comes time to craft new reports and propositions. I wonder if there is some way Committee deliberations could be facilitated so that communication on potential Assembly topics could take place prior to the Assembly. I suggest the Central Committee play a greater role in determining when, how and if legislation/reports should reach the Assembly floor. The massive rewriting of the joint Committee resolution #1 on diversity on the assembly floor highlights the need for the Central Committee to play a greater role. Additionally, I thought Service of the Poor Report #1 should never have come to the Assembly floor as it deals with Brothers’ community concerns. I

wonder what value the category “Reports for Receipt” has in the deliberation process. *(Richard Gray)*

- ❖ Gather a group (Preparatory Committee & Others – 15 or so in size?) together for several hours to debrief – to review these evaluations and to continue the evaluation of the Assembly.
- ❖ More access to computers and printers for committee work. Perhaps there is a way to provide additional time for committees to work and with sufficient resources to complete their work.
- ❖ Thanks to all who made this first Assembly the success it was. *(Brother Stanislaus Campbell, FSC)*
- ❖ Chaplain for the entire week who is invested in the Assembly. Training for Committee chairs, especially on guiding proper legislation (i.e., propositions versus reports, etc.) *(Robert Jordan)*
- ❖ No distinction made between proposals with major impact on works – including their very existence and those dealing with lesser concerns – debates on major issues short circuited by calling the question prematurely. Two sessions needed to give time to digest and discuss major proposals. *(Brother James Meegan, FSC)*
- ❖ Perhaps a few aesthetic elements (i.e., concern, special art exhibit) could be included to enrich the program.
- ❖ Continue this great work!
- ❖ Spend a longer time on the Rules of Procedure. *(Brother Jesus Lara, FSC)*
- ❖ Thank you for the honor of serving as a delegate. *(Christine Buell)*
- ❖ Good organization of the Assembly prior to our gathering at SMC. Gave the delegates a sense of belonging to an entity bigger than themselves (District) and a sense of ownership for the future. Also, through formal and informal session together, we came to know better one another and local/District issues. *(Brother Norman Cook, FSC)*
- ❖ Excellent job by support staff and advance planners.
- ❖ Congratulations. Well done.
- ❖ Focus more on the address and directions of the Assembly on Mission. We didn't have enough time to discuss the details of each proposition.
- ❖ Invite the three moderators back for work in subsequent assemblies.

- ❖ It would have been great to have all the socials right next to the meeting location of the General Assembly. The socials (evening ones) to begin before or after dinner, when there are no evening sessions, to allow for uninterrupted work or rest. The first day of presentations was extremely helpful and empowering. We appreciate the openness. *(Limarys Caraballo)*
- ❖ Be sure to profit from our “learning experience” for the next Assembly. In the future make a distinction between “Reports” and “Propositions” as between moral and legislative. *(Brother Brendan Kneale, FSC)*
- ❖ It became apparent to me on Day 3 that I was unclear on one of the overall purposes of the Assembly: To propose new ideas, directions and plans or to do this in addition to affirming and continuing existing works, policy and programs. I think more explicit instructions on this would have helped. I heard in other people’s comments that there was frustration that so many propositions reinforced existing work. However, were we not told to do this? I think it is important to send a message for both new vision and continued direction, but I genuinely don’t know if the original intention was for both. *(Rory Dorman)*
- ❖ Get together for a follow-up regionally to hear a report on the District Chapter results.
- ❖ I have so much respect for the work that Brother Stan did as the leader of the Preparatory Committee. He did an incredible job. The entire staff of DLSI did exceptional work in preparation. *(Catherine Karrels)*
- ❖ In the future there will need to be a second session of the Assembly to give time to absorb and rethink proposals. Kudos to the organizers and secretariat staff for exceptional organization.
- ❖ I enjoyed the organ music during mass and wish there would have been more of it. *(Mike Trafecanty)*
- ❖ I very much appreciate the opportunity to participate in this historic event. I am very humbled with the experience – it has energized me to get back to work. *(Bill George)*
- ❖ Hats off to everyone who organized this Assembly. It was extremely efficient and well thought through. First class!
- ❖ What a wonderful work together and by association!
- ❖ Good job!
- ❖ As a partner, thank you for the wonderful opportunity to participate! I look forward to more and deeper engagement in similar activities.
- ❖ Inspiring.

- ❖ There was no opportunity for adjustment of the process once we were into it. I might suggest that a day after the committees have started their work, a session for the whole around clarification regarding the difference between propositions and reports and in clarifying areas of overlap, cooperation and distinction between the various committees. The role of the Central Committee could have been helpful in coaching some of the committees in framing their propositions. Some of them had good intent but were very poorly worded and thus were defeated. Not all were able to be resubmitted with better language given the time constraints and since there was only one session of this Assembly, they died. This may be a matter of a learning curve about the whole process of crafting propositions or reports, but I thought some coaching could have been in order and would have speeded up the work of the Assembly. Will some of the Partners from this Assembly be invited as observers to the District Chapter sessions when these propositions on Mission are debated? Looking ahead what interim structures need to be in place for these representative partners, especially to continue their exposure to these issues? Starting again with all new representatives in four years would be unfortunate. (*Penny Washbourn*)
- ❖ Please continue to do this. How historic that we have done this and are a part of shaping the future.
- ❖ Living areas should be closer to meeting, praying, eating facilities.
- ❖ Diabetic desserts needed at meals and for snacks.
- ❖ Among the documents sent out in advance, include the booklet of all the previous Chapter Acts so as to avoid useless duplication and to aid research. Publish these evaluations.
- ❖ Food was excellent and the choices numerous. Also foods at breaks and for snacks were plentiful.
- ❖ One comment is due about Prayer and Celebration of Liturgy. The organizers did an excellent job and made great choices about readings, prayers, and music. The young man at the piano made morning prayer an event to remember. The music was moving. The readings lifted our hearts and minds to the spirit of the Assembly.
- ❖ Obviously, the Assembly was geared by the selected topics for group discussion to address the “special option for the poor” issue. However, there are a number of other issues that also need discussion if the schools are to become quality institutions for all students, and especially the poor. For example, what is the nature of a quality education in Lasallian schools? What is the insightful curriculum for religious instruction in terms of doctrine, especially in cases where the religious traditions are diverse? Is the motto “Enter to Learn, Leave to Serve,” someone has garnered from a school in India appropriate in California? Does such a motto encourage “practical education,” that is functional or “useful” education rather than

education in liberal arts, a truly liberating education for all students? Is such a motto geared for “usefulness” only, rather than both continuing education as well as service? Should the latter half of the motto be “Leave to learn and serve?” There are all sorts of issues in governance and finance that authentic “Partners” should be allowed to discuss and hopefully offer creative views.

Though some people revel in the idea of experiential education in the name of “immersion” or some other catch-phrase, the whole concept of “Service-Learning” needs to be investigated with care in terms of what a high school or collegiate institution is designated by intelligent principle to achieve overall. I am always worried about certain vested interests making anti-intellectual inroads on the school.

The purposes of the school need clarification for some interests, e.g., some Campus Ministry personnel would place campus ministry goals over the overall goals of a school which has academic freedom at its heart. Tom Brady’s comment that freedom of choice based on intelligent principle seems to be obscured by desires to make people be good through some kind of Campus Ministry action.

One of the issues that I found of interest in reading some of the material and hearing some of the comments is that many high school teachers do not understand the significant difference between secondary and collegiate education, even though all, I assume, have experienced some form of higher education. Some would have the College assume the role of a glorified high school. While collegiate education is the next step, its focus and seriousness extends far beyond the experience of the secondary school student. The professional and intellectual interests of faculty have a profound effect upon those students who are prepared for collegiate education. Collegiate education, particularly in the liberal arts (including the sciences) is distinctively different from a high school education and environment. While I recognize weaknesses in higher education, especially in such areas as athleticism in some places, the professional education of college and university faculty, their association among their peers as well as their interest in research, teaching and in some cases, publication, is far greater than anything one finds overall in a secondary school faculty. Collegiate education is distinctive and clearly discriminatory in terms of intellectual interests regardless of the economic condition of the student. The fact that higher educational institutions have changed the outlook and lives of students who had intellectual talent and were only able to attend because of financial aid (some sponsored by the government) is to their credit. I don’t know that the secondary school folks always understand the unique nature and purposes of higher education. (*Brother Mel Anderson, FSC*)