

Dear Everyone Connected with the St. Patrick Catholic American Community,

Greetings as we approach the last weeks of our summer vacation. This week we welcome our new Vice Rector, Fr. Steve Petroff, CSP. He comes to St. Patrick's from Chicago, Illinois where he's been associate pastor of Old St. Mary's church since July of 2017. A native of Clarkston, Michigan, Fr. Steve earned a B.A. from Oakland University in Rochester, MI, and an M.S. in Hispanic literature and linguistics from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. He then spent 20 years in Los Angeles working in marketing and strategic planning for both international companies and specialized firms.

Fr. Steve joined the Paulist novitiate in the fall of 2011 and spent Lent of 2012 with the American community in Rome at Santa Susanna. He made his final promises to the Paulist Fathers on September 2, 2016 and was ordained a transitional deacon the next day at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC. After finishing the normal course of priestly formation and earning his M. Div. from The Catholic University of America, Fr. Steve was ordained a priest by Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson, Arizona on May 20, 2017 at the Paulist mother church, the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, in New York City, along with Paulist Fathers Matthew Berrios, CSP and Stuart Wilson-Smith, CSP. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with Fr. Steve and his family who are mourning the loss of his father Joe, who passed away two weeks ago. You can meet Fr. Steve at St. Patrick's this weekend, when he celebrates and preaches at the Saturday 6:00 PM Mass and the Sunday morning 10:30 AM Mass, with a reception downstairs in Tara Hall (air-conditioned) afterwards.

The readings for this coming weekend focus on what it means to be saved. We forget that being saved essentially means being in right relationship with God and the people of God, and therefore continuing that relationship after death, in heaven for eternity. With the all too human language of salvation, the problem is that it is easy to see such definitions as the standards by which to exclude people. We often forget about this particular Gospel, which tells us that we must rethink whatever notions we have about who is fit for the Kingdom of God. Those we think least likely to enter may be the first to do so, and vice versa. Jesus tends to focus on the poetic image that Isaiah paints, that of people coming together from all parts of the earth to worship God as one. Only a vision on a cosmic level like that of Isaiah can enable us to get our own priorities straight and truly see everyone in our world as sisters and brothers.

If you have not yet signed up your family for our Religious Education Program, please do so as soon as possible. Information, schedule and application forms are available from me by email only. There will soon be a waiting list for non parishioners for the First Communion classes, but there is plenty of room in our Confirmation class and the non sacramental classes, Grades One through Eight. Active parishioners have priority. The St. Nicholas Charity Serata Committee is calling for as much help as possible as we begin preparing for the Gala Event of the Christmas Social Season on December 7, 2019. For those of you who are new, the Serata is a Dinner Dance, which includes a Silent and a Live Auction, as well as a Raffle, all held at Marymount International School. The entire proceeds go directly to specific Roman charities.

In the meantime, I look forward to your imminent return and hope and pray that you are having good and safe holidays. Ciao for now, Father Greg