

Dear Parishioners, Friends, Alumni and Religious Education Families,

Happy New Year! I hope that all of you have had a safe and fantastic holiday thus far and are preparing to begin the New Year with enthusiasm, gusto, hope and courage. 2016 was another difficult year for the Santa Susanna Community, but it's a brand new day and year. Now we have some hope and a plan and will be able to announce our new Church officially in a few weeks. Even after three and a half years of exile it is amazing how our community spirit has been sustained, and even grown. We had our most successful St. Nicholas Charity Serata ever (watch the video at [www.stnicholasserata.org](http://www.stnicholasserata.org) -- password: Greg), and we just celebrated wonderful Christmas liturgies. With renewed resolve and vigor, we will work harder than ever to do what needs to be done to have a new home Church, with enough space to provide ministry for all of you and for our many visitors and pilgrims. I know that this is very frustrating for all of you as it is for Fr. Steve and me, but you have been so supportive and encouraging that it makes the difficult moments so much easier.

This weekend, we follow the U.S. Church calendar and celebrate the great feast of the Epiphany of the Lord at all four of our weekend Masses. Epiphany is the manifestation of the love of God for us in Jesus Christ. The Gospel story of the three Magi or astrologers or kings is one we have heard many times, and one with which we can resonate. On a mysterious journey, the three Magi are searching for the newborn King, yet at the same time they are looking for the meaning of life and for answers to profound questions. The brightness of the star draws them toward their goal, which is the Savior with whom they will spend time in adoration and contemplation. This is the Child who will give them and us the hope and peace we desire. Fr. Ed Dougherty is the celebrant for the Saturday 5.45 PM Mass in the Carthusian Chapel of Santa Maria degli Angeli and I will preside at the Sunday 9 AM Mass at Santa Maria's Main Altar. Fr. Steve celebrates the Sunday 10 AM Mass at San Camillo de Lellis and I will preside and preach at the 11 AM Santa Susanna Mass in the Marymount Chapel, with the Vittori and Panicci Families providing hospitality.

Our next Family Based Religious Education Session is Saturday, January 14, at 3.30 PM. The special guest speaker for the adults will be Ms. Ann Haring, the Religious Education Coordinator of Marymount International School, who will speak about Family Prayer. In regard to our Winter Spiritual Walking Tour schedule, I am currently organizing two special tours, one in January (19) and one in February (16), plus five Thursdays during Lent (March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30). We are definitely set for the Catacombs of San Sebastiano on March 9, followed by Mass in the Basilica. The remainder of the schedule will be announced imminently.

Fr. Paul Robichaud, my predecessor as Rector of Santa Susanna, called me last week. He has been suffering from Parkinson's Disease now for the past 11 years. On Tuesday, tomorrow, Fr. Paul will have Deep Brain Surgery during which two microchips will be inserted into his brain as a way to lessen his tremor. Fr. Paul asks for your prayers and notes that you can follow his progress and send him messages at [www.caringbridge.org](http://www.caringbridge.org). Just go to this website, type in Fr. Paul's name, and register. He very much appreciates your thoughts and prayers.

Again, have a happy and blessed New Year. Ciao for now, Father Greg.