

Dear Parishioners, Alumni, Friends and Religious Education Families,

Greetings on this rainy day. Next Sunday we hear one of the most familiar and beloved passages in the Bible, The Beatitudes. They are the preface to the Sermon on the Mount and actually sum up what we are about to hear. The Beatitudes list the kinds of persons whom Jesus declares to be blessed, happy and fortunate, and they tell us what such persons can hope for. They place before us what our goal as Christians can and should be, and show us how to reach that goal. They tell us how our hopes can be fulfilled. With respect to the kingdom of heaven, the Beatitudes are both the entrance requirements and the promises of the blessings to be enjoyed there.

The list of what we can hope for includes the kingdom of heaven, comfort and consolation, sharing in the reign of God, divine justice, divine mercy, seeing God face to face, being children of God, and perfect joy and happiness. All these hopes are different aspects of the same thing, the fullness of life in the kingdom of God, which is the culmination of everything we have ever dreamt of and more. In Christian hope, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus have turned our wildest dreams and wishes not only into possibilities but into realities. To reach this goal we are called to be poor in spirit, compassionate, meek, merciful, clean of heart and peacemakers. And we are called to be willing even to be insulted and persecuted for our ideals and values. These values stand in opposition to what is often celebrated and glorified in our world today. Nevertheless, these are the kinds of persons we must strive to be if we ever hope to turn our dreams into realities.

On Wednesday, January 25, we celebrate the Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle, the feast day of the Paulist Fathers, which is why we prayed for all of the Paulists this past Sunday. On Saturday, January 28, at 10 AM, we will celebrate Mass in the Basilica of St. Pauls Outside the Walls. At this Mass, to which all of you are invited, our Paulist Associates will renew their yearly commitment. So please join us!!!!

This weekend Fr. Ken Thesing will be the presider and homilist at the Saturday 5:45 PM Mass in the Carthusian Chapel of Santa Maria degli Angeli and I will celebrate the Sunday 9 AM Mass at the main altar. Fr. Russel Murray is the presider and homilist for the Sunday 10 AM Mass at San Camillo de Lellis and Fr. Steve is the celebrant for the Santa Susanna Mass in the Marymount Chapel at 11 AM, with the Toti and Merico Families providing hospitality.

On February 16, our spiritual tour will be of the Necropolis and Museum of Cerveteri. This is a three hour tour and the cost will depend on how many people are interested (approx. 40 euros), so please let me know by February 6. We will leave from Stazione Termini at 9 and return by 3:30. On Thursday, March 16, I am offering a full day tour of Naples. We depart from Stazione Termini at 7:30 AM and return at 6:10 PM. Total cost is 120 euros (includes train tickets, entrance fees and pranzo). We will see the Duomo, San Lorenzo Maggiore and Scavi of the Roman Forum, San Gregorio Aremeno, San Domenico Maggiore, Santa Chiara, Gesù Nuovo, Cappella Sansevero and the Via dei Presepii. Need payment and commitment by March 1st. Regular three hour walking tours in Rome will be on March 2, 9, 23 and 30.

Have a very good week and I look forward to seeing you this coming weekend at one of our four community Masses. Ciao for now, Father Greg