

Dear Parishioners, Alumni, Religious Education Families and Friends,

In the Gospels, Jesus cannot look at a suffering human being without being moved into action. He walks through a frantic crowd and brings hope and compassion. He drives out demons, heals sick people and then refuels himself in order to continue a life of service. He gets up early in the day, before dawn, and goes off to a deserted place to be absorbed in prayer. He is restored and ready to show the love of God to the next person in need that he meets. We are called to continue the healing ministry and service of Jesus, and we too need to be energized by solitude, prayer and community. Then we can feel our hearts moved to compassion and propelled to action. Today put yourself in someone else's shoes and into his or her difficult situation. Feel what that person is feeling and think of what Jesus might do to help. Then respond in the best way that only you yourself can.

Our next Family Based Religious Education Session is Saturday, February 3, at 3.30 PM at St. Patrick's. I will give a presentation on the Sacrament of Holy Orders and my journey from the Novitiate to my 35th Ordination Anniversary this coming May, as well as the Sacrament of Marriage, to which I hope the parents will contribute.

Yesterday I included the minutes of our last Parish Council Meeting in the bulletin. Here are the highlights: good Christmas Eve Mass attendance and liturgies, but collections were disappointing. Very favorable reviews for the St. Nicholas Charity Serata and the committee discussed changes that need to be made, especially with my transfer in September. Could have used more help with cleanup, sold more dinner and raffle tickets and thus raised more money for the charities. Still a great success!

Update on Work on the Church: Total Bills paid to date for renovations: €116.158,99; Donations to Restoration Fund: €72.288,98. Work left to accomplish: Heating in the Church, Security and new door to Tara Hall after Robbery, New Sign in front of the Church, Olive Tree pruning and decoration of Tara Hall and Offices, some future renovation projects within the church and handicap access at entrance. Distribution of Hotel Cards with our Mass schedule done before Christmas, but needs to be ongoing for better effect and increased attendance. Stewardship Sunday will be March 4. The budget, fundraising and our monetary needs will be explained at all four of our Masses. The collections have been lower than last year and we need to increase them considerably so that we can pay our future utility bills and payroll. We will soon begin our Memorial Pew Plaques Project as a fundraiser and I will reach out to the US Bishops for a donation to the American parish in Rome.

I need help with filing, correspondence, creating detailed manuals for future staff and sacramental record updating. If you can give two or three hours a week, let me know. We had no one to volunteer to organize our days at the Caritas Food Kitchen, but yesterday Sr. Nancy said yes. For liturgy, we need more volunteers to be lecturers, ministers of communion and altar servers, especially at the Saturday 6 PM, Sunday 9 and 11 AM Mass. We have had an increase in wedding requests, which is wonderful.

We are continuing to evaluate our Family-Based Religious Education program and ways to improve it. For Adults we also have our Thursday Walking Tours (beg. 1 Feb.), our Tuesday Scripture class, and our classes for those who wish to receive the Sacraments of Initiation. We are happy to announce that we finally have an official

office phone number: 06.8881.8727. Special thanks to Hiroko Sasaki and her team for the reception after our Unity Prayer Service on January 21. In regard to future Paulist staffing, there is no news yet, but I anticipate that there will be soon. Our next Parish Council Meeting will be March 21, with our committees meeting before then.

This weekend I will celebrate the Saturday 6 PM Family Mass and the Sunday 11 AM Mass in the Marymount Chapel, officially known as Scout Sunday. And Sunday will be Maryknoll Day at St. Patrick's as Fr. Ken presides at the 9 AM Mass and Fr. Ed is the celebrant at the 10.30 AM Mass. And don't forget the Library Used Book Sale which begins on Wednesday, February 7, with a Farewell to Head Librarian Tonia White and a welcome to her successor, Sally Richards. Hope to see you all soon. Ciao for now, Fr. Greg