

Dear Parishioners, Alumni, and Friends of St. Patrick's Church,

Greetings to you from the Paulist terrazzo on Via Antonio Salandra in Roma! I am back again, now getting ready for an exciting fall season. But first we have the remainder of July and all of August in quiet-town Roma. And of course today, July 15, is the first day we are accepting inquiries about our Family Based Religious Education Program. I am also working diligently on the new As Romans Do. If you are interested in sponsoring our 100 page bi-annual guide to life in Rome as a way of promoting your business, school or place of work, please write to me as soon as possible and I will send you the information.

Speaking about being busy about many things, this coming Sunday we hear about Martha and Mary. None of us likes change. Whether or not we have a choice in the matter, change happens throughout our lives. And that is what happens to Abraham and Sarah, and Martha and Mary. Both families welcome visitors into their homes and offer hospitality that leads to dramatic changes. Abraham and Sarah are invited to let go and trust in God's wisdom and grace. When they do so, they have a child in their old age, and eventually their lives are uprooted as they move away from their ancestral home. Jesus visits the home of Martha and Mary and brings along extra guests, which leaves Martha in a dither. She is just doing what is expected, but Mary does something else. She is listening to what their guest is saying and it is enriching her life, which is the point in all of this.

We run around trying to get so many things done, and this gets in the way of paying attention to what is around us. If we do pay attention and see the truth of what is in front of us, we might have to do something about it. Even though we do not want to go through the upset of change, we must always be ready to move in a different direction when we listen to the word of God. Taking the time to sit at the feet of Jesus, like Mary did, is a metaphor for talking with each other and with God. To pray, to watch, to listen. So try out some of each this week.

Information and registration forms are now available by email for our Family-Based Religious Education Program. Registered active parishioners who have been regularly attending our parish Masses and programs will have first preference for enrollment. However, there will be a limited number of openings for non-parishioners and non-active St. Patrick's parishioners. Attendance of the child together with one parent is mandatory for every session. Both parents must have a comprehensive, thorough understanding of English, as does the child. The minimum age for First Communion is now 8 years old and the Third Grade (by the first day of class) and for Confirmation it is 14 years old and the Ninth Grade.

If you are in Rome, please join our community for Mass on Sunday. The traffic has lessened and it is easier to find a parking space near the Church. We would love to see all of you, whenever you are able to attend. Maryknoll Father Jim Lynch will preside and preach at the Saturday evening 6 PM Mass and I will be the celebrant for the Sunday 9 AM Mass. Fr. Tom Holahan, who has been with us for six weeks and will be returning to New York soon, will celebrate the Sunday 10:30 AM Mass. Continue to have a good summer, and enjoy good weather, good times with family and friends, and good health and happiness wherever you are. I hope to see all of you very soon. Ciao for now, Father Greg