

Dear Saint David Parishioners,

Thank you all for the warm welcome I have received from so many of you, I cannot express how comforting it is for Fr. Hans and me!

I have seen and experienced very early on what a special place and community we have here at Saint David, and I am honored to be here. I hope as you get to know me you will experience how happy I am to be back in parish ministry – the reason I became a priest. I am thrilled to have been assigned to a parish with a school. I am a product of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Miami, and believe totally in Catholic education and that every boy and girl deserves the ability not only to receive a quality education – but most importantly to encounter Jesus Christ as they grow and are nurtured in the faith. Last weekend in the Gospel we heard the Parable of the Mustard Seed. *“It is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants...”* Catholic schools support the role of the family as the domestic church to sow the seeds of faith that grow into *“the largest of plants and puts forth large branches.”* This is the gift my parents and grandparents gave me, and it is the gift the families of our parish and school give to the newest generations.

I understand that I have big shoes to fill – as witnessed during the 50th Anniversary Mass, the legacy of Fr. O’Reilly is still very much alive here at Saint David. No matter where you look on the campus his fingerprints remain. And Fr. Steve, who carried on the vision that Fr. O’Reilly set for the parish and school (maybe with his own twist here and there). To quote Archbishop Wenski in his homily at the 50th Anniversary Mass: “to tell the story of this parish is to tell the story of people who, under the leadership of Father Gabriel O’Reilly and now Father Steven O’Hala, have created an equally extraordinary community of faith, hope, and love.” My hope is that as I assume this new role as Pastor of this community that “we remember the past with gratitude, live the present with enthusiasm, and look forward to the future with confidence.”

I ask for your prayers, patients, and support as we begin this new chapter in the history of Saint David Parish.

Sincerely,

Fr. Ryan