



Sacred Heart Church

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January 28, 2021

The Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas

Dear Parishioners:

This weekend brings with it an historic moment for our parish, as the merger process between Sacred Heart Parish of Georgetown and St. Patrick Parish of Redding Ridge will be actualized. After months of discussion within the Collaborative Committee made up of members of both parishes as well as their clergy, and following the work accomplished within its various subcommittees in the examination of parish life and practice, we are ready to merge and begin new life as the newest parish in the diocese: Sacred Heart and St. Patrick Parish.

The merger takes effect this Sunday, January 31st. At the end of the day on Saturday, January 30th, both Sacred Heart Parish of Georgetown and St. Patrick Parish of Redding Ridge will be suppressed. This means the end of our 140-year history as a fixture of the Georgetown community, as established in 1881. On Sunday, January 31st, the assets and liabilities of both former parishes will be combined into a brand-new parish, and placed under the care of a brand-new pastor: Fr. Joseph Cervero, currently Pastor of St. Patrick Parish.

One may think that the word “suppression” is equivalent to that of “closing”, but this is not the case in our situation. Rather, the new parish inherits all the existing buildings and grounds of the former two parishes, to be put to the best use possible for its needs. The work of the Collaborative Committee has already ascertained that no part of either complex of buildings and grounds is to close or be sold. This means that the new parish will now enjoy two churches for divine worship as opposed to one, and that in fact is the case: with the recommendations of the subcommittee on Liturgy and Parish Life, Fr. Cervero has already crafted both a new Sunday Mass schedule and a new weekday Mass schedule which contains liturgies staggered between the two church edifices. The new schedule is attached to this letter, so please familiarize yourself with it, as changes take place beginning Monday, February 1st.

While the need for merger was primarily based on financial concerns which were exacerbated from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, it also exerts the feeling that a more productive pastoral development of the communities of both Georgetown and Redding would take place from within a larger community capable of engaging the resources of a combined parish to accomplish its noble task rather than struggling to do so on a more solitary basis. It is within this mindset that Bishop Caggiano ultimately determined the need for merger to take place for both Sacred Heart and St. Patrick parishes. It also means that the future success of this venture is directly dependent on the level of dedication and support it receives from the newly-merged community, as well as upon the viability of the objectives of its new pastoral plan and the level of investment that the new parish receives – in terms that are not only financial, but communal in nature.

