

Reflection for MUAA National Board of Director

Before we begin, I ask you to join me in praying for Father John Naus who suffered another stroke earlier this month and is now in Palliative care.

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah. (29: 11-15)

For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope. When you call me, and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me and I will change your lot; I will gather you together from all the nations and all the places to which I have banished you, bring you back to the place from which I have exiled you. As for your saying, "The LORD has raised up for us prophets here in Babylon."

I read from Jeremiah's letter to the people of Judah because it tells of a new beginning. I could incorporate lots of euphemisms. But instead want to focus on the many new beginnings we experience this time of the year.

We welcomed 2013 students as freshmen at Marquette in late August. I'm told that almost 2000 of them are still with us. .

Today we welcome many of you to the National Alumni Board. It is a new beginning for all of you but we do not need to start from "scratch." This board builds on the accomplishments, the challenges, the success and the mistakes of previous alumni boards and its members. That having been said, your willingness to make this commitment is very important and a significant occasion for us to celebrate today.

Each of you has promised to commit your time, your talents and your treasures to your alma mater. We thank you for this gift and today we pray in a special way that God will be with each of us as we work together to make the difference at Marquette University. We pray in thanksgiving for the likes of Greg and the other past presidents. We pray for Mary and especially the new members of the board. We pray for Tim Simmons and the Alumni and External Relations staff. We pray for all the students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, benefactors and friends who make up the Marquette community.

As we begin anew this fall, we cannot minimize the very significant challenges facing our world and Marquette at this time. But neither do we want to merely focus on the negative. We have always been faced with challenges and we use these to make us better and stronger as we move forward. While some will choose to focus on what is wrong with our world, we will focus on and celebrate the great future ahead for Marquette University.

Each of you is a part of this great future. Together we move into a new era at Marquette and let me conclude with a quote from Father Pilarz in a letter he sent to all Marquette students early in his tenure as president.

We will celebrate together the aspirations we have for Marquette. Core to those aspirations is your personal success, including being part of a community in which we support and care for one another. Please take advantage of this and of the opportunities throughout this year to learn more about ... how, together, we can make a difference.

And please join me in saying, Amen!