

The Rev. Christopher Potter

April 30, 2017

Dear St. John's Episcopal Church and School Community:

May the joy and peace that comes with recognizing the Risen Jesus among you, fill you with endless wonder during this Easter Season!

Several weeks ago, the movement of God's Spirit surprised and gifted me with no warning. For, in a moment of quiet reflection, I received a phone call from Bishop Bruno's office informing me that I was being called to serve, if willing, the people of God at St. John Chrysostom Church and School in Rancho Santa Margarita. I must have been stunned longer than I had thought, for after what seemed only a moment to me, the voice on the other side asked, "Christopher! Are you alright?"

I was more than alright! I was excited and humbled with the prospect of becoming the next Vicar at St. John's. Further, I am more than willing and look forward to coming to love and serve the Community of people who worship, live, learn, work, and play in Rancho Santa Margarita. Our mutual friend, Fr. John, has spoken to me often of your great appetite for the Word of God. He takes joy in sharing the many ways you serve Christ in the hungry and the poor. Even Bishop Bruno, who knows of your dedication to hospitality and how you share freely from your abundant gifts, says that he knows of no other place that has the level of enthusiasm for spiritual growth and love for education that St. John's has! (He also says that it's the "Busiest Place on Earth!")

I was ordained a Catholic priest in 1982. After a few pastoral assignments, I took leave from parochial ministry to marry, raise a family, start some businesses, and to work in both the public and private sectors. All along, I discovered my work required the best of me: bringing healing where people were broken and isolated; offering hope where people had languished in desperation and loneliness. I realized that my heart had never left priestly ministry, eventually asking Bishop Bruno to accept me as an Episcopal priest in the Diocese of Los Angeles. Now, I am a single father of an adult daughter and doing what I love most in life!

My passion and education merge at the intersections of liturgy, education, responding to the Gospel of Jesus, and encouraging people to join in the work of fulfilling God's reign on earth. A priest is called to be the mid-wife of hope. With humility and prayer, we enter with God into people's lives when loss, injury, and death have robbed them of vision. Together with them and God's grace, priests give birth to hope and rebuild lives. We find amid tragedy the unending love God has for the world as seen and taught by Jesus.

I look forward to entering with you into the covenant of priest and faithful. You have the advantage of having had powerful and talented leaders like our Bishop-Elect John Taylor. All have brought you – and will continue to bring you – to far frontiers in your journey of faith. I am thrilled to find out how God will work with us together and call us to new revelations in our walk with Jesus.

Until Pentecost, I am faithfully yours;

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher Potter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'C'.

Christopher Potter+