

Hello. My name is Tom Rossano and I am the pastoral council chairperson and I have the honor to say a few words about Fr. Peter on behalf of the council and on behalf of the St. Thomas community.

A few years ago, after Father Peter and I worked together on an event, a person came up to me and said “You know what, when you and Father Peter stand together make a perfect 10.” Then he drew in the air a one and a zero – and I was thinking it was our teamwork. But, now with Father Peter looking so good... we are more like an 11. It just goes to show that all of us get better when we journey together as a community. And that is one of the greatest legacies you leave us with: the ability to form community and finding Jesus in community. Community went far beyond social gatherings - and he always had great parties. It was warmth and inspiration you provided us that gave us the commitment to come back here to the Eucharistic celebration. It was here with where we celebrated the ups and downs of life, the joy and sorrows, and the every day moments of dying to ourselves and rising to new life. It was where we received nourishment from our risen Lord and support from those who have faith in Him. This something as a Parish Community we will continue to develop over the years to come.

You have touched our hearts and minds by teaching us many things like loving God, loving neighbor, loving ourselves and most importantly patience...while waiting for you to show up 1, 2, 3 minutes late.

It is difficult to capture thirteen years of people and experiences in a few words or a few minutes. What can we say other than thank

you.

Fr. Peter - we present you with this picture of our stain glass window of the nativity from St. Thomas the Apostle for you to take with you on new role as pastor of the Church of the Nativity in Midland Park. Take this as a reminder of your time here, the people you served, and the friends you will always have. With it know that you take a little bit of all of us with you.

And with you going to a Church named the nativity, they get the gift of you to have a little Christmas in July.

And until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Please pray for us and we will pray for you.

God Bless!

This was presented by Thomas Rossano at Father Peter Funesti's Farewell Mass.