



April 9, 2024

Parents, Students, and Friends of Nativity:

We are delighted to announce that Mr. Ian Parelius will join Nativity as a founding faculty member serving as our 9th and 10th grade Literature, History, and Theology Teacher.

Mr. Parelius grew up in Petaluma, the oldest of six children. As a child, Ian was shaped by faith, family, music and sports. In his non-denominational Christian home, a personal relationship with Jesus through prayer and the Bible was at the center of all he did. At ten years old he was challenged to memorize the entirety of the Sermon on the Mount and managed to complete it by the end of the school year! Ian also grew to love two hobbies: swimming and classical music. He played the piano, trombone, and viola in the Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Ian first fell in love with Classical education as a Philosophy major at St. Mary's College in Moraga, CA where he earned a degree in the [Integral Studies](#) program. Students gathered weekly in seminar format with open discussion and debate about every issue of faith, morality and human existence. It was this program which cultivated a deeply intellectual examination of humanity, and where Ian discovered his passion for classical education. He excelled in the program, graduating Summa Cum Laude and winning the [St. Albert Magnus Award](#) for Excellence in Philosophy.

In true Renaissance style, Mr. Parelius also excelled in both collegiate athletics (as the starting goalie on the Varsity Men's Water Polo Team) and in the arts (where he continued studying and performing both the piano and trombone).

After graduation, Ian wanted to deepen the intellectual study of his faith, traveling to Boston to earn a Masters in Theological Studies from Boston College. Thereafter he felt drawn to work as a [FOCUS Missionary](#). He lived in Birmingham, Alabama serving the Catholic students at University of Alabama Birmingham where he lead Bible studies and retreats. One of the most powerful experiences that year was when he took a few students on a mission trip to the Bronx, NY to help the Missionaries of Charity serve the poor. Their supernatural joy led him to reflect more on whether he might have a supernatural vocation to religious life.

In 2016 Mr. Parelius entered the Dominican Novitiate here in San Francisco, residing at St. Dominick's. After nearly two years in formation, Mr. Parelius discerned that he was called to teaching and family life, rather than the priesthood. He returned to Petaluma, almost immediately meeting his now wife Trina, who was a graduate of Franciscan University of Steubenville. Trina felt that Ian's time in formation as a Dominican was wonderful training to be a faith-filled, servant husband!

For the last eight years, Mr. Parelius has worked at Cardinal Newman High School in Santa Rosa and Marin Catholic High School in Kentfield where Mr. Parelius taught both Theology and English. He is known for his AP English seminar studying the works of J.R.R. Tolkien and his innovative approach to teaching Shakespearian English (ask him for more details). He is a voracious reader of all the great works in the Catholic and Christian intellectual tradition. His recent favorites are the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, the writings of Joseph Ratzinger, and the stories of Flannery O'Connor.

Outside the classroom, Mr. Parelius spends his time with his young and growing family. He and Trina are parents to three girls under five and live just a short walk from Nativity. He is an active parishioner at Star of the Sea, often bravely seating his young family in the front section for the Extraordinary Form Mass.

Mr. Parelius is looking forward to building and delivering a curriculum that organizes and integrates history, theology, philosophy, and literature. He loves nothing more than facilitating a Socratic seminar with open debate in search of truth and understanding - maybe followed by a celebratory piano solo. We are grateful that such a talented person, who is so deeply passionate about his subject matter, has joined Nativity in such an important role.



Please join us in welcoming and congratulating Ian!

May God Bless You!

Nativity Board of Directors



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