

Welcome to—and from—Marquette’s New President

I have been invited to introduce myself to you, and I am delighted to do so. I am Scott R. Pilarz, S.J., and I have the privilege, beginning this academic year, to serve as president of Marquette University. It is humbling for me to join this community as the successor of Robert A. Wild, S.J., and our 21 other fellow Jesuits who have led this great university as president.

I come to this role with eight years of experience as president of the University of Scranton. So I understand the extent of the demands of Catholic, Jesuit higher education in today’s world. And I am coming to know the contribution of the Law School to Marquette University’s effort to meet those demands. Certainly there is a solid base: I visited Ray and Kay Eckstein Hall, the Law School’s extraordinary home of only one year, on one of my earliest visits to campus, and was inspired by the vision that Father Wild helped to bring to reality for Marquette Law School and the region.

While there was no law school at Scranton, I spent my undergraduate years at Georgetown University and returned there to teach after receiving my Ph.D. in English at the City University of New York. My years at Georgetown helped me to develop a sense of what a great law school can do for a university. So I have much to learn but, hopefully, something to offer as well.

I have been able to learn a number of things about Marquette Law School specifically, even apart from the wonders of Eckstein Hall. The Law School’s dean, Joseph D. Kearney, worked with me closely over the past year as the leader of the presidential transition within the University. I benefited from Dean Kearney’s insights and counsel during the process.

I believe that Dean Kearney learned from me as well. He took one lesson particularly to heart: I understand that he has more or less polled the faculty and students, looking for a connection with Camden, New Jersey, my hometown (the south side of Chicago connection that he had with my predecessor will serve him less well in this new world). The early returns have not been many, but there is time.



So I am excited to help lead Marquette Law School. Jesuit education for centuries has inspired people to “go and set the world on fire.” It is not a monastic education, but one that seeks to ensure that its teachers and students engage the world. Can there be any doubt that legal education is about inspiring men and women to engage the world, in all its glory and all its humanity, in all their forms?

I have travelled far fewer miles than Father Jacques Marquette, who left his family in France for the new world. But I feel a kinship with the University’s namesake as I begin my own journey at Marquette. This is a time of exploration and discovery for me. I look forward to meeting faculty, alumni, and students of Marquette Law School; to collaborating with you to advance the Law School; and to doing all this, as each of my predecessors would have said as well, *Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam*.

Scott R. Pilarz, S.J.

President, Marquette University