Christmas: God, Generosity, and Gratitude

As we embark on the last week of our 2011 Advent journey to encounter the Lord Jesus once again at Christmas, let us reflect on the religious and spiritual meaning of this great feast. We know it is the commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ some two thousand years ago and is the doctrinal mystery of the Incarnation of God. Christmas is the liturgical solemnity which closes the four weeks of Advent, our preparation to receive, once more into the world and the lives of Christians, Emmanuel, “God with us,” and opens for us the twelve days of Christmastide. This is the period from Christmas Eve through the feast of the Epiphany, the manifestation of the Son of God to the gentile world on January 6th.

I like to think of Christmas in terms of three G’s: God, generosity, and gratitude. At the very heart of this feast is God who is Father, the supreme creator of all that is and who has gratuitously bestowed this “all” upon us, his people. We can say that, by definition, his identity is the complete and absolute expression of generosity. This generosity is manifest as a readiness and bounteousness in giving, a freedom from meanness or smallness of mind or character, and an extraordinary expansiveness and completeness of being.

The religious response to this utterly undeserved generosity and unlimited outpouring and giving of God’s very self, is gratitude.

The generosity of God is at the core of the biblical understanding of God’s nature. Everything we know about God, indeed the first thing we learn about God in the initial verses of the Book of Genesis, highlights and illustrates God’s extravagant generosity. The very act of creation itself is proof of that generosity; it is evidence, too, of a God so caring and unique that love erupts from God’s self to create our universe and us within it.

To trust and hope in God’s boundless charity is not only something to look forward to in an age or a time to come, it is a reality that we experience around us all the time. The image of generosity in the messianic banquet where the food is plentiful and the wine runs incessantly should mean to us that God’s generosity envelops us now and that our lives, our world, are owed to a munificent, big-hearted God.

St. John reminds us: “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (3:16). This divine, life-giving, creative gesture and act of filiation joins us to God as sons and daughters through our brother and Lord, Jesus Christ. Such an act can only evoke a sense of belonging, mutuality, and gratitude on our behalf.

May our ritual of gift giving during this Christmas season become a continuation of generosity and gratitude. It will if we act without self-interest and a spirit of altruism in an attempt to express the deepest sentiments and commitments of our hearts and relationship between the person who bestows and the person who accepts a gift. What is at stake is not the cost or the price of the gifts exchanged but the value that is associated with them and expressed by the giver and receiver.

In our busy lives as we rush about seeking just the right gift to place under the tree this Christmas Eve, we might place with it the sentiment that expresses the true meaning of Christmas. We might present our gifts to an all good and loving God, who has showered us with every blessing through his Son, Jesus Christ.

Please join me in my simple Christmas prayer: the only gift I want is to come closer to you, my God, by gratefully reciprocating the generous love I have received from you through your Son, Jesus Christ. No other gift will give me greater joy or peace. You have already blessed me and all your people with all that we need. Please grant this wish of mine. Please, good Jesus, teach me your ways of generosity and love so that I may always have a heart full of gratitude and peace.

Rev. James L. Dugan, S.J.
Associate Pastor
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18th
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Final week of the SVdP Advent Food Drive.
Details on page 5.

Wallace Hall Family Christmas Pageant.
Rehearsal: 9:30 AM. Pageant at Noon.
Details on page 3.

Joyeux Noël!
Annual Christmas Concert.
4:00 PM. Details on page 5.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19th
Reconciliation Monday
Confessions will be heard from
2:00 – 7:00 PM.
Parish Advent Reconciliation Service.
7:30 PM. Details on page 5.

Please note that Confessions will not be heard on Saturday,
December 24th, Christmas Eve. However, anyone who seeks
the Sacrament between December 19th and 24th
may call the Parish House for an appointment.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22nd
Reflections on the Sunday Advent Scriptures. 7:00 PM. Conference Room.
As a preparation for the Feast of Christmas,
Rev. Robert O’Brien, S.J.,
of the Murray-Weigel Jesuit Community
in the Bronx, will be offering reflections
on the Scripture Readings
for the Sundays of Advent.

2011 CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR’S MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve
Saturday, December 24th
5:00 PM Family Mass Fr. SooHoo, Presider
Doors open at 4:15 PM Prelude begins at 4:30 PM
8:00 PM Mass of Christmas Fr. Bergen, Presider
Doors open at 7:30 PM Prelude begins at 7:45 PM
Midnight Mass Fr. Witt, Presider
Doors open at 10:45 PM Prelude begins at 11:15 PM

Christmas Day
Sunday, December 25th
9:00 AM Mass* Fr. Dugan, Presider (*please note the early start time)
11:00 AM Solemn Mass Fr. Nacciarone, Presider
(The Parish House will be closed)

Monday, December 26th
One Mass will be celebrated at 8:30 AM
(The Parish House will be closed)

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
Sunday, January 1st, 2012
Regular Sunday Mass Schedule:
5:30 PM (Saturday)
8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM Solemn, 11:00 AM Wallace Hall Family Mass, 7:30 PM

Monday, January 2nd
One Mass will be celebrated at 8:30 AM
(The Parish House will be closed)

A Gentle Reminder:
The Christmas Masses here in the Parish are unusually crowded, especially
the 5:00 PM Family Mass and the Midnight Mass.
People will be seated as they arrive. In fairness
to all, please do not attempt to save or hold seats
for those who are expected later. The ushers will
not honor such arrangements.

Thank you for your cooperation!

PLEASE OPEN FOR PAGES 3 AND 4
WALLACE HALL
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Sunday, December 18th
immediately following the 11:00 AM Family Mass

We hope that your family will join us.
There is a role for every child who would like to participate in telling the story of our Lord’s birth!

Dress Rehearsal:
Sunday, December 18th at 9:30 AM. Wallace Hall.

Please contact Joanne Cunneen at the Parish House (212-288-3588) with any questions.

THE 2011 ANNUAL COLLECTION

Thank you to those who have contributed to this appeal.
At present, the total stands at $200,781. The Annual Collection is very important to the financial well-being of our Parish.

If you have not yet made a donation, there are several ways to do so:
• by check
• through ParishPay
  (accessible via www.stignatiusloyola.org)
• by credit card
  (please contact Mary Reed, Director of Development, at 646-981-2632)

Thank you!

40s & FABULOUS

SAVE THE DATE!
Sunday, January 15th at 5:30 PM
New Member Meet & Greet

Interested in meeting other parishioners in their 40s for charity work, fellowship, and social events?

A new group is being formed here at St. Ignatius to bridge the gap between the Ignatian Young Adults and the Boomers & Beyond.

An inaugural “meet and greet” is planned for Sunday, January 15th (location to be named later). Please plan to join us as we discuss ways in which to grow this new ministry.

Details to follow...

Give a gift this Christmas that supports our Parish!

Not your average church cookbook, EATS & SWEETS is a professionally-bound collection of appetizer and dessert recipes.
It’s a great resource for holiday party planning, and makes a perfect stocking stuffer, too!

Cookbooks are on sale for $20 in the Parish House every day, and in the Narthex after select Masses.
All proceeds benefit the Ignatian Young Adult ministry.

BOOMERS & BEYOND

Christmas Caroling
Come and spread some holiday cheer with Boomers & Beyond.
Sunday, December 18th
12:45 PM at the Cardinal Cooke Center
1249 Fifth Avenue (between 106th and 107th Streets)
Join Boomers & Beyond for their annual Christmas Caroling event at the Cardinal Cooke Center and the Lott Assisted Living Facility. We will celebrate the holiday afterwards with an informal get-together at a nearby restaurant.

is an inter-parish social and community service organization for Catholics who are over 50.

Shelter Volunteers Urgently Needed!
We are in great need of volunteers to stay overnight with our shelter guests. The shelter runs every other weekend (Friday-Saturday-Sunday) from November through April. We serve 12 women each evening. These women rely on us, and we are relying on you. Please consider whether this is a ministry in which you feel called to participate. It is very rewarding and serves a great need.

For more details, and to volunteer, please contact Chris Halem at chrishalem@yahoo.com or 917-494-7301

ADVENT 2011: In Giving, We Receive
Copies of our Advent Brochure are available in the Narthex, at the Parish House, and online at www.stignatiusloyola.org

Blessings and Joy on this Season!

Boomers & Beyond

Copies of our Advent Brochure are available in the Narthex, at the Parish House, and online at www.stignatiusloyola.org

Blessings and Joy on this Season!

Boomers & Beyond
Announced Masses and Readings for the Week

Monday, December 19th
(4th Monday of Advent)
8:30 MEM Livia Lowinger
12:10 MEM Winifred DiSalvio
5:30 MEM Fay White

Tuesday, December 20th
(4th Tuesday of Advent)
8:30 MEM Myriam S. Bessa
12:10 MEM John Cleaver Kelly
5:30 MEM Richard Merlino

Wednesday, December 21st
(4th Wednesday of Advent)
Song of Solomon 2:8-14 Psalm 33 Luke 1:39-45
8:30 MEM John Figge
12:10 MEM Elizabeth Higgins Sciutto
5:30 MEM Nathan Davidson

Thursday, December 22nd
(4th Thursday of Advent)
1 Samuel 1:24-28 1 Samuel 2 Luke 1:46-56
8:30 MEM Eileen Sullivan
12:10 MEM John Figge
5:30 MEM Living & Deceased Members of the Wallace Family

Friday, December 23rd
(St. John of Kanty)
8:30 MEM Leonardo Santiago Ortiz
12:10 MEM Richard DuFresne
5:30 MEM Austin Camilleri

Saturday, December 24th
(4th Saturday of Advent)
2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 Psalm 89 Luke 1:67-79
8:30 MEM John B., John A., & Elizabeth A. Rooney

Sunday, December 25th
(Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord)

We pray for the faithful departed
John McCooey
Irmia Iturregui
May they rest in the peace of the Risen Lord

Volunteers Needed
For the Ministry of Hospitality at our Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year’s Eve Masses:

Saturday, December 24th
Christmas Eve – 5:00 PM Family Mass
8:00 PM Mass of Christmas Midnight Mass

Sunday, December 25th
Christmas Day – 9:00 AM (please note the early start time) and 11:00 AM

Saturday, December 31st
New Year’s Eve – 5:30 PM

A spirit of welcome and celebration is all that is required.
For more information, contact Adele Gallo, head of the Hospitality Ministry, amdgallo@me.com or 516-528-4660.

Copies of the Christmas and Holiday Mass Schedule, which includes the listing of music being sung at the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses, are available in the Narthex, the Parish House, and at www.stignatiusloyola.org

Advent/Christmas Prayer Booklet
Based on the writings of the late Bishop Kenneth Untener, this booklet offers daily reflections throughout the Advent/Christmas season.
Available at the Parish House while supply lasts. Cost: $1

Finding God in All Things
Finding God in the Workplace
with Vince Buzzeo and Joan McGovern
Sunday, January 8th
6:00 PM in the Parish Lounge.
All young adults are welcome to attend!
To register, email Fr. Soohoo, SJ at soohooa@stignatiusloyola.org

Sunday Socials Winter Schedule
The IYA hosts socials for young adults (ages 21-39) in Wallace Hall from September through June following the Sunday evening 7:30 PM Mass.

Sunday Social Dates:
Jan. 8 Feb. 19 Mar. 4
Jan. 22 Mar. 18

To receive updates on IYA events and other opportunities, please sign up for our email list at http://tinyurl.com/IgnatianYoungAdults and follow us on Facebook at “Ignatian Young Adults (NYC)"

Announced Masses and Readings for the Week
Annual Christmas Concert: 
Joyeux Noël!
Sunday, 
December 18th 
4:00 PM

directed by K. Scott Warren, Robert Reuter, 
Mary Huff and Michael Sheetz

with Nancianne Parrella, organ
Victoria Drake, harp Arthur Fiacco, cello

Celebrate Christmas with a French twist! 
The St. Ignatius Choirs are featured in this delightful 
holiday presentation of French masterpieces for the 
season, including Poulenc’s Quatre motets pour le temps de Noël and the Saint-Saëns Christmas Oratorio.

Only a few tickets remain. They are available in the Parish House or by calling 212-288-2520.

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners,

Over the past several weeks the Parish House has been overflowing with gifts for local food pantries and the Christmas Angel project. It is consoling to see the spirit so alive here at St. Ignatius!

As the calendar year-end approaches, please consider putting the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola on your “gift list” by making a charitable donation to our Annual Collection.

If you are making a gift of securities, contact the Church Treasurer, Fernando Castro, at 212-288-6200 x276 or castrof@stignatiusloyola.org

My thanks and prayers that God will richly bless you as we draw near to the Feast of Christmas.

Rev. George M. Witt, S.J.

Monday, December 19th: 
ADVENT RECONCILIATION MONDAY

All parishes in the Archdiocese of New York will offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Monday, December 19th. Confessions will be heard at St. Ignatius Loyola from 2:00 – 7:00 PM.

This will be followed by our PARISH ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE at 7:30 PM

Many priests will be available for Confession.

Please note that Confessions will not be heard on Saturday, December 24th, Christmas Eve. However, anyone who seeks the Sacrament between December 19th and 24th may call the Parish House for an appointment.

SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
ADVENT FOOD DRIVE

Throughout Advent, SVdP has been accepting donations of food for the Pantry at the Church of St. Gregory the Great. Please bring items to the Parish House. Thank you!

Week 4 (Dec. 18th – 23rd): Dole/DelMonte individual fruit cups

Please support the Advent and Christmas Liturgical Music Fund

This fund supports the liturgical music program throughout the year – our musicians, staff, music, robes, and maintenance of instruments. Contribution forms are available in the Narthex and Parish House.

Thank you for your generous support of our music ministry!
SAVE THE DATE!

LAY MINISTERS’ ENRICHMENT

Living Our Vocations: God’s Will, Our Desires
Saturday, January 28th
9:30 AM – 3:00 PM
Wallace Hall
Rev. James Hederman, S.J.
Vocation Promoter for the New England, New York, and Maryland Jesuit Provinces

All Lay Ministers at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola are invited to attend this program.

Details to follow...

Music Information: (212) 288-2520  Email: music@stignatiusloyola.org

PARISH STAFF

Pastor
Rev. George M. Witt, S.J.

Pastoral Associates
Joanne Cunneen
Kathryn King, F.S.P.

Associate Pastors
Rev. William J. Bergen, S.J.
Rev. James L. Dugan, S.J.
Rev. Ugo R. Nacciarone, S.J.

Assisting Priests (Sunday)
Rev. Philip G. Judge, S.J.
Rev. James Martin, S.J.
Rev. Anthony P. SooHoo, S.J.

Music Ministries
Scott Warren, Interim Director
Nancianne Parrella
Robert Reuter
Mary Huff
Michael Sheetz
Philip Anderson
Sara Murphy, Administrator

Staff information: on the website at music/music staff

Director of Development
Mary Reed

Assistant to the Pastor
Diane M. Boyle

Administrative Assistant
Patricia Schneider

Director of Facilities/Events Coordinator
Czeslaw “Chester” Ciupinski

Treasurer
Fernando Castro

Weekday Masses Monday–Friday
8:30 AM, 12:10 PM and 5:30 PM
Saturday: 8:30 AM

Masses for Next Weekend:
Saturday  5:00 PM  Fr. SooHoo
8:00 PM  Fr. Bergen
Midnight Mass  Fr. Witt
Sunday:  9:00 AM*  Fr. Dugan
(*pls. note early start time)
Solemn  11:00 AM  Fr. Ugo

Religious Education for Children
Joanne Cunneen, M.A., M.S.
Director
(212) 861-4764

St. Ignatius Loyola Grammar School
Ms. Mary Larkin, M.S. Ed.
Principal
48 East 84th Street
New York, NY 10028
(212) 861-3820 Fax: (212) 879-8248

St. Ignatius Loyola Day Nursery
Ms. Theodora Crist, M.S.
Executive Director
240 East 84th Street
New York, NY 10028
(212) 734-6427 Fax: (212) 734-6972

Children’s Liturgy of the Word:
Sundays at the 9:30 AM Mass and the 11:00 AM Mass in Wallace Hall.

Eucharistic Adoration:
First Saturdays at 9:00 AM in the Lady Chapel.

Centering Prayer:
Mondays and Thursdays at 6:30 PM

Confessions:
5:00 PM Saturday or by appointment. Communal Penance Services are celebrated during Advent and Lent. Please see page 5 for details.

Baptisms:
Please call Joanne Cunneen at the Parish House to arrange for a Baptism and the preparation given prior to Baptism.

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults:
Contact Maureen Fullam, M.A., Director, at the Parish House.

Marriages:
The Bride or Groom should call Joanne Cunneen at the Parish House to begin preparation for Marriage, normally one year in advance.

Visits to the Sick:
Please contact the Parish House between 9:00 AM-9:00 PM.

Catholicism 101: The Book of Revelation.
An 8-week course beginning Wednesday, January 18th. Join us as we seek to understand the message of the prophet John in his own time and the enduring message of the book for Christians today. Course fee: $25. Sponsored by the Adult Education Center at the Church of St. Francis of Assisi, 135 West 31st Street. For more information, or to register, call 212-736-8500 or visit www.stfrancisnyc.org/courses

HandCrafting Justice, a project of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, provides access to Fair Trade markets that empower enterprising women in the developing world to lift themselves out of poverty through the creation of unique handmade goods. As you think of buying gifts for your loved ones this Christmas, please consider a high quality fair trade gift which will help support women around the world.

Visit www.handcraftingjustice.org

Weekday Masses Monday–Friday
8:30 AM, 12:10 PM and 5:30 PM
Saturday: 8:30 AM

Masses for Next Weekend:
Saturday  5:00 PM  Fr. SooHoo
8:00 PM  Fr. Bergen
Midnight Mass  Fr. Witt
Sunday:  9:00 AM*  Fr. Dugan
(*pls. note early start time)
Solemn  11:00 AM  Fr. Ugo

Music Information: (212) 288-2520  Email: music@stignatiusloyola.org