Gaudete! The Fragility of Life

In recent weeks many friends have confided in me that they no longer watch the 11 o’clock news on television. They tune in for the weather only; the news will disturb their sleep. As we await and prepare for the coming of the Prince of Peace, we may well experience some cognitive dissonance, some spiritual schizophrenia.

Last Sunday a large group of our neighbors gathered on Park Avenue for the annual tree lighting and carols at the Brick Church. “God rest ye merry gentlemen,” we sang, and the atmosphere was joyous and familial. I was grateful that we also prayed for our city and our country, as did the next day on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, patronal feast of the United States. As we sang and prayed, an ambulance broke through with its wailing reminder that life is fragile—the Sound of Sirens (with apologies to Simon & Garfunkel). As we pass the winter solstice it can be a comfort to reflect on the homeless child who offers us all a home.

That wise man Andy Griffith said, “You know when you’re young you think you will always be. As you become more fragile you reflect on how much comfort can come from the past. Hymns can carry you into the future.”

On the First Sunday of Advent, the parish director of music ministries K. Scott Warren previewed the rich and varied December music programs. He wrote, “(music)...is a quiet, restful way to open our hearts to the graces and gifts that will sustain us through the hectic holiday season.” Last week parishioner Ashley Grier, member of Canticum Sacrum, shared with us her faith journey, and she invited us to “take comfort in knowing that God is very much present in our lives. Let us be present, and be willing to recognize God’s revelation.”

Gaudete! The Latin experts in the Jesuit community tell me it is second person plural imperative: “Rejoice!” Singing is a great way to rejoice, and we do that so well here at St. Ignatius Loyola! We can also rejoice that our voices are fragile, our lives are fragile, and our faith is a precious fragile thing. We wait for the Christ Child, fragile but safe in his mother’s arms, Mary and Joseph, homeless and fleeing, the shepherds working through the night, the magi searching. G.K. Chesterton captures the scene:

A Child in a foul stable,  
Where the beasts feed and foam;  
Only where He was homeless  
Are you and I at home;  
We have hands that fashion and  
heads that know,  
But our hearts we lost - how long ago!  
In a place no chart nor ship can show  
Under the sky’s dome.  
(The House of Christmas)

The 11 o’clock news disturbs our sleep, and the sirens of the city toll every 15 minutes, reminding us that time is passing and life is fragile. Scott wrote “From Contemplation to Exaltation,” Ashley wrote “Wide Open Doors.” And that quintessential wise man Confucius says, “Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.”

One thing that keeps me a man of faith (there are others, to be sure) is my love of paradox. A grain of wheat must die if it is to bring life; when I am weak then I am strong; the first shall be last. Where God is homeless we are all at home, a mighty fortress with open doors and shattered windows. Life is strong and fragile, sweet and bitter, all at the same time. Freedom is fragile, relationships are complicated.

Each of us can fill in the blanks. Are we homeless at home? Are we willful or willing? At this season the highs can be very high and the lows very low. May the Child provide us with a new horizon of peace, and assure us that we are not alone.

— Rev. Michael P. Hilbert, S.J.  
Associate Pastor
THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14th
Third Sunday of Advent

SVDP Annual Toy Drive ends tomorrow. Details on page 5.

SVDP Advent Food Drive continues through December 21st. Details on page 5.

This Weekend: Special Collection
The annual collection for the retired women and men religious of the New York Archdiocese will be taken this weekend.

Proceeds will help to defray the cost of providing care for those who have given their lives in the service of the Church.

Thank you for your generosity.

THIS WEEKEND: PRE-NATAL BLESSING
A special Pre-Natal Blessing will be offered to expectant families at all Masses this weekend. As we draw near to the celebration of the birth of the Christ Child, we encourage those families about to experience the miracle of birth or adoption to join us for this special blessing.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14th
Sacred Music in a Sacred Space presents Heavenly Light — Annual Christmas Concert. 3:00 PM. Church. Details on page 3.

Sunday Social. 8:30 PM. Wallace Hall. Hosted by the Ignatian Young Adults. Follows the 7:30 PM Mass. Details on page 3.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15th
Reconciliation Monday
Parishes throughout the Archdiocese of New York will be offering the Sacrament of Confession.

Confessions will be heard from 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM.

This will be followed by our Parish Advent Reconciliation Service at 7:00 PM

Many priests will be available for Confession.

Private Prayer & Reflection
Weekday Evenings:
December 15th-19th (Except Wed., December 17th)

The Lady Chapel will be open from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM as an opportunity to spend time in private prayer and reflection.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15th
Ranger Rosary Ministry. 7:00 PM. Meeting Room. Join us in making rosaries to send to our military. New members are welcome!

Ignatian Young Adults Knitting Group. 7:00 PM. Conference Room.
Details on page 3.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16th
Society of St. Vincent de Paul Meeting. 7:00 PM. Conference Room.
All are welcome.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17th
Daily Masses at 8:30 AM, 12:10 PM, and 5:30 PM: Time for Reflection
The Daily Mass on the Wednesdays of Advent will offer a few moments to reflect quietly upon the readings of the day (in lieu of a homily).

Job Transition Support Group. 10:00 AM. Parish Lounge. Details on page 3.

Sacred Music in a Sacred Space presents Heavenly Light — Annual Christmas Concert. 7:00 PM. Church. Details on page 3.

FRIDAY – SUNDAY
DECEMBER 19th – DECEMBER 21st
Shelter Weekend. Wallace Hall.
To inquire about volunteering, email svdp.shelter980@gmail.com

ADVENT
Available at the Parish House
Light for the World: Advent Reflections
Adapted from the writings of Fr. Ronald Rohlheiser. Cost: $1

Daily Reflections for Advent & Christmas
By Bishop Robert Morneau of Green Bay, WI. Cost: $2

Advent/Christmas Prayer Booklet
Based on the writings of the late Bishop Kenneth Untener. Cost: $1
IGNATIAN YOUNG ADULTS

Sunday Socials Fall/Winter Schedule
The Sunday Socials are held in Wallace Hall at 8:30 PM, following the 7:30 PM Mass. They are hosted by the Ignatian Young Adults. All young adults (ages 21–39) are welcome. To receive updates on IYA events and other opportunities, you can follow us on Facebook at “Ignatian Young Adults (NYC).”

IYA Knitting Group
All IYAs are welcome to join us as we craft for charity. If you have questions or would like to be placed on the mailing list, contact Amy at IYAknitting@gmail.com

December at Sacred Music in a Sacred Space
Heavenly Light: Annual Christmas Concerts
Sunday, December 14th at 3:00 PM & Wednesday, December 17th at 7:00 PM
Choir and Orchestra of St. Ignatius Loyola, Parish Community Choir, and Children’s Choirs
Nancianne Parrella, organ
K. Scott Warren, conductor
Centering on excerpts from J.S. Bach’s Christmas Oratorio, our ever-popular Christmas concerts will offer you and your family the inspiring warmth and joy of the season. Includes well-known carols for all to sing.
Tickets are available online at www.smssconcerts.org or by calling 212-288-2520 for 24/7 ordering.

IYA Advent Reflection Group
Sundays:
December 14th & 21st
6:00 PM in the Parish House
The Ignatian Young Adults (ages 21-39) are sponsoring a sharing group during Advent. We are exploring the spirituality of the season using Sacred Space for the Advent and Christmas Season 2014-2015 as a starting point for reflection.
During each meeting, facilitated by a young adult peer leader, we have an opportunity to reflect more deeply on the daily readings for the season of Advent.
Email ignatianyoungadults@gmail.com to RSVP.
The book is available for purchase on Amazon.com

SECKERS’ RETREAT
FOR YOUNG ADULTS
January 30th – February 1st
Friday Evening – Sunday Afternoon
Mariandale Retreat Center, Ossining, NY
For young adults in their 20s and 30s
Join other young adults as they learn how their Catholic faith impacts their lives through Ignatian spirituality. Take time to reflect on your journey and God’s hopes and dreams for you.
Cost: $250/$225 (before December 15th)/person; financial assistance available.
For more information, visit charis.nyc, email CharisRetreatNYC@gmail.com, or call 347-619-2692.

MUSIC
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21ST
4th Sunday of Advent
11:00 AM SOLEMN MASS
Brahms Es ist ein Ros’ entsprungen*
Demessieux Rorate coeli*
Missa cum jubilo Kyrie and Sanctus
Parsons Ave Maria
Britten Hymn to the Virgin
*also at 7:30 PM Mass
7:30 PM MASS
Ellis There is no rose

Job Transition Support Group
Wednesday, December 17th
10:00 AM in the Parish Lounge
Bringing together a group of experienced professionals looking to secure employment, we hope to help one another in the job search process. Please bring your resume.
For more information, contact John Holewa at jfholewa@gmail.com or Christian Nolan at ctnolan59@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE!
LAY MINISTERS’ ENRICHMENT PROGRAM
Saturday, January 31st
Presenter: K. Scott Warren, Director of Music Ministries
All Lay Ministers at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola are invited to attend.
Details to follow...
ATTENTION LECTORS:
Copies of the new Workbook for Lectors, Year B, 2015, are available for $10 at the Parish House reception desk.

WALLACE HALL
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT
Sunday, December 21st
Immediately following the 11:00 AM Family Mass
We hope that your family will join us in this celebration of our Lord’s birth.
We would be grateful for help from parents in organizing rehearsals, costumes, and props.
Please contact Mary Jo Ward at 917-846-5502 or mjward@med.cornell.edu with any questions or to volunteer.

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.

Gifts of $100 or more that are received by Saturday, December 13th, will be listed in the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day worship aids. Contributions of $500 or more will be featured in a separate section.

To donate, visit https://donate.stignatiusloyola.org/liturgicalmusic

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) makes a difference in the lives of people in need through service and prayerful reflection. Relying on their experience, IVC volunteers are older adults who serve in community agencies and schools as tutors, counselors, legal advisors, business consultants, nurses and teachers. They are men and women for others who seek to develop and enrich their own spiritual lives through individual and communal reflection in the tradition of St. Ignatius Loyola.

For more information about IVC, visit IVCUSA.org or contact Mary Ellen O’Driscoll, Metro New York Area Director, at 917-609-8163.

Announced Masses and Readings for the Week

Monday, December 15th
(Third Monday of Advent)
8:30 MEM William & Ann Reilly
12:10 MEM Jack O’Leary
5:30 MEM Lawrence B. Healy

Tuesday, December 16th
(Third Tuesday of Advent)
Zephaniah 3:1–2, 9–13 Psalm 34 Matthew 21:28–32
8:30 MEM Jane Flannigan
12:10 MEM John Carty
5:30 MEM Nancy McGuire

Wednesday, December 17th
(Third Wednesday of Advent)
Genesis 49:2, 8–10 Psalm 72 Matthew 1:1–17
8:30 MEM John J. Barry
12:10 MEM Marie Joyce
5:30 LVG The Coffey Family

Thursday, December 18th
(Third Thursday of Advent)
Jeremiah 23:5–8 Psalm 72 Matthew 1:18–25
8:30 MEM William R. Holmes, Jr. & Cynthia A. Scalley
12:10 MEM Sean Lydon
5:30 MEM Living & Deceased Members of the Wallace Family

Friday, December 19th
(Third Friday of Advent)
8:30 MEM Raymond Petrocelli
12:10 MEM Louis Zabreta
5:30 MEM Nathan Davidson

Saturday, December 20th
(Third Saturday of Advent)
8:30 MEM Noreen Farrell

Sunday, December 21st
(Fourth Sunday of Advent)
2 Samuel 7:1–5, 8b–12, 14a, 16 Psalm 89

PRAYER RESOURCES
Pray as You Go
http://www.pray-as-you-go.org

Pray as You Go is a daily prayer session designed for use on your iPod or other portable MP3 player.

3-Minute Retreats
http://www.loyolapress.com/3-minute-retreats-daily-online-prayer.htm

Take a short prayer break right at your computer. Spend some time reflecting on a Scripture passage.
Have you made your donation to the Annual Appeal?

Thank you to those who have already responded to the Annual Appeal, which is now underway. In order to fund the current level of service and programming, we rely heavily on this annual collection.

If you have not yet made a donation, you can do so by visiting the Annual Appeal page on the St. Ignatius website by scanning the QR code at left.

To electronically access the Annual Report for Fiscal year 2014 and a letter from Father Witt about the Annual Appeal, visit our website at www.saintignatiusloyola.org. Copies are also available at the Parish House.

Thank you for your continued generosity!

4th ANNUAL PARISH CHRISTMAS COOKIE EXCHANGE

Hosted by the Ignatian Young Adults at the IYA Sunday Social

TODAY at 8:30 PM in Wallace Hall

All parishioners are welcome.

Bring your homemade cookies to swap with others!

To participate:

BAKE your favorite Christmas cookies. (If you’re not a baker but would still like to participate in the exchange, treats from a bakery are fine, too!)

We recommend bringing 2 dozen cookies (24), but any amount is fine as long as you take that many home!

BRING your treats to Wallace Hall on Sunday, December 15th, before or after the 7:30 PM Mass. Please bring your treats in a container you can reuse for carrying your new cookies home.

EXCHANGE your cookies.

All are welcome to stay for our Christmas Social, also in Wallace Hall!

If you are interested in donating baked goods for the Christmas Social or have any questions about the event, please contact Ann at Ann.wirry@gmail.com

SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

ANNUAL TOY DRIVE

Ends Tomorrow!

SVdP is sponsoring a toy drive to benefit the children of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish on Staten Island. Please bring new, unwrapped toys or games for boys and girls between the ages of 6–12 to the Parish House.

Thank you for your generosity!

ADVENT FOOD DRIVE

Final Week!

Benefitting the Community Food Pantry at the Church of St. Gregory the Great.

Throughout the first three weeks of Advent, SVdP is accepting donations of food for the Community Food Pantry at the Church of St. Gregory the Great.

Please bring donations to the Parish House through Sunday, December 21st.

Thank you for remembering those in need this holiday season.

HOSPITALITY MINISTRY

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Wednesday, December 24th

Christmas Eve

• 4:00 PM Family Mass I • 6:00 PM Family Mass II
• 8:00 PM Mass of Christmas • Midnight Mass

Thursday, December 25th

Christmas Day • 9:30 AM and 11:00 AM

If you are available, please email liturgicalministers@stignatiusloyola.org to let us know at which Mass you can assist.

A sign-up table will also be in the Narthex before and after all Masses today and Sunday, December 21st.

Decorate Your Christmas Tree and Support the Family Ministry!

This weekend, Christmas ornaments featuring an image of the church will be on sale in the Narthex after the 5:30 PM Mass on Saturday and after the 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM, and 7:30 PM Masses on Sunday. Ornaments can also be purchased in Wallace Hall following the 11:00 AM Mass. Cost: $25
Tutors Needed: Academic Support Program.
Sponsored by ComUnidad Juan Diego, the Marist Brothers, and the Archdiocese of New York. Every Wednesday and Thursday, 4:30 PM–6:00 PM. Our Lady Queen of Angels School, 229 East 112th Street. The program, primarily serving the Latino community in East Harlem, focuses on providing children with life and study skills as well as academic tutoring. For more information, contact Br. John Klein, F.M.S. by email at jklein47@gmail.com or by phone/text at 201-320-4782.

New York Encounter: Identity: In Search of the Human Face. Friday, January 16th – Sunday, January 18th, 2015. Metropolitan Pavilion, 125 West 18th Street. A three-day cultural festival centered around presentations, artistic performances, conferences, exhibits, and information booths introducing a variety of charitable, cultural, and work-related initiatives. Featuring opening remarks by Cardinal Dolan. All events are free and open to the public. For more information, visit newyorkencounter.org or call (347) 713-5146.

More than 10,000 New Yorkers are currently waiting for a life-saving transplant… in other words, they are waiting for a chance to live.

New York ranks 49th out of 50 states with regard to the percentage of residents registered as organ donors. New York ranks 3rd in the country in people waiting for organ donations, yet only 23% of New Yorkers are registered organ donors. The Roman Catholic Church has long supported organ and tissue donation. In this context, donation is seen as an opportunity for individuals to foster a culture that values life.

Learn more about becoming a donor by visiting the New York Organ Donor website: http://www.donatelifeny.org/
Copies of the brochure Organ and Tissue Donation: A Catholic Perspective are available in the Narthex and at the Parish House.

Weekday Masses
Monday – Friday
8:30 AM, 12:10 PM, and 5:30 PM
Saturday: 8:30 AM
Masses for Next Weekend:
Saturday Vigil: 5:30 PM Fr. Feely
Sunday: 8:00 AM Fr. Bergen
9:30 AM Fr. Witt
Wallace Hall 11:00 AM Fr. Judge
Solemn 11:00 AM Fr. Feely
7:30 PM Fr. Feely

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