



December 21, 2025 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

The Gift of Hope

Perhaps you can recall the endearing short story about the exchange of Christmas gifts between James and Della Dillingham Young. Newly married and young, they had little money between them, but it was important for them to honor their love through an exchange of gifts on Christmas Day. They wanted to keep their gifts secret until they presented them to each other. Della had the grand sum of \$1.87 to buy a gift for James, and James not much more than that to buy a gift for Della.

When they exchanged their gifts on Christmas morning, it was neither the expensive set of finely decorated combs for Della's knee-length brown hair nor the shining platinum fob chain for James's gold pocket watch that captured their hearts and filled them with happiness. Rather, it was what they did to pay for these gifts that showed the depth of their love for each other. That is what they cherished more than anything else. That is what gave them a true understanding of Christmas

I presume by now that with these few sentences you recognize the short story, *The Gift of the Magi*, written in 1905 by American author O. Henry, and will remember what James and Della did to be able to buy their gifts. If not, treat yourself and read it during the Christmas holiday. It is a story of the depth of love that James and Della experienced through personal sacrifice. In exchanging their gifts that Christmas morning, hope for a bright and happy future together was born as they reveled in the love that they had for each other, a love that they knew would endure no matter what their financial circumstances. Nothing had more value for them than that.

Why focus on sacrifice as we prepare for a day that is intended to be celebrated with joy and festive gatherings? Can't such a consideration wait until a time when we are in the throes of anxiety and despair or have surrendered ourselves to a feeling of hopelessness? After all, most of us have more than \$1.87 to our names and can afford to buy admirable Christmas gifts and feast on foods prepared from treasured family recipes. By God's grace, all of this will be done without great personal sacrifice. While this may be true for the vast majority of us, it is certainly not true for everyone.

As a parish, we are very generous at this time of the year and help those in need with food, clothing, and toys. Such good deeds are noteworthy and virtuous. They are done without any expectation of a word of gratitude or personal recognition. To do what is right is always its own reward. However, when we give generously to those less fortunate, do we recognize and honor the personal sacrifices of those who choose to accept and receive what we offer to them? Out of love for their families or concern for their own welfare, many will have sacrificed their pride, their sense of self-worth, or their dignity. If we can acknowledge their sacrifices, we will then be challenged to sacrifice our pre-conceived notions of the poor. Hope will spring forth from the abyss of ignorance, fear, and judgment when, like James and Della, we understand the true meaning of Christmas. And so, what is that meaning?

More than two thousand years ago, a young woman sacrificed her will out of love for God. Her betrothed sacrificed his reputation out of love for the one he was to marry. Parents-to-be sacrificed their dignity and accepted shelter in a stable so their child would be born in safety. And ultimately, their son sacrificed his life out of love for all God's creation that we might know the depth of God's love for us. In the midst of surrender to the will of God and confounded by confusion, fear, anxiety, and hardship, hope was born in Bethlehem, and the meaning of love was found in sacrifice.

For James and Della, the spark of hope for a brighter future together was kindled into a roaring fire as they exchanged gifts on Christmas morning. May we be blessed with the gift of hope in every expression of love we experience on Christmas Day.

— Rev. Dennis J. Yesalonia, S.J.
Pastor

Parish Mission Statement

*The love of Christ impels us to welcome all,
to worship joyfully and pray fervently,
to walk together with those in need, and
to reverence God in the wonder of Creation.*

This Week at a Glance

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21st

Bambinelli Sunday.
11 AM. Wallace Hall.

Annual Christmas Concert: Gloria!
3 PM. Church.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23rd

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.
6 PM. Church.

Emmanuel Has Come:
Matthew's Gospel for Advent.
7 PM. Parish House & Zoom.
Details on page 3.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24th &

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25th

To view our complete Christmas Mass schedule,
see details at right.

For Families with Young Children

For the safety of your child, please accompany
them to the bathroom if there is a need
during the course of the Mass.

They must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul welcomes all St. Ignatius parishioners to volunteer with us—and join us at our meetings for prayer, reflection, spiritual growth, fellowship, and community service year-round.

Our regular meetings take place every other Wednesday at 7 PM in the Parish House. Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 7th. All are welcome!

For more information, please contact us at
svdpmembership980@gmail.com.

Low-Gluten Hosts

For parishioners wishing to receive a low-gluten host at the distribution of Holy Communion, please speak with a Hospitality Minister.



May the joy that accompanies the birth of the Prince of Peace reside in your hearts during this Christmas season and throughout the New Year.

Merry Christmas

Dennis J. Yesalonia, S.J.
Pastor
Church of St. Ignatius Loyola

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Mass Schedule

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

CHRISTMAS EVE

4 PM

Family Mass

(Omega Dance/Children's Choirs/Wallace Hall Choir)

6 PM

(Parish Community Choir)

8 PM

Vigil Mass

(Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola)

Midnight Mass (livestreamed)

(Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

CHRISTMAS DAY

10 AM (livestreamed)

(Organ/Cantor)

Noon

Solemn Mass

(Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola)

Guided Church Tour

Sunday, December 28th at 12:30 PM
Church (Meeting Point: Narthex)

The Church of St. Ignatius Loyola is a vibrant parish community whose foundation rests on the faith life and commitment of all who worship here.

We invite you to explore and learn more about our beautiful church through our monthly tours.

To register, visit ignatius.nyc/guidedtour/.

The Spiritual Exercises as a School for Cultivating a Sacramental Imagination

Saturday, February 14th in Wallace Hall
8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

PRESENTER: FR. KEVIN O'BRIEN, S.J.

Fr. Kevin O'Brien, S.J., author of the bestselling books *The Ignatian Adventure* and *Seeing with the Heart*, will explore how Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises can help us "find God in all things" through the development of a sacramental imagination. He will suggest how such an approach to living, loving, and serving impacts our understanding of the church and our ministry. This morning of reflection will offer times for personal prayer and common sharing.

To register, visit tinyurl.com/LMEWinter2026.

St. Ignatius Has an App!

It has never been easier to find current information on parish programming, participate in online giving, learn about our ministries, and more.



To download our app, scan the QR code.

IRA Charitable Rollover (Qualified Charitable Distribution)

If you are age 70½ or older and have an IRA, you may make a tax-free Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) directly from your IRA to the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola. In 2025, individuals may contribute up to \$108,000, or \$108,000 per qualifying spouse if married, without including the distribution in taxable income.

A QCD can be a meaningful way to support the mission of the Church while also offering potential tax advantages.

We encourage parishioners to consult with their IRA administrator or tax advisor to determine the best option for their personal financial situation. You may also contact our Treasurer, Fernando Castro, for general questions.

Emmanuel Has Come: Matthew's Gospel for Advent

Tuesdays, through December 23rd
7 PM

Parish House & Zoom

Matthew's Gospel enjoyed preeminence among our ancestors in faith and has inspired every generation of Christians. His story of Jesus begins with a perplexing genealogy, then journeys through some of the most memorable stories in scripture—the Magi, the Sermon on the Mount, engrossing parables, captivating miracles, a distinctive Passion story, and the Great Commission.

This 4-session course will serve as a general introduction to this beloved text. Brian B. Pinter, Pastoral Associate, will lead the discussion.

RSVP to pinterb@nycignatius.org.

Epiphany Retreat Day

Saturday, January 3rd
9 AM to 3 PM
Wallace Hall

In anticipation of the Feast of the Epiphany on Sunday, join us for a few hours of prayerful reflection and contemplation as we consider the days between the birth of Christ and Christ's manifestation to the whole world, which we commemorate through the visit of the Magi to the Holy Family.

Hosted by the Father William J. Bergen, S.J., Office of Ignatian Spirituality & Faith Formation

For more information, please contact Roxanne De La Torre, Pastoral Associate, at delatorrer@nycignatius.org.



To register, visit forms.cloud.microsoft/r/pYnUYPLsMz or scan the QR code at left.

Giving via Zelle

We are pleased to announce that parishioners can now make donations to the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola conveniently through Zelle. If you use online or mobile banking, you can send your contribution directly from your bank account with no fees.

To give via Zelle, simply use the following email: church@nycignatius.org. In the memo line, please specify the fund or intention you would like your gift applied to.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support of our parish. Your contributions make a meaningful difference in sustaining our ministries and mission.

CHURCH OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA

980 Park Avenue at 84th Street • New York, New York 10028

(212) 288-3588 • Fax: (212) 734-3671 • ignatius.nyc

PARISH STAFF

Pastor

Rev. Dennis J. Yesalonia, S.J.

Associate Pastors

Rev. Mark C. Hallinan, S.J.

Rev. Michael P. Hilbert, S.J.

Assisting Priest

Rev. James Martin, S.J.

Pastoral Year Priest

Rev. Jonathan P. Pennacchia, S.J.

In Residence

Rev. James A. Casciotti, S.J.

Pastoral Associates

Roxanne De La Torre

Kate Noonan

Brian Pinter

Jean Santopatre

Pastoral Assistant

Maureen Haley

Music Ministries

Jen Arvay Kefalas

Robert Reuter

Daniel Beckwith

Michael Sheetz

Christina Kay

Elizabeth Van Os

Douglas Purcell

Scott Warren, *Director*

Assistant to the Pastor

Rebecca Brucas

Director of Communications

Elizabeth O'Sullivan

Director of Facilities

Robert Cisternino

Facilities Coordinator

Pattie Hughes

Parish Administrative Assistant

Caitlin Caruso

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 Vigil

5:30 PM Fr. Hallinan

Sunday:

8:00 AM Fr. Yesalonia

9:30 AM Fr. Pennacchia

Wallace Hall

11:00 AM Fr. Hilbert

Solemn

11:00 AM Fr. Nolan

7:30 PM Fr. Nolan

Religious Education for Children

Ms. Kate Noonan, Director

(212) 288-3588 x609

noonank@nycignatius.org

Saint Ignatius Loyola School

Upper Campus

(First Grade through Eighth Grade)

Ms. Mary Larkin, Head of School

M.S. Ed. (Admin.), M.S. Ed. (Literacy)

48 East 84th Street

(212) 861-3820 | Fax: (212) 879-8248

Lower Campus

(PreK-3 through Kindergarten)

Ms. Mary Larkin, Head of School

240 East 84th Street

(212) 734-6427 | Fax: (212) 734-6972

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Sundays at the 9:30 AM Mass.

Confessions

4:30 PM Saturday, 6:30 PM Sunday,

or by appointment.

Baptisms

Please contact Maureen Haley at

baptisms@nycignatius.org

to arrange for a Baptism and

the preparation given prior to Baptism.

Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

Contact Maureen Fullam, M.A.,

Director, at the Parish House.

Marriages

The Bride or Groom should contact

Maureen Haley at

weddings@nycignatius.org

to begin preparation for Marriage,

normally one year in advance.

Visits to the Sick

Please contact the Parish House

between the hours of

9:00 AM and 9:00 PM.

Ignatian Young Adults (IYA)

For more information about our IYA

ministry, email Jean Santopatre at

santopatrej@nycignatius.org.

Announced Masses and Readings for the Week

Monday, December 22nd

(Fourth Monday of Advent)

1 Samuel 1:24–28 1 Samuel 2

Luke 1:46–56

8:30 MEM Janet Green

12:10 MEM Toni Brown

5:30 MEM Nathan Davidson

Tuesday, December 23rd

(Fourth Tuesday of Advent)

Malachi 3:1–4, 23–24 Psalm 25

Luke 1:57–66

8:30 MEM Peter J. Burke

12:10 MEM Sose & Mark

Prekelezaj

5:30 MEM Jeanne Stratford

Wednesday, December 24th

(Fourth Wednesday of Advent)

2 Samuel 7:1–5, 8b–12, 14a, 16

Psalm 89 Luke 1:67–79

8:30 MEM Robert L. Cahill

Thursday, December 25th

(Nativity of the Lord)

Isaiah 9:1–6 Psalm 96

Titus 2:11–14 Luke 2:1–14

Friday, December 26th

(St. Stephen)

Acts 6:8–10; 7:54–59 Psalm 31

Matthew 10:17–22

8:30 MEM Nancy Janice Hoerner

Saturday, December 27th

(St. John)

1 John 1:1–4 Psalm 97

John 20:1a, 2–8

8:30 MEM Harold Berry

Sunday, December 28th

(Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph)

Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14 Psalm 128

Colossians 3:12–21

Matthew 2:13–15, 19–23