



December 17, 2023 | Third Sunday of Advent

Matter Matters! Celebrating the Centenary of Greccio

The global and social darkness of this Advent urges us to understand God's relationship to creation, both the universe and the world we inhabit. God is not "outside" the whole order of creation. Rather, God dwells in the depths of creation, in our being and becoming. Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., considered matter and consciousness as two aspects of the "stuff" of creation. As this whole enterprise moves forward, Love or God is the unifying influence of existence. Such Love, 'Incarnating' within matter, consciousness, history, and personhood in its fulness, is the goal of creation's becoming. God rises up by means of the energies of Love, bringing a divine presence to the wondrous exchange of the divine/human in the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and in us.



Eight hundred years ago, at Christmas of 1223, St. Francis of Assisi went to Greccio, a tiny village in Rieti, Italy, to celebrate God's extravagant gift of Love in the birth of Jesus Christ. His vision of a 'New Bethlehem' gave rise to the Christmas Creche tradition. Francis shifted the perspective from "we go to the crib" to "in Christ, the Incarnate God, comes to us." A manger filled with straw, an ox, and an ass, was placed under an altar on the mountainside. There were no figures of parents, sheep, angels, or wise men! Not even a babe in the feeding trough! His desire was to enact the memory of Christ's birth out in the open, in an out-of-the-way place, with Jesus Christ as the center-point of human history. Hundreds of villagers from far and near, carrying lighted lanterns,

arrived, ecstatic with joy. The forest amplified their songs of jubilation!

For Francis, celebrating the Eucharist over the feeding trough stressed the significance of memory, "ensuring that we don't forget." (1 Celano). In his heart, the supreme "memorial" of the Eucharist continues Incarnation—the Body and Blood of the living Christ feeds us today. The Nativity of Greccio opens us to the 'coming near' of God. The Spiritual Senses of Joy, Beauty, Awe, Wonder, Love, Gratitude, and Peace engage with the physical senses of Sight, Hearing, Taste, Touch, and Smell. One's whole being can be absorbed into the intoxication of such extravagant Love. The powerful Love of the Infant draws everyone present, beyond Himself, into communion with God and with one another.

What does this mean for our world today? In retrospect, the Greccio gift appears to be an extravagant, amazing communal experience of nature mysticism. Michael Blastic, OFM, posits that the event may be termed a "Cosmic Liturgical Dialog." The dynamism of the living Word made flesh draws Creation, Incarnation, Eucharist, and Humanity into a communion of opposites, becoming the reconciliation referred to by the gospel message 'Peace on Earth Good Will to All.' Humans and creation harmonized in the echoes of the song across the forested valley. In medieval art, the Ox represented the Jewish tradition and the Ass, the 'Pagan' tradition, *i.e.*, Muslims and non-believers. Both were depicted as feeding from the trough of the Babe at Greccio! Not much is known about the content of the homily preached by St. Francis during that Christmas Liturgy, except that it proclaimed Peace! Francis was adamant that the celebration witnessed simplicity, poverty (non-appropriation), and humility (respect and reverence). All are welcome! This New Bethlehem offers mutual Love without cost, distinction, or strings attached. Extravagant inclusion in communion is a hallmark of the Incarnation. 'Fratelli Tutti'!

— Sr. Kathryn King FSP

This Week at a Glance

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17th

Bambinelli Sunday.

Following the 11 AM Masses. Wallace Hall.

Details below.

Annual Christmas Concert: Holy Light.

3 PM. Church.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18th

Advent Day of Reconciliation.

3 PM to 5 PM and 6 PM to 8 PM. Church. *Details below.*

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19th

**Scripture Class | Praying With the
Men and Women of Advent.**

7 PM. Parish House & Zoom.

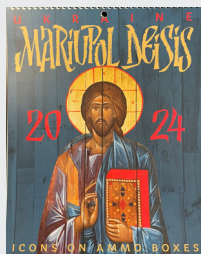
To register, email brianbpinter@protonmail.com.

Tuesday Night Book Group:

The Surprising Rebirth of Belief in God.

7 PM. Zoom.

*To receive the Zoom link, RSVP with the subject line
"Rebirth of Belief" to tuesdaynightbookgroup@gmail.com.*



Icons on Ammo Boxes 2024 Calendar

The Icons on Ammo Boxes 2024 Calendar, featuring the work of Ukrainian artists Sofia Atlantova and Oleksandr Klymenko, are available for \$10 at the Parish House.

Proceeds support the efforts in Ukraine.

Bambinelli Sunday

**December 17th, following the 11 AM Masses
Wallace Hall**

We will bless Infant Jesus figurines that will be placed in crèches.

We invite parishioners to bring their figurines in for the blessing.

Advent Day of Reconciliation Monday, December 18th

Confessions will be heard in the Church from 3 PM to 5 PM and 6 PM to 8 PM.



**To receive our weekly email newsletter,
scan the QR code or visit ignatius.nyc.**

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Mass Schedule

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

5:30 PM

Saturday Mass

8:00 AM

Sunday Mass

9:30 AM

Sunday Mass

11:00 AM

Solemn Mass

11:00 AM

Family Mass

CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 PM

Family Mass

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

6:00 PM

(Parish Community Choir)

8:00 PM

Vigil Mass (Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola)

Midnight Mass (livestreamed)

(Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

CHRISTMAS DAY

10:00 AM (livestreamed)

(Organ/Cantor)

12:00 Noon

Solemn Mass (Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola)

Masses of December 24th

Sunday, December 24th, is both the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve.

The Sunday Mass obligation is not displaced by the observance of Christmas on Christmas Eve. Attending one of the Christmas Eve Masses does not satisfy the Sunday obligation.

Snow Ball Dance

Thank You!

Thank you to all those who danced the night away at the Snow Ball Dance and to our sponsors:

- Frank E. Campbell–The Funeral Chapel
- Michael Doyle of Acheson Doyle Partners Architects

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Annual Toy Drive Through Sunday, December 17th

*Benefiting the children of St. Mary of the Assumption-
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel–St. Benedict Parish
on Staten Island*

Please bring new, unwrapped toys or games for children between the ages of 3–12 to the Parish House.

Toys must be new. No used toys, please.

*Sponsored by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and
the Interparish Religious Education Program*

Hospitality Ministry

Volunteers Needed

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24TH
Christmas Eve

- 4 PM Family Mass • 6 PM
- 8 PM Mass of Christmas • Midnight Mass

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25TH
Christmas Day

- 10 AM • 12 PM Noon

MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2024
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

- 10:30 AM

If you can assist, please email
liturgicalministers@saintignatiusloyola.org
with your availability.

*A sign-up table will be in the Narthex
after all Masses this weekend.*

Save the Date: Lay Ministers Enrichment Program Saturday, January 6, 2024 Wallace Hall

SPEAKER

Father James A. Casciotti, S.J.

8:30 AM | Breakfast

9:30 AM to 12:00 PM | Program

Registration opens on Monday, December 18th.

Home Communion Call

If you or a loved one is confined to home and would like to receive Communion on a periodic or regular basis, someone from the parish's Compassionate Care Ministry will come to your home and bring Communion.

**If interested, email Fr. Hilbert at
hilbertm@saintignatiusloyola.org or leave your
name and phone number at the Parish House for
Fr. Hilbert, and someone will be scheduled to visit.**

Parish Digital Publications

To access our Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report,
visit ignatius.nyc/annual-reports.

The Vision Statement Implementation Plan
and the Laudato Si' Action Platform can be
found at ignatius.nyc/mission-and-values.

Low-Gluten Hosts

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

Back to Basics 2.0: What It Means to Be Catholic

Through April 2024, the priests of the parish will offer an opportunity to learn more about what it means to be Catholic.

**THE CHURCH'S GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND
THE ROLE OF THE LAITY**
Thursday, February 22nd
7 PM

Wallace Hall

Fr. Michael Hilbert, S.J.

RELIGIOUS ORDERS OF THE CHURCH
Monday, March 18th
7 PM

Wallace Hall

Fr. James Casciotti, S.J.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL ENCYCLICALS
Monday, April 15th
7 PM

Wallace Hall

Fr. Dennis Yesalonia, S.J.

Lost & Found

If you have lost an item while visiting the church,
please stop by the Parish House to check if
your misplaced article has been turned in.

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook at [stignatiusnyc](https://www.instagram.com/stignatiusnyc).

CHURCH OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA

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PARISH STAFF

Pastor

Rev. Dennis J. Yesalonia, S.J.

Associate Pastors

Rev. Mark C. Hallinan, S.J.

Rev. Michael P. Hilbert, S.J.

Senior Priest

Rev. William J. Bergen, S.J.

Assisting Priest

Rev. James Martin, S.J.

In Residence

Rev. James A. Casciotti, S.J.

Pastoral Associates

Kate Noonan Brian Pinter Jean Santopatre

Pastoral Assistant

Maureen Haley

Music Ministries

Daniel Beckwith Douglas Purcell
Robert Reuter Elizabeth Van Os
Michael Sheetz Christina Kay
Scott Warren, *Director*

Assistant to the Pastor

Rebecca Brucas

Administrative Assistant

Patricia Schneider

Director of Communications

Elizabeth O'Sullivan

Director of Facilities

Robert Cisternino

Facilities Coordinator

Caroline Fernandes

Treasurer

Fernando Castro

Weekday Masses (Monday – Friday)

8:30 AM, 12:10 PM, and 5:30 PM

Saturday: 8:30 AM

Masses for the Weekend of December 24th

Saturday Vigil 5:30 PM Fr. Bergen
Sunday: 8:00 AM Fr. Hallinan
9:30 AM Fr. Hallinan
Solemn 11:00 AM Fr. Hilbert
Wallace Hall Family 11:00 AM Fr. Yesalonia

For our complete Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Mass schedule, see page 2.

Religious Education for Children

Ms. Kate Noonan, Director

(212) 288-3588 x609

noonank@saintignatiusloyola.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 or by appointment.

Baptisms

Please contact Maureen Haley at

baptisms@saintignatiusloyola.org

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 contact

Maureen Haley at

weddings@saintignatiusloyola.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@saintignatiusloyola.org.

Announced Masses and Readings for the Week

Monday, December 18th

(3rd Monday of Advent)

Jerome 23:5–8 Psalm 72

Matthew 1:18–25

8:30 MEM Eileen Noble

12:10 MEM Stephen Francis Burke

5:30 ANN Magdalena Lewis

Tuesday, December 19th

(3rd Tuesday of Advent)

Judges 13:2–7, 24–25a Psalm 71

Luke 1:5–25

8:30 MEM Carla Fendi

12:10 MEM James Guedry

5:30 MEM Joseph & Margaret
Phelan

Wednesday, December 20th

(3rd Wednesday of Advent)

Isaiah 7:10–14 Psalm 24

Luke 1:26–38

8:30 MEM Frank Basile

12:10 MEM John McCooey

5:30 MEM Marie Dinnocenzio

Thursday, December 21st

(3rd Thursday of Advent)

Song 2:8–14 Psalm 33

Luke 1:39–45

8:30 LVG Tom & Anne Lenihan

12:10 MEM James Manning

5:30 MEM Nathan Davidson

Friday, December 22nd

(3rd Friday of Advent)

1 Samuel 1:24–28 1 Samuel 2

Luke 1:46–56

8:30 MEM George (Lanny) Ryan

12:10 MEM Sose & Mark

Prekelezaj

5:30 MEM Charles & Mae
Tantillo

Saturday, December 23rd

(3rd Saturday of Advent)

Malachi 3:1–4, 23–24 Psalm 25

Luke 1:57–66

8:30 MEM Peter J. Burke

Sunday, December 24th

(4th Sunday of Advent)

2 Samuel 7:1–5, 8b–12, 14a, 16

Psalm 89 Romans 16:25–27

Luke 1:26–38