



December 24, 2023 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

A Season of Beauty and Wonder

At this year's Christmas Pageant, presented by our grammar school students, one of the student narrators who introduced the performance commented that Christmas is "a season of beauty and wonder." That phrase remained with me throughout the pageant and has permeated my consciousness ever since. *A season of beauty and wonder*, and yet we live in a world of darkness and dread, bombarded by reports of events on distant shores and our own city streets that mute the strains of *Peace on Earth* and shatter our dreams for the future. Beauty and wonder seem but illusions.



Another vivid image that has had a place of prominence in my consciousness since I saw it was the photo of a creche prominently displayed in a church. Unlike the idyllic scenes we are accustomed to, the entire scene was filled with rubble, and at its center, the Infant Jesus was placed. There was no shelter for the child. There were no animals to bring warmth. There were no shepherds. And most tragic of all, there were no parents to protect the child from harm's way. There was only devastation and debris, as though a giant abyss was about to swallow the child into a vortex of destruction and darkness. The scene was obviously intended to display graphically the tragedy unfolding today in the Holy Land.

A rather stark contrast of words and images that have been intruding on my consciousness as I prepare to celebrate the birth of the one promised by God to save the world from the folly of its own undoing. Happiness sparkled on the faces and in the smiles of the students who participated in the Christmas pageant. Parents and family members who were present beamed with pride. Each carol and pageant scene trumpeted the joy that is rightly associated with this season. Beauty and wonder were evident that night as we dared to dream, in that moment, that all was right with the world and would forever be. For unto us, the Prince of Peace is born.

And as for the searing image of the creche, I was drawn more deeply into it. The desolation I initially experienced began to fade as my reflections focused on the very center of the creche. There was an exquisite serenity that radiated from the vulnerable infant lying in the detritus of conflict. Beauty and wonder were captured in the glow of the infant's gaze. His radiance was the incarnation of God with us, *Emmanuel*, wherever we are—in the midst of the rubble of our lives, in the deepest darkness of loneliness, at the center of everything that brings us joy, in our successes and failures, *Emmanuel*!

We will gather this Christmas season as others have done for more than two millennia. We will bring with us everything that is in our consciousness and hearts and place at the crib our dreams and hopes, our gratitude and praise, our fears and regrets, and, most important of all, our belief that this is truly a season of beauty and wonder. We do this trusting in God's love for us, believing that the Father sent the Son into our world, an imperfect world, messy and blood-stained but filled with the beauty that is and that is yet to be. The wonders of His love exceed our every hope and dream. *Joy to the World* is the anthem that is befittingly sung by those who believe.

Christmas, in truth, is a season of beauty and wonder. May our hearts be open to receive the wonders of God's love this Christmas and every day of our lives. Merry Christmas!

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

This Week at a Glance

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25th

To view our Christmas Day Mass schedule, see below.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26th &

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27th

The Parish House will be closed in observance of the Christmas Holiday.

One Daily Mass will be celebrated at 8:30 AM both days.

Christmas Day Mass Schedule

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

10:00 AM (livestreamed) (*Organ/Cantor*)

12:00 Noon Solemn Mass (*Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola*)

Annual Appeal

As you consider your end-of-year giving, please remember to include your contribution to the Annual Appeal on your to-do list.

In order to fund the current level of service and programming, we rely on the Annual Appeal, which is now underway.



If you have not yet made a donation, you can do so by scanning the QR code at left or by visiting ignatius.nyc/annual-appeal.

Thank you for your support!

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.

Low-Gluten Hosts

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



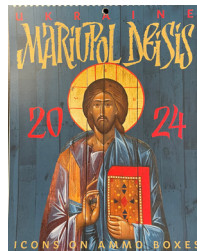
May the joy that accompanies the birth of the Prince of Peace reside in your hearts during this Christmas season and throughout the New Year.

Merry Christmas

Dennis J. Yesalonia, S.J.

Pastor

Church of St. Ignatius Loyola



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 humanitarian efforts in Ukraine.

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.



Sign-up for Our Weekly E-Newsletter!

To receive regular updates on parish news and events, scan the QR code or visit ignatius.nyc.

The Mary Project
Wednesday, January 10th
7 PM
Zoom

*Presented by the Ignatian Interfaith Ministry
and the Peace Islands Institute*

Join the Ignatian Interfaith Ministry as they partner with our Muslim friends from the Peace Islands Institute to embark on an in-depth exploration of Mary in both faith traditions.

SUBSEQUENT SESSIONS
Thursday, February 8th
7 PM to 8:30 PM
Zoom

Sunday, May 19th
2 PM to 4 PM
Wallace Hall



Registration is required.
To register, scan the QR code at left or
visit [ignatius.nyc/the-mary-project](https://www.ignatius.nyc/the-mary-project).

Lay Ministers Enrichment Program:
Pope Francis on Facing the Trials of Life
Saturday, January 6th
9 AM to 12:30 PM
Wallace Hall

*A morning in reflection, faith sharing, and conversation,
led by Fr. James Casciotti, S.J.*

In a homily, while addressing young people about to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, Pope Francis stated: "And here I come to my last point. It is an invitation which I make to you, young confirmands, and to all present. Remain steadfast in the journey of faith, with firm hope in the Lord. This is the secret of our journey! He gives us the courage to swim against the tide..." Fr. Casciotti will present on this topic and lead private and group reflection.

Continental breakfast will be served at 9 AM.
The program will commence shortly thereafter.

To register, visit tinyurl.com/LMEWINTER24.
Registration is required.

Music at St. Ignatius

**Support the Advent & Christmas
Liturgical Music Fund**

If you have been moved by the exceptional music ministry at St. Ignatius Loyola, please consider giving a special year-end gift to the Advent & Christmas Liturgical Music Fund—every dollar counts! Our goal for this year's Appeal is to raise \$50,000 towards our annual \$70,000 goal for Liturgical Music.

Gifts may be made online at
[ignatius.nyc/advent-christmas-music/](https://www.ignatius.nyc/advent-christmas-music/), or
by mailing a check to the address below, made
out to "Church of St. Ignatius Loyola" with
"Advent/Christmas Music 2023" in the memo line.
Church of St. Ignatius Loyola
Advent/Christmas Music
980 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10028

*Gifts of \$100 or more that are received on or
before Sunday, December 31st will be listed
in the January 7th worship leaflets.*

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.

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 at 7 PM
Wallace Hall
Fr. Michael Hilbert, S.J.

RELIGIOUS ORDERS OF THE CHURCH
Monday, March 18th at 7 PM
Wallace Hall
Fr. James Casciotti, S.J.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL ENCYCLICALS
Monday, April 15th at 7 PM
Wallace Hall
Fr. Dennis Yesalonia, S.J.

Ignatian Volunteer Corps

IVC volunteers are adults over 50 years of age who
offer their life skills and experience one to two
days a week to directly serve those in need.

Interested? Contact Maureen Fullam,
Regional Director, at 917-859-0928 or email
mfullam@ivcusa.org, and visit us at [ivcusa.org](https://www.ivcusa.org).

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.

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 31st

Saturday Vigil 5:30 PM Fr. Yesalonia

Sunday: 8:00 AM Fr. Hilbert

9:30 AM Fr. Hilbert

Solemn 11:00 AM Fr. Casciotti

Wallace Hall Family 11:00 AM Fr. Hallinan

7:30 PM Fr. Casciotti

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 25th

(*Nativity of the Lord*)

Isaiah 9:1–6 Psalm 96

Titus 2:11–14 Luke 2:1–14

Tuesday, December 26th

(*St. Stephen*)

Acts 6:8–10; 7:54–59 Psalm 31

Matthew 10:17–22

8:30 MEM Eugenie Jones

Wednesday, December 27th

(*St. John*)

1 John 1:1–4 Psalm 97

John 20:1a, 2–8

8:30 MEM Carmen Elina
Delgado

12:10 MEM Toni Brown

5:30 MEM Gerrin M. Hagen

Thursday, December 28th

(*The Holy Innocents*)

1 John 1:5–2:2 Psalm 124

Matthew 2:13–18

8:30 MEM Maximino Gamuza

12:10 MEM Rocco Di Giorgio

5:30 MEM Dr. & Mrs. Edward
Brennan

Friday, December 29th

(*Fifth Day in the Christmas Octave*)

1 John 2:3–11 Psalm 96

Luke 2:22–35

8:30 MEM John F. Griffin

12:10 MEM William Wallace

5:30 MEM William Powers

Saturday, December 30th

(*Sixth Day in the Christmas Octave*)

1 John 2:12–17 Psalm 96

Luke 2:36–40

8:30 ANN John Butler

Sunday, December 31st

(*The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary &
Joseph*)

Genesis 15:1–6; 21:1–3 Psalm 105

Hebrews 11:8, 11–12, 17–19

Luke 2:22–40