

ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

CLEVELAND, OHIO

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“Marthas” Making St. Ignatius Shine With Love for Jesus

Are you a Martha or a Mary?

In the Gospel of Luke, we are introduced to two sisters, one named Mary and one named Martha. These women welcome Jesus into their home – one sat and listened to Him speak, while the other cleaned and took care of the house. While the story is meant to be about Mary’s stillness and attentive faith, we still need Marthas in this world, serving our Lord in their own way.

At our parish, we are fortunate to have a group of individuals who have taken on Martha’s name and her role, the Marthas Church Cleaners. Meeting every Friday morning, these committed women and men make sure St. Ignatius is sparkling for the weekend ahead. Coordinator Beverly Beischlag explains how it all comes together.

“First we clean the altar with warm water,” she says. “We have another person that dusts the altar floor itself and dusts the statues. Then we have a person that goes back and does all the windows and wood in the sanctuary and airs out the confessional.”

Other tasks include cleaning all the pews, dusting and cleaning the elevator, mopping floors, and cleaning bathrooms.



Meeting every Friday to keep St. Ignatius looking clean and beautiful are the Marthas Church Cleaners – (from left) volunteers Dolores Coleman, June Terstage, Beverly Beischlag, and Ellen Eckstein.

The Eucharist and Stewardship as a Way of Life

More than 20 years ago, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a pastoral letter titled *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*. This document was an invitation to follow Christ Who gave of Himself for us. Each of us is called to serve our neighbors and to be stewards of God's creation and of all that has been entrusted to us. However, to truly understand stewardship, we must look to the Holy Eucharist. The Holy Eucharist is the total gift of our loving Savior to us. Stewardship is our response to that gift.

Even the word "Eucharist" implies stewardship. The word "Eucharist" finds its roots in the Latin word *eucharistia*, which in turn came from the Greek word *eukaristos*, which meant, quite simply, "gratitude" or "thanksgiving." How fitting that we, who are called to be a stewardship people, celebrate at the focal point of every Mass an act of thanksgiving and gratitude — namely, the reception of Jesus' gift to us — the Eucharist.

In their pastoral letter on stewardship, the bishops speak of the Eucharist in this way: "The Eucharist is the great sign and agent of this expansive communion of charity... we enjoy a unique union with Christ and, in Him, with one another. Here His love — indeed, His very Self — flows into us as disciples and, through us and our practice of stewardship to the entire human race."

When we receive Christ's Body in the Holy Eucharist, we hear the minister say, "The Body of Christ." To this, we respond, "Amen" — which means in Hebrew, "Yes; it is so." This is the essence of stewardship. We should enter the



Church for Mass out of "gratitude." We recognize the presence of the Lord in Holy Communion, and then we truly receive the Lord. What is left for us to do is the fulfillment of stewardship — that is, sharing what we have received in love of God and neighbor. Our entire experience speaks to stewardship — we are grateful; we recognize the real presence of the Lord; we receive the Lord; and then we share what we have received.

Christ's gift to us through the Eucharist is an invitation to us. We are called to give beyond what is convenient or what may be comfortable. We are called to forgive even when forgiveness may not be deserved; we are called to love even when that love is not returned. We are called to love as God loves us.

The Eucharist is stewardship celebrated. The Mass is more than a ritual. It is an actual encounter with God, with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We need to respond to the Eucharist with our complete selves. What we experience in the Eucharist should, in turn, translate into our daily lives. We are committed to the Church, which is Christ's body. We show our love for His body by acts of charity and generosity. We spend time in prayer, expressing our gratitude and our love.

God's greatest gift to us is Christ's great love for us — this was shown when He was crucified on the Cross to pay the penalty for our sins and to give us eternal life. God's love for us is without limit, and He offers Himself to us in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Stewardship is how we respond to that gift.

"The Eucharist is 'the source and summit of the Christian life.' 'The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and the works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church.'" — Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1324

A Letter From Our Pastor

Advent: Moving Toward a Time of Fulfilled Hope

Dear Parishioners,

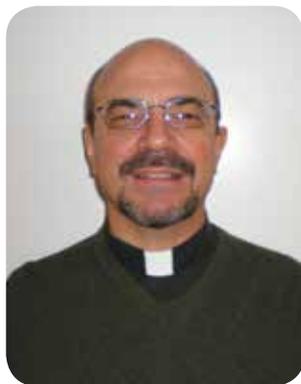
There is never a time during the year when we cannot pause and reflect on who and what we are and how we conduct our lives, both as a parish and as people of God. But this time of year in particular lends itself to just that.

Advent is often called “a season of hope.” However, it is more than that. We have choices and decisions to make at this time. This is the time when we must acknowledge the need for us to change attitudes and to welcome the light of Christ’s presence. In this way, we can contribute to bringing hope to a world that is starved for hope.

Of course, we approach this time of year with a spirit of confident expectation, but now is the time for us to be awake to Christ, Whose presence is revealed as forgiveness, Whose peace reconciles our differences, and Whose hope should strengthen and lift up our hearts.

We have pointed out that each and every day is an opportunity for a new beginning. Our new Church liturgical year began on the First Sunday of Advent. We understand that Advent is a time of preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord – Christmas – but I would remind you that it is much more than that for us Catholics and Christians.

It is a time for us to prepare for Christ’s Second Coming, as well. Much of what we do, our Scripture readings, our prayers, our traditions are built on that reality. One of the traditions in our Church and in many of our homes is an Advent wreath. That custom is filled



with meaning. The wreath tends to be circular in shape with four candles – three purple and one rose. The color purple is very evident at this time of year, just as it is during Lent. Purple represents prayer, penance, sacrifice, and good works.

On the Third Sunday of Advent, though, we light the rose candle. That is Gaudete Sunday, a day of rejoicing. Throughout Advent, the candles are lit in progression each week. This builds on the idea of expectation and hope that we may see as Christ’s first coming into the world, but we must also keep in mind that, at the same time, we are anticipating His Second Coming. We cannot ask ourselves often enough, “Are we ready?” Jesus and St. Paul and others remind us often that we do not and cannot know the time and the place.

The point is that the time is now for us. Yes, this is a time of hope, but we are heading toward a time of fulfilled hope. God bless you and yours at this special time of year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Michael Troha



“Emphasize Love, Inclusivity, Forgiveness, and Compassion” *St. Ignatius*

From raking leaves as children for their neighbors to embarking on a mission trip to South Africa, Stephanie and Craig Haller have endeavored to live according to the principles by which they were raised.

“We were both raised as stewards of our families, communities and the Earth,” says Stephanie Haller. “We were raised with the idea that one is responsible not just for oneself, but for those around us.”

Stephanie and Craig both grew up in Lakewood. His family belonged to St. James and her family to St. Rose. Though they first met in high school, Stephanie and Craig wouldn’t reconnect until their 40s.

“It wasn’t until much later, and after many adventures, that we would meet again and create a family,” Stephanie says. “Neither of us had ever been married before, but in our own ways, we had been preparing for a life with each other.”

When choosing a Church in which they would raise their own child, Craig and Stephanie wanted a sense of “home.”

“We discussed aspects of religion that we embraced and those with which we struggled,” Stephanie says. “We ultimately agreed that the framework of the Catholic Church was the right choice for our daughter and us.”

Today, Stephanie and Craig seek to live stewardship in their domestic church, their home, and in their professions. When Stephanie first studied to become

a Montessori teacher, she found that the profession aligned with her spirit. It was in her early 20s that Stephanie first encountered the work of Maria Montessori, a devout Catholic, doctor and educator.

“Maria Montessori’s work with children exemplifies Christian stewardship and love and respect for all God’s creation,” Stephanie says. “It is a blessing to guide children and to be a witness, knowing it is their journey and not my own. I have grown in my faith as a result of my work.”

Raised with strong values of service to family, Craig spent his earlier years in construction and doing home improvement work for family and friends. Today, he works for Otis Elevators in the maintenance department.

Craig bought and refurbished an old home in Olmsted Township, which was a project that allowed him to connect with his father as they worked alongside each other.

“Craig is a person who feels tremendous responsibility to those around him,” Stephanie says. “It is evident in the way he provides for his family, but also cares for those around him through acts of kindness and giving.”

One experience that would shape the Haller family’s sense of stewardship and faith was when Stephanie moved to South Africa in 2011. She spent her days



Kinley Haller’s Baptism – (from left) Craig, Stephanie, Kinley, Gary Haller (Craig’s brother) and Robin Haller (Godparents to Kinley) and Fr. Troha



Kinley Haller’s Baptism – (from left) Gary Haller, Robin Haller, Fr. Troha, Kinley, Stephanie and Craig Haller

St. Ignatius' Stephanie and Craig Haller

riding in the back of a pickup and visiting various Montessori Schools. In the evenings, Stephanie joined the sisters at their mission.

"The mission was a home for abandoned children," Stephanie says. "I would hold babies with AIDS or TB who had been left to die by family members unable to care for them."

While in South Africa for those few months, Stephanie struggled with reservations about the faith and with the suffering that she witnessed firsthand. During this time, she spoke with Fr. Cas, a priest serving at the mission.

"Fr. Cas encouraged me to place greater emphasis on the bigger pictures of love, inclusivity, forgiveness and compassion that form a life that is lived in service to



Kinley Haller in the Rocky River Reservation

God," Stephanie says. "The lessons I learned during that short time with Fr. Cas have stayed with me."

The lessons of stewardship that Stephanie and Craig have learned along their faith journeys are lessons that they hope to pass on to their daughter, Kinley Dianne, who was baptized at St. Ignatius within a few weeks of Fr. Troha's arrival.

"We look forward to watching her grow up in this community where we have been welcomed and embraced," Stephanie says. "Through examples of helping others, praying daily, attending Mass and modeling love and respect, we hope Kinley feels the same call to serve as we have in our lives."

"Marthas" Making St. Ignatius Shine With Love for Jesus

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"We also have the candles that we clean. I sit in the back and clean the candles and get the wax off," Beverly says.

As Beverly explains, some of the "Marthas" have a few decades serving the church under their belts. Beverly says this experience helps them all work in tandem like a well-oiled machine. And when one person finishes their assigned task, he or she will usually jump in to help another person finish what they're doing.

"These are things you don't even think about you just automatically do," she says. "Everybody takes turns and knows what they like to do and they do it. We help each other. If we're not gabbing, we can be out within an hour. The more people there, the quicker you get done."

In addition to adding a level of devotion to her personal walk with Jesus, Beverly says her favorite part of being involved with the Marthas is seeing the friends she's made each

week and giving of her time and talent to the church.

"My kids say, 'Mom, you're getting too old for this,' but I like to go and do it," she says.

Beverly says the group has 10 volunteers who help each week as much as they're able, but since the group is getting older, she says she'd love to see more people help.

"An extra hand always helps," she says. "We're all up in age and we could use some young ones."

Parishioners who believe themselves to be a "Martha" at heart may contact the parish office at 216-251-0300 to volunteer.

A Modern Model of Sainthood *St. Teresa of Calcutta*

In the dark final years of the Cold War, a small woman — standing at barely five feet tall — offered a living counternarrative to the inhibiting fear undergirding our daily lives and our foreign affairs. Instead of living in fear, Mother Teresa acted out of love. Instead of withdrawing and isolating herself, she gave tirelessly to others.

Many of us harbor a personal connection to this saint, for we lived during the height of the media coverage of Mother Teresa's work and her friendships with Pope St. John Paul II and the beloved Princess Diana.

Long before she received the name Mother Teresa and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was born on Aug. 26, 1910, in Skopje, Macedonia, the crossroads of the Balkans. The youngest of three children, Mother Teresa was raised predominately by her mother after her father's death, when she was about 8 years old. Dranfile (Drana) Bojaxhiu, Mother Teresa's mother, undoubtedly became a strong influence on her daughter's vocation, since Drana herself was a devout Catholic and known for her prayer life and her charity.

Agnes attended a Catholic primary school and, following the example of her mother, became active in their parish and sang in Sacred Heart's choir. As a young person, Agnes enjoyed reading the lives of the saints — while immersing herself in the stories of these holy men and women, Agnes first felt the stirring call to become a missionary.

At the age of 18, Agnes traveled to Dublin, Ireland, to join the Sisters of Loreto. She became Sr. Mary Teresa, named after St. Thérèse of Lisieux, and began to learn English. Within a few months of arriving in Ireland, she left for India.

In India, Sr. Mary Teresa lived at the Loreto Entally community in Calcutta, where she served as an educator and taught at St. Mary's School. After her final profession,

she became Mother Teresa and, a few years later, began serving as the school's principal.

On an ordinary day, Mother Teresa received an extraordinary call. While on a train ride to her annual retreat, Mother Teresa felt what she would describe as Jesus' thirst for souls. Soon, Jesus called her to found the Missionaries of Charity, an order devoted to serving the "poorest of the poor."

The order formally began on Oct. 7, 1950, and has grown from one woman tending the sick and dying in the streets of Calcutta to over 4,500 religious sisters helping the poor in over 130 countries around the world. Additionally, the order grew to include the Missionaries of Charity Brothers, the Missionaries of Charity Fathers and the Lay Missionaries of Charity.

Though externally Mother Teresa joyfully and indefatigably served the poor for nearly 50 years, during the majority of this time, she experienced a "dark night of the soul," an extensive period of not feeling God's presence or hearing His voice. Other

saints, notably St. John of the Cross, similarly experienced a dark night of the soul. Despite this spiritual struggle, Mother Teresa continued her work joyfully throughout her sickness and until her death on Sept. 5, 1997.

Pope St. John Paul II beatified Mother Teresa in 2003. Fittingly, this year, a pontiff who has underscored the importance of social justice celebrated her canonization. On Sept. 4, 2016, Pope Francis canonized Mother Teresa, the "Saint of the Gutters," at the Vatican.

St. Teresa of Calcutta offers us an example of ceaseless prayer and selfless service. She is a modern model of sainthood that we can emulate in our daily lives starting with how we serve and treat the other members of our family, our faith community and all those with whom we interact on a daily basis.

St. Teresa of Calcutta, Pray for Us!



Christmastime Means “Home” in the Parish

For many former parishioners at St. Ignatius, the Christmas season is a time of homecoming, and Fr. Michael Troha is looking forward to welcoming them when they join us to celebrate Mass at that time.

The church will be decorated and the crib will be in its traditional spot in front of St. Joseph’s side altar.

“Many people who grew up in the neighborhood and who moved away, come home for Christmas,” Fr. Troha says. “For many, it’s a family tradition to come back for Christmas Eve Mass or Christmas Day Mass.”

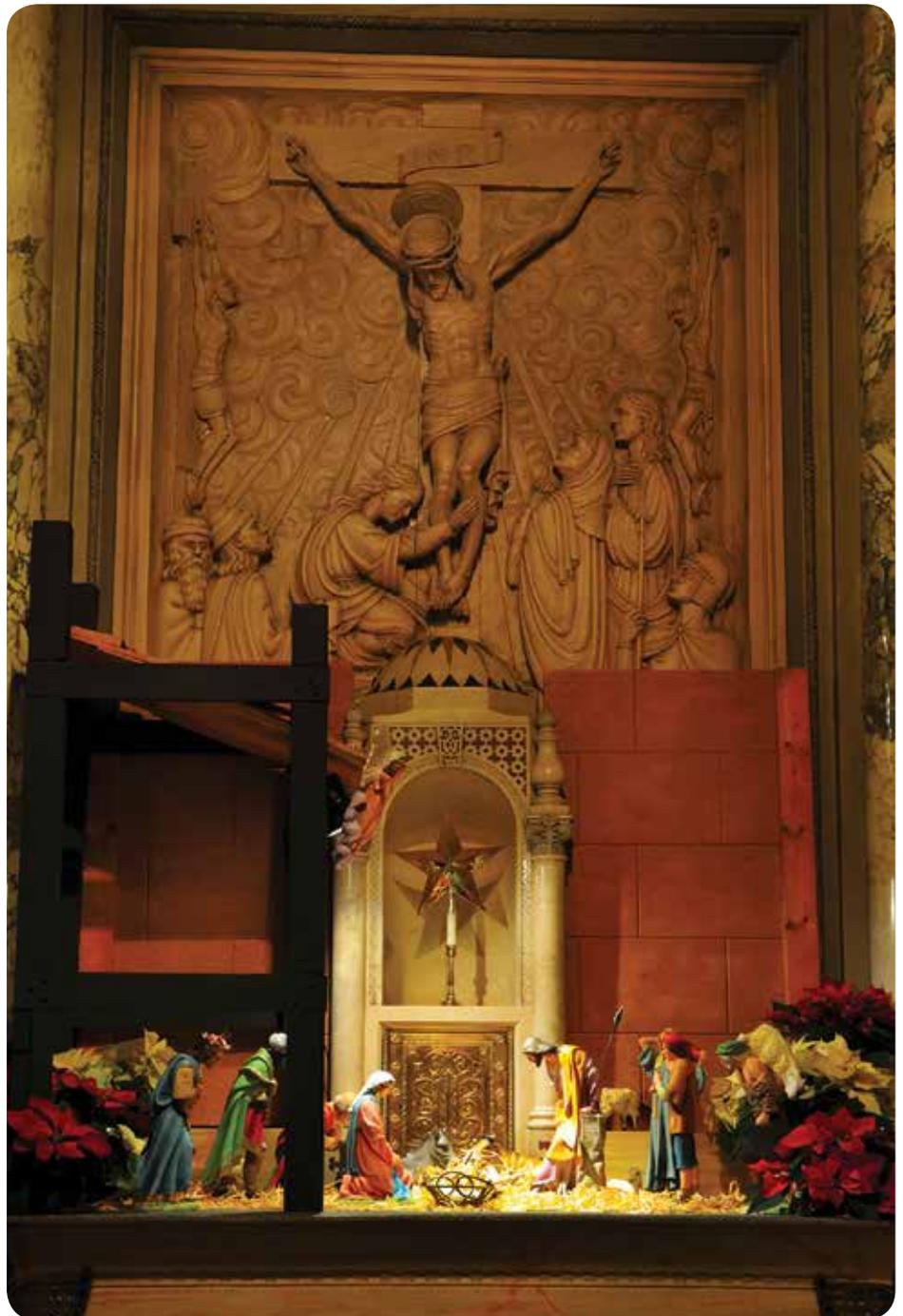
The celebration will begin at 5 p.m. on Christmas Eve with the candlelight Mass.

“All the lights in the church are off, and there are candles at the altar, we have the blessing of the crib, and all the participants have candles during the Liturgy of the Word,” Fr. Troha says. “It is very nice. We also have very good music. We have an enormous pipe organ that we keep well tuned, and we bring in other instruments. People come for the music and candlelight, I think.”

We also have the choice of attending midnight Mass on Christmas Eve – at midnight.

“That’s getting rarer and rarer these days,” Fr. Troha says. “We get a very good crowd, probably the second largest attendance of the three Masses. Some like going to

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The St. Joseph side altar becomes the setting for our Christmas crib. The candlelight Christmas Eve Mass will provide a lovely illumination of this scene. This also is the Mass when the children who will be receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion take part in the candlelight procession.

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Saturday, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Christmastime Means “Home” in the Parish

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a midnight Mass at Christmas. It's a very special time.”

Changes in the Church's rules regarding fasting before Communion have led to the decline in the midnight Mass.

“In the old days, there was no vigil Mass,” Fr. Troha says. “You had to fast before Communion from midnight until Mass the next day – no food or water. Then it was relaxed to three hours for food, and one hour for water. So strategically Mass

was held at midnight. But those rules went out, and so people have midnight Mass at 8 p.m. We do have a midnight Mass, and it's very well attended.”

The Christmas Day Mass is held at 11 a.m., which also is well attended.

During all the Masses, we can enjoy the decorations that the Parish Floral Decoration Ministry placed during the fourth week of Advent.

“We have nice things, and it's a big, big church with a limited

budget,” Fr. Troha says. “They do a good job, very tastefully, throughout the sanctuary and the church.”

Plans for the Christmas season are simple, but Fr. Troha adds that everyone is encouraged to donate gift cards.

“These go to help people in our neighborhood and to help out families in our school,” he says. “You can put them in the collection, or mail them or drop them off at the rectory.”

Anyone with questions about the schedule for the upcoming season may call the parish office at 216-251-0300.