

**NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS**

- 2 A Unique Collection Becomes A Generous Gift
- 3 CAN Ministry
- 4 Gesu Parish Service During the Pandemic
- 5 St. Pat's Hunger Center
- 6 Music During the Pandemic
- 7 The Masked Marvels or the Marvels of Masks?
- 10 Alumni Updates



*Generous parishioner Cathy Lincoln has donated a collection of nativity scenes from around the world to Gesu, including this scene from Indonesia.*

**FROM THE PASTOR**


Dear Gesu Community,

In recent months, the Catholic media has been reporting that there is a declining number of Catholics who believe in the Real Presence in the Eucharist. This is disturbing to many Catholics and it should be, because believing in the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is one of the most essential beliefs of our Catholic faith. From the very beginning of the Church, belief that Jesus Christ is truly present in the consecrated bread and wine when the community of believers gathers to pray and to break the bread and share the chalice has been essential to being a follower of Jesus.

So what do we know about the belief in the Real Presence in the Eucharist? A look back to the beginnings of the Church in the age of the Apostles and beyond reveals to us how we should think about the Eucharist. What we believe about the Eucharist comes to us directly from the Scriptures and from what we know about how the early Church members lived and prayed the faith that the Apostles passed on to them.

From a Scriptural background, three of the Gospels give us an account of the Last Supper. The words of Jesus have been preserved in these accounts. In one form or another the Synoptic Gospels tell us, “Jesus took the bread and said take and eat, this is my body; and then took the cup and said the blessing and said drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood

of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sin.” Interestingly, the Gospel of John doesn’t contain these words of Jesus in the Last Supper, but in chapter six Jesus is quite clear that He is the Bread of Life and unless we eat this Bread and drink His Blood we will not have eternal life within us. Some people think that Jesus was talking in symbolic language, but reading the passage carefully, it is clear that some followers left him after this because the teaching was too difficult for them to accept. Clearly, Jesus was quite serious about what he said, because many followers left him after this. Certainly, those early followers would not have walked away if He was simply referring to a symbolic act.

St. Paul has what may be the oldest account of the Eucharist in his first letter to the Corinthians, 11:23-27. Here he mentions what he received from the Lord and then goes on to explain how we are to proclaim the death of the Lord. He explains that Jesus took bread, broke it and shared it and told the disciples to “do this in memory of me.” From the Gospels and from Paul, there is ample information for us to see what Jesus did and what the early Church did, but we have many more sources that continue to tell the story of the Eucharist in the first century.

The early Church believed very strongly that when the community gathered in prayer and said the blessing prayers over the bread and wine, that Jesus Christ became truly present – body and blood, soul and divinity – in the consecrated gifts. The Apostles and the early Church never doubted that He was truly present when they did this. They believed *(Continued on page 9)*

## A UNIQUE COLLECTION BECOMES A GENEROUS GIFT



*Cathy Lincoln holding the first Nativity scene acquired by her mother, Emma. It was purchased in Mexico in 1972.*

Some people collect coins. Others save stamps. Then there's the Lincoln collection! Cathy Lincoln's mother, Emma, started collecting Nativity scenes in 1972 when on a family trip to Mexico. Cathy remembers well the first Nativity scene acquired for the collection. In fact, 48 years later she still has it. "It was very traditional. Made of clay, and the figures were small, two to three inches tall. We liked it and she bought it."

Since then the collection has grown to, at one point, somewhere in the neighborhood of 800 Nativity sets. The Lincoln family – parents, six children and a grandfather – loved to travel. That enthusiasm for adventure (and Nativity sets) prevailed right up to Emma's death in 2017.

Cathy and her mother, Emma, traveled the world extensively together. Part of their travel adventure was searching for and acquiring Nativity sets native to countries they visited. They never knew when they would find something special. "When we were traveling, we didn't take a lot of clothing, but we always had big suitcases for bringing items home. We never knew where we might find a collectible Nativity scene."

"I remember driving up a winding mountain road late on a stormy night in Portugal. We were both tired when we reached the hotel. Mom went inside to register and she came back to the car with a big smile on her face," said Cathy. "We just hit pay dirt," her mom exclaimed. While checking in Emma spotted a beautiful Nativity scene, and before they left the hotel Emma had negotiated its purchase.

Cathy recently donated a wide range of Nativity scenes to Gesu Church in memory of her mother. The extensive, colorful collection is off the narthex of Gesu Church in cases specially built by an Amish craftsman to display the Nativity sets.

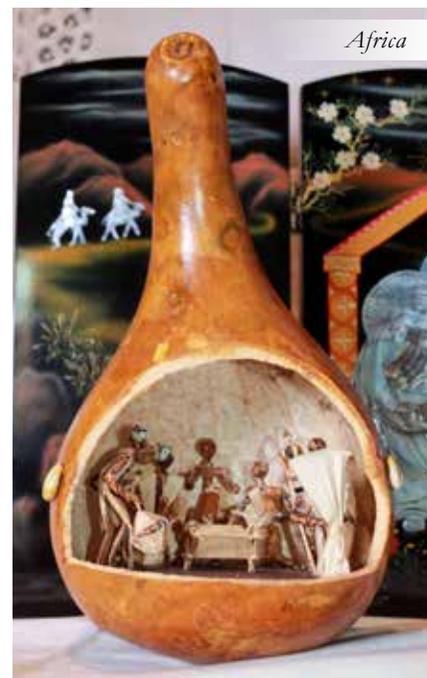
Included in what is now called The Nativity Room are figures from Ghana, Romania, Kenya, China, Russia, Nepal, Portugal, The Netherlands, Thailand, Zulu, Iceland, Finland and countless more countries. After all these years of adding to the global representation, Cathy has a favorite Nativity scene and also one that was left behind on a store shelf. The favorite? "It's from Venezuela. It was made by Amazon River Indians and it is made of clay. It is just so different. And very special to me because of its origin." The one that was left on the shelf? "I won't tell you the country, but it was lime green, and it glowed in the dark. That was too over the top for my mother and me."



*Ecuador*



*Kenya*



*Africa*



*The Netherlands*

## 'CAN' MINISTRY CONTINUES TO CREATE SMILES

By Angela Young

Gesu's Catechesis for Adaptive Needs (CAN) Ministry has entered into its second year. Our first year was incredible, and was truly an experience more than any of us could have imagined. Friendships began last year among all the members of the class, as well as their Buddies. "Buddies" are the Gesu middle school students who provide helping hands to the Catechists, while developing friendships in faith with our special needs participants.



Our Catechesis class was able to highlight and discuss key aspects of our Catholic faith last year, and we plan to continue to build upon these topics. In last year's class, we witnessed students giving high fives and sharing the brightest smiles ever seen; we watched as each of the students, including their Buddies, learned the American Sign Language alphabet; and we also prayed along with the students for special intentions of parishioners.

This year our classes – like all Gesu PSR classes – are virtual. However, this hasn't derailed our learning or our fun! Thanks to technology (and God's gift of creativity) we can still see smiling faces, learn about our faith, and share our reflections on scripture. We plan to pray for parishioners' intentions again this winter, helping celebrate Jesus' light this Christmas. We will also be incorporating the Corporal Works of Mercy into our lessons.

If you are a family with a special needs child, teen, or young adult, we are here to journey with and help you! If you are a parishioner who is interested in assisting in our Adaptive Needs Ministry, please contact us at the emails below:

- Angela Young: [maryangelyoung@gmail.com](mailto:maryangelyoung@gmail.com)
- Debbie Bruening: [debbruening1@gmail.com](mailto:debbruening1@gmail.com)
- Mary von Carlowitz: [mvoncarlowitz@churchofthegesu.org](mailto:mvoncarlowitz@churchofthegesu.org)



## 'YA YOU CAN' MINISTRY OFF TO A STRONG START

By Deborah Breuning

October 9 was the kickoff of an exciting new ministry, here at Gesu: Young Adult and Youth Catechesis for Adaptive Needs. This virtual program developed as an extension of the CAN Ministry for elementary-aged PSR students. The goal of YA YOU CAN is to further participants' faith formation after the Sacrament of Confirmation has been received. The once a month Zoom meeting unpacks a lesson based on a yearly theme.

Various aids are provided to supplement the teaching: Scripture verses, adult coloring, music, crafts and service opportunities. Resources for the once a month Zoom meetings are either picked up, dropped off or mailed.

The theme for this year is "Friendship with Jesus." The young adults use their liturgically colored "prayer squares" to house their Scripture verse, prayer card and any other sacramentals (spiritual tools). October's Scripture verse was, "I have called you friends," from John 15:15. The prayer card for this month is St. Therese of the Child Jesus. From this point on (after they have been given the basic tools/prompts), the students creatively express how they feel God is calling them friends: through nature as well as through their personal interests.

In the picture to the left, YA YOU CAN participant, Jenna Schnell proudly displays the many friends of Jesus through prayer cards of the saints. She has used an autumn pumpkin to show how Jesus speaks to us through Creation.

The reception of YA YOU CAN has been overwhelmingly positive, with statements such as: "Yes, please sign my daughter up, we are so happy this program exists!" Individuals of many backgrounds are represented: different developmental disabilities, different parishes, and even members from different states. This virtual platform has been an ideal vehicle for bringing together a unique faith community. Perhaps COVID does have a silver lining!

## GESU PARISH'S SERVICE DURING THE PANDEMIC

By Fr. Michael A. Vincent, SJ, Associate Pastor

When it came to the planning for Gesu's Annual Service Day, usually held the first Saturday of December near the beginning of Advent and the Feast of Saint Francis Xavier (one of our parish's patron saints), we knew we had to do something different this year. Many of the agencies to which we sent our parish volunteers were not allowing visitors because of the pandemic, and many of those who had volunteered in the past were reluctant to be out and about with large groups of people. Our "Gesu Together" events were also being impacted by changes during this unprecedented pandemic year.

Hence the dilemma! At the same time, at the height of summer, the parish staff and the school administration and faculty were engaged in choosing our annual theme and our "One Book, One Parish" reading selection for the coming fall and winter months. Usually this theme influences homilies, discussion groups, our School Mass themes, our Youth Ministry Program, our Leadership Commissions, as well as our Lenten Speaker Series, "The Novena of Grace." Last year, you may recall, we focused on the saints as a source of hope and inspiration.

This year of COVID-19, we decided to combine the parish theme with how we would handle service. We determined that with a theme like "The Corporal Works of Mercy," we are able to spread potential service opportunities for our parishioners and their families over the course of the entire year. People can choose whether to take part during one month, several months, or each month between now and the end of May.

For October, we focused on "Feed the Hungry." Our neighboring parishes have food pantries, which we have supported in the past by placing a basket for donations at the Gesu altar rail, which we did in October. It was interesting that as we planned activities in accord with this Corporal Work of Mercy, we recalled that Jesus' feeding of the crowds is the one and only miracle portrayed in each of the Four Gospels.

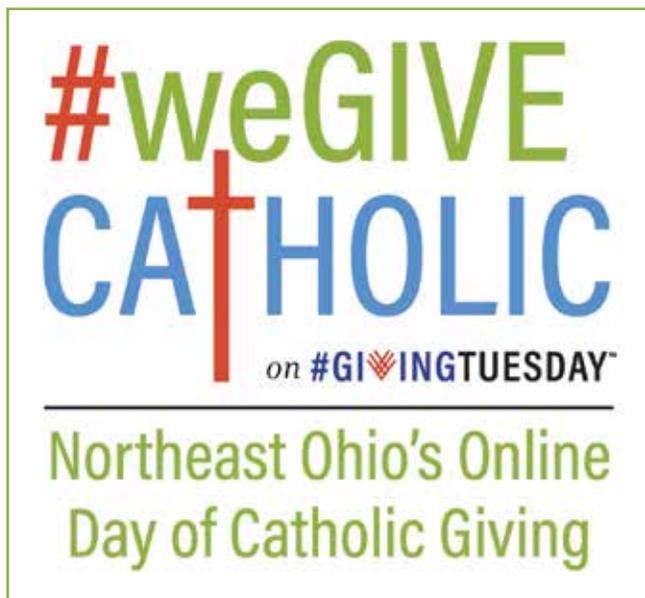
We are also exploring ways to honor and pray for the dead, perhaps doing some cemetery clean-ups in November, as we focus on "Burying the Dead." Our December opportunities will revolve around "Clothe the Naked."

In the New Year, monthly works will include "Give Drink to the Thirsty," "Give Alms to the Poor," "Visit the Sick and Prisoners," "Care for Creation" (a new Work of Mercy inspired by Pope Francis's recent encyclical letter on Creation), and conclude next May with "Shelter the Homeless and Welcome the Stranger." We plan to offer service opportunities each month tied to a specific Work of Mercy. We welcome your ideas as we try to find concrete ways to carry out service tied to all of the Corporal Works of Mercy. We are also seeking appropriate activities for our Gesu School children and our young people in PSR. One focus will certainly be Gesu School's Annual "Hike for Hunger."

Where do the Corporal Works of Mercy come from? One very obvious source, which uses almost the exact wording as some of the works, is the scene in Matthew's Gospel in which Jesus speaks about the criteria on which "The King" (Jesus) will judge people's lives. "When the Son of Man comes in his glory...all the nations will be assembled before him...and he will say, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.'" And then, in a revealing and mysterious comment, Jesus added, "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25: 31-41).

In his "Inaugural Discourse," where Jesus speaks in his hometown Nazareth Synagogue, the Gospel of Luke reinforces his care for those in need by describing how Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord" (Luke 4: 18-19). Another source of the spirit behind the Corporal Works of Mercy is in the Letter of Saint James, where we are told that the Church must treat the poor with respect and dignity equal to that given to the wealthy, and where we learn that "Faith without works is dead" (James 2: 26). Even earlier, however, from many of the Old Testament prophets we hear of demands by God on the People of Israel that they care for widows and orphans, and that they treat "the alien dwelling in your land" (Leviticus 19: 33) with dignity.

Our faith calls upon us to find ways of serving the poor and needy, sharing our resources, especially during this time of the pandemic when so many people are unemployed and when we see huge lines of people in cars awaiting free or reduced-price food to feed their families. Let us be moved with compassion, as Jesus so very often is in the Gospels, and allow our hearts to imitate the heart of Jesus as we care for those in need in our acts of service and generosity.



## ST. PAT'S HUNGER CENTER: GESU'S COMMITMENT TO SERVING THE HUNGRY

By Pat Murphy

Cooking dinner for the homeless and hungry at St. Pat's in Ohio City is one example of the way Gesu Parish carries out Christ's command to feed the hungry. Over the years, many within our parish community have volunteered with this in some way. There are volunteers who order and shop for the supplies; young families who bake homemade cookies to accompany the meals; cooks who have time to set up and prepare the dinner at St. Pat's; and sandwich makers and servers who deliver the food to the tables and pack up the left overs to be used later or shared with other hungry people.

In the mid-80's Fr. Bob Begin assembled a group of parishes to provide meals at St. Pat's. Karen Knaus and Sr. Kathleen Ryan, both teachers at Gesu, started bringing 7th and 8th graders to help. Eventually the leadership shifted to John and Molly Power who formalized the procedures and assignments. The process was seamless and has continued. As we faced the COVID-19 pandemic in Cleveland, Jody Salata and Gil Holzheimer picked up the reins. Jody says "The students' experience at St. Pat's was transformative for many of them. I think seeing the needs of those less fortunate was a real eye opener. They were moved by the gratitude of the clients for the simple kindness of a smile, kind word and a meal."



Gesu continues feeding the hungry every month. The updated "healthy living" menu is served as takeout meals in an effort to keep all safe. The hungry are still suffering, and their needs are growing due to the economy and the upcoming winter months. Additionally, Gesu has other outreach programs such as donations to the food fund, providing a meal each month at La Sagrada Familia, stocking the food pantry at Our Lady of Peace Parish, and helping at the food bank. There are also several spin-offs, not formally part of Gesu, but include parishioners who deliver sandwiches to the homeless living under bridges and in other harsh environments. To learn more or get involved, please reach out to the parish office at (216) 932-0617.



### *Gesu Welcomes Amy Zucca* OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Our new Outreach Coordinator is most welcome as we continue our focus on the Corporal Works of Mercy. Amy Zucca may look familiar to us since she and her husband, Ron, have been members of the Gesu parish since 1994. Together they have raised four children, all Gesu graduates, and have been involved in many of the parish activities including the co-op nursery during Mass, bread deliveries to the hunger center and soup dinners. They also have been foster parents to teen and younger children with the goal of reuniting families. Relationships formed continue long past the reunification.

Amy has been working at John Carroll University, her alma mater, for almost 14 years. As she begins an early retirement, she is not ready to slow down. The Outreach Coordinator opportunity is her dream job and, as Amy says, "I am super excited to start and look forward to building our reputation as the parish that serves." She is completely open to new ideas and would like to tie her activities to the Corporal Works of Mercy. She is skilled at planning events and executing. Data collection is second nature and will be part of her role. Although she does not officially start at Gesu until December 1, she has already participated in staff meetings and has connected with the members of the outreach committee. Although many of the activities are modified during the pandemic, she is ready to go and may open new doors to continue to reach out to the community here and in Honduras.

## MUSIC DURING THE PANDEMIC

By Jimmy Thompson

The “new normal” here at Gesu has provided challenges for all of us as we look to continue our worship meaningfully and safely together. With our wonderful choir and cantors sidelined, Gesu’s instrumentalists have taken on additional Masses in an attempt to fill out the sound in our spacious sanctuary. The increased time I have spent at the church over the past nine months has afforded me the opportunity to get to know many members of Gesu’s staff and religious community whom I previously saw only in passing – a silver lining of the times for which I am particularly grateful.



This article in particular was born of a post-Mass conversation I had with Fr. Kiser, who recently asked: “Jimmy, after all that musical training you’ve received, don’t you get bored playing hymns each week? What makes this meaningful for you?” As someone who has elected to pursue classical music professionally, I will admit that playing “On Eagle’s Wings” does not necessarily present the same technical challenges as a Beethoven sonata or Shostakovich quartet. However, the 15 years I have spent playing for Gesu have influenced my musical, professional, personal and spiritual development more thoroughly and profoundly than I could have possibly imagined.

On my first morning as a student at St. Ignatius High School, I remember receiving an intimidating stack of papers from Dennis Arko, my first period English teacher. The cover page featured a picture of a beautiful hand-crafted Shaker chair and the words, “your work is your prayer.” This thought served as our mantra throughout the semester, but more importantly, it has stuck with me over the years as a way to find meaning in the hours I spend each day striving to improve as a musician. Playing violin at Gesu provides me with a concrete opportunity to offer up my abilities as prayer for the good of our entire community – a relief from the often-times isolating work that constitutes much of my week. Particularly during the pandemic, with concert halls shuttered

around the world, it has been wonderful to look forward to sharing music with you every Sunday.

I have spent the past 22 years practicing violin and learning to play in the classical tradition. Though my technical abilities and musical instincts have been shaped over time by both my teachers and my conservatory training, the unique skill set I’ve developed as a liturgical musician has greatly contributed to my overall confidence onstage and versatility as a performer. All of the playing I do each Sunday is improvised; I’m constantly listening and reacting to our terrific director, Mark Ehrbar, who in turn keeps a close eye on the celebrant to determine how much music is needed. Learning to improvise from a young age has taught me how to listen while playing my instrument, identify and anticipate changes of harmony, and relax despite not knowing exactly what is coming next! I have found that these skills complement the relative strictness of my classical instruction and allow me to understand music and execute my artistic ideas much more naturally and successfully. Growing up playing in front of hundreds of people each weekend has also tempered my nerves and taught me to maintain a sense of poise under pressure.

Given that adaptability and flexibility are two of a liturgical musician’s most important qualities, “boring” is hardly the word that comes to mind when reflecting on the whole of my experiences in the choir loft. Over the years I have been handed parts in the wrong key, for the wrong instrument, and for the wrong piece; thrown (sometimes literally) various books and binders; sent on mid-Mass missions to locate a particular piece of music; and fielded innumerable (usually indecipherable) mouthed instructions and hand signals from across the church, inevitably with seconds to spare before the next hymn. I’ve broken and replaced strings, dropped a hymnal on the organ manual, stabbed a pianist in the face with my bow (accidentally!), tripped on the loft stairs holding a 1734 Guarneri on loan from a New York firm (it survived), and witnessed our previous director drop an open binder off the edge of the loft during Easter Vigil; I remember watching in silent horror as over 100 loose pages fluttered down in the darkness over a candle-bearing congregation. Fortunately, both our church and I are still standing!

My work as a liturgical musician here at Gesu has provided me with so much: a meaningful way to offer up my own talents and give thanks to God, a rich network of friends and musical colleagues, countless professional opportunities, and an endless supply of colorful stories. I feel truly blessed to be part of this community, and I am so thankful to Fr. Kiser, Mark Ehrbar, and all of you for your constant support and encouragement over the years.

# The Masked Marvels or The Marvels of Masks?

## *Covid Challenges*

As we bring the first quarter of the 2020-2021 school year to a close we have asked students and teachers to share their thoughts about this unique school year. Gesu School now has an enrollment of 650 students in Kdg-Grade 8. Families have been able to opt for either a traditional classroom experience or participate remotely from their homes. We began the year with over 100 remote learners who signed on for the first quarter of the year. After better understanding the safety protocols that are part of each school day, a number of students have recently returned to daily classes at Gesu. We share with you the thoughts of several faculty members and students as a way of getting a better picture of this new school experience.

"The best word I can use to describe the 2020-2021 school year is challenging. Everything from lessons, lunch, recess, Mass, assemblies, to arrival and dismissal has an extra layer of challenge to it. We are moving forward in a positive direction, but I feel we always have to keep an eye out for the next road bump that will appear."

"It was exciting and a bit nerve racking to return to school. However, nothing beats being in-person with the students. I didn't realize how much I truly missed the interaction with them. The banter between students or the wave from a little hand just cannot be replicated on Zoom."

- Regan Kazel, Assistant Principal

"The new synchronous learning format is quite different from the distance learning format we used last spring. The synchronous learning format means we are teaching as many as 24 in-person students, as well as teaching our remote learners who are present all day on Zoom via laptops, projected on an interactive whiteboard. What I find to be particularly difficult about teaching during the coronavirus pandemic is that students must be safely distanced at all times. We can no longer gather together on the carpet to listen to a story, play games in close contact, or be spontaneous in what and how we learn."

"There are blessings to be found, however, in this 'new normal!' Our homeroom cohort group has bonded together quickly and formed an identity that is very, very special in a short amount of time. Our students are resilient, creative, and curious about the world. My biggest hope for the school year is that all 26 of my first graders stay healthy and that one day, they will all be able to laugh and learn together in person in our classroom."

- Patty Komperda, Grade One Teacher

"I am very proud of the students who have taken the new guidelines as their new normal. It is inspiring to see them employ a growth mindset as they accept new challenges this year. My hope for the year is that Gesu continues to be a safe place for learning. As we all are challenged with safety regulations and protocols, we will continue to improve our ability to provide personalized instruction to all Gesu students regardless of their location."

- Melissa Hensel,  
Intervention Specialist, Gesu School Inclusion Coordinator

"I think the "silver lining" of this school year is our classmates. I realized how much I missed my classmates, even the ones I rarely talked to during online school last spring. It's important to have people with you at school. My biggest hope for this school year is to have the eighth grade experience past eighth graders have gotten. For example: DC trip, Cedar Point, the Faculty-Student Volleyball Game, and other leadership activities."

- Ana Ferrante, 8th Grade Student



"I have a unique perspective in regards to our current situation. I am both a teacher at Gesu and also the parent of a current 8th grader. As a parent I am grateful for all of the work that the administration has done to develop a plan that allows our students to be safely back at school. The students have been true champions. The necessary modifications that we have made to school are not the easiest, yet the kids are managing beautifully. As a teacher, I am glad to be back in the classroom! Teachers are natural problem solvers. None of us ever imagined what teaching would be like during a pandemic and yet every day we are creating solutions so that our students can continue to not only learn, but thrive in this time."

- Genevieve Kenealy, Advanced Language Arts 5-8 Teacher

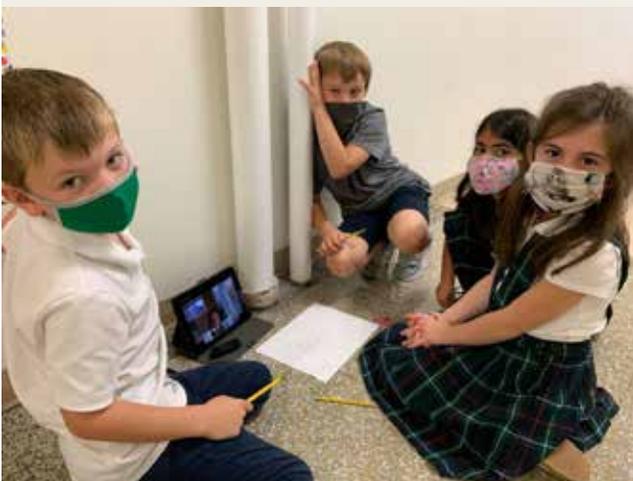
"The hardest part of the changes is that we don't switch classrooms and we have to social distance on the playground. I miss traveling to specials but we still go to the library which is exciting and I am very happy about that. The blessing is that we are really lucky to go to school. So many of our friends and neighbors don't get to do that. My biggest hope for the school year is that it will be safe enough for the Zoom students to return to school. It is harder for them than it is for us and I miss them."

- Libby Fitzgerald, 4th Grade Student



"Overall, I am feeling great about the school year so far. When I started school back in September, it was a lot of change to adapt to. Change from not being in school physically for so long, as well as changes within the school like lunch and recess. However, I was excited to be back in school and I was ready for the challenge of this school year. Not being able to socialize with everyone in the ways of the past was difficult at first, however each day it becomes more and more of my new normal. Although I am not a remote learner I can only imagine the difficulty of being in front of a screen all day and zooming into classes. I am definitely grateful for being able to be in school full time with my friends this year even though things may look slightly different."

- Katherine Frawley, 8th Grade Student



"There are certainly new challenges that we face as educators. However, I do not believe there is anything that we can't handle in order to do what is best for our students within the new learning format. I have been able to adjust to the changes that we have made by keeping a positive mindset, being very flexible, utilizing problem solving skills, and collaborating with my colleagues to the best of my abilities. I have seen firsthand how hard our faculty and staff go above and beyond to do what is best for our students and that has motivated me for each and every day."

- Brad Davidson, Physical Education K-8

"First and foremost, I was very grateful to be able to return to face-to-face instruction with our students. There is so much joy in being able to interact with the students in class and watching them grow and mature as the year progresses, and I really missed that during remote learning last spring. The students have been very flexible with all of the changes this school year has brought, and seem genuinely grateful to be back in school."

"With all of that said, the truth is that this year has been the most challenging of my teaching career thus far. Aside from logistical challenges of moving classrooms and managing new technology, the most difficult part has been managing remote and in person learners simultaneously. The remote learning model is very different from the one we used in the spring, with students participating in real time, synchronous classes. This provides a more comprehensive and rigorous Gesu education to our remote learners, but also comes with additional challenges of trying to support these learners from a distance."

- Clare Hogan, Grade Eight Teacher

"I find it difficult to stay a safe distance away from friends and classmates at recess. It is also hard to keep a mask on. At least we get to go back to school this year, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to be able to do this. I hope that we will be able to start to switch classrooms and interact with other classes at recess soon! I also hope that everyone at Gesu will stay healthy, and that a vaccine for the virus will be discovered quickly."

- Josh Young , 6th Grade Student

"I'm glad I got to try out both (*in-person and virtual learning*) and figure out what was best. I like how my teachers are working hard and understanding how difficult it is for us as well. I prefer being in person much more than online. My hope for this school year is that eventually we can go back to normal and all be together to have a great final year at Gesu. I wish and pray for this."

-Delaney Santarelli, 8th Grade Student



"I was very excited to have the 2020-21 school year start! After months of preparation, it was truly wonderful to see the smiling faces of our Gesu School students back in the building with us. I am filled with gratitude for our Gesu School community — my dedicated and caring colleagues, the Gesu parents who have been so supportive of our efforts, and our students who have adjusted remarkably well to wearing masks and seem genuinely happy to be back in school. Despite the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, we remain committed to providing Gesu students with a rigorous academic experience, a nurturing environment in which to develop their individual talents and abilities, opportunities for leadership and service to the community, and enjoying some fun times as a school community! We are indeed "Better Together."

- Judi Herbert, Admissions & Tuition Director

(Continued from page 1)

because this is what Jesus told them. Why would they doubt his words! It is this belief that the Apostles passed on to our earliest brothers and sisters in the faith. The earliest writings we have from that first century, show us that communities founded by the apostles believed that Jesus Christ was truly present to them in the bread and wine when Christians gathered to pray, as Jesus and the Apostles did at the Last Supper.

Perhaps even more important than the writings of the first and second century, was the "practice of the faith" by early Christians. What did the earliest Christians actually do when they gathered to pray? They celebrated the Eucharist!

The Real Presence of Christ, in His Body and Blood, is what gave them the strength to endure trials, persecutions, and torture long before all the New Testament was even gathered together in a book. Without that belief and without knowing that Jesus was truly with them when they celebrated the Eucharist, it is doubtful the early Church would have had the strength to survive and grow.

We need to remind ourselves that the Church had its practices, that is, the Eucharist, before it had its scriptures. The Eucharist came before the Scriptures. It was the believing Church that wrote the scriptures. So we can ask ourselves: Why did the Church believe in the Real Presence? It's quite simple.

It was the Apostles who passed this on from Jesus to their followers; it is also the strongest and firmest belief of the early Church. It's what gave the community life and hope and helped the followers accomplish the biggest "miracle" of all, the exponential growth of the faith despite the risk of torture and persecution. Each time we receive the Eucharist, we are connected right back to Jesus Christ and his profound gift of mercy and love. The most precious gift that the Apostles and the early Church gave us was the gift of being united to Jesus' mercy and love in the sacrifice of the Cross. We do that every time we celebrate the Eucharist.

Fr. Karl J. Kiser, SJ  
Pastor

## ALUMNI UPDATES



*Cyril Pinchak, Class of '98*

Gesu's own Rev. Cyril Pinchak, SJ, was ordained in Parma at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Cathedral on June 24, 2017- the Feast of St. John the Baptist. His second Mass was the following day at Gesu, attended by a multitude of family and friends. Fr. Pinchak's family has always attended both Byzantine and Roman Catholic Masses. As part of the fabric of family and culture from his birth, it comes as no surprise that Fr. Pinchak is Bi-Ritual, able to celebrate both Byzantine and Roman Catholic Masses.

After ordination in 2017, he traveled to Rome where he studied Byzantine Theology for three years with Jesuits from around the world. From the year 1917, the Society of Jesus – the Jesuits – was charged by the Pope with educating men and women from Eastern Christian Churches. Arriving in Rome in 2017, Fr. Pinchak's good fortune was the celebration of this Jesuit 100 year anniversary and a special Mass with the Pope.

Recently given faculties of the Diocese of Cleveland by permission of the Very Rev, Brian G. Paulson, SJ, provincial of the USA Midwest Province of the Society of Jesus, Fr. Pinchak is now a faculty member of St. Ignatius High School. There he teaches Freshmen Theology and Junior Morality, as well as helps coach Cross-Country. He also celebrates Masses at area churches on week-ends. We are exceedingly proud of this Gesu School graduate. With his father and mother, Dr. Alfred and Mary Pinchak, his entire family has been members of Gesu for many years.

Mary Brigid Sammon, daughter of longtime Gesu parishioners, Tom and Molly Sammon, was recently presented with The White Hat Award from the Florida Attorney General, Ashley Moody. This award is one that "acknowledges individuals who go above and beyond job performance and are consistently demonstrating a dedication to our mission of serving Floridians."



*Mary Brigid Sammon, Class of '96*

Mary Brigid, along with her sisters and brothers, attended Gesu School and she graduated in 1996. After Walsh Jesuit and The Ohio State University, Mary took a brief hiatus and then moved to Orlando, Florida, attending Barry University School of Law. As Assistant Statewide Prosecutor, her work for the Florida Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution began in 2016. Congratulations Mary Brigid. You make Gesu proud!

### GESU ALUMNI UPDATE - NEWS & VIEWS Fall 2020

*Note: Photos are welcomed. Thank you.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class of \_\_\_\_\_  
*(include maiden name, if applicable)*

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

News you'd like to share with classmates in a future issue of *Gesu News & Views*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## WE REMEMBER SR. MARIA ROSA

Dear Friends of Sociedad,

As we've learned of the death of Sr. Maria Rosa, we share in your sorrow and feelings of loss. On behalf of the Honduran Children's Rescue Fund and Gesu Church, please accept our condolences on the passing of our dear matriarch & friend.



Along with time, which we hope will assuage some sadness, please know that we joyfully work daily to support Sociedad Amigos de los Niños, the children, and the mission and vision of Sr. Rosa. We trust that our continued efforts on behalf

of the children will bring comfort to you in the weeks, months and years ahead.

We look forward to our immediate work, where normally we would be alongside you in person. God has a plan and although we may not be physically present, we strive to always be with you. Just like Sr. Maria Rosa always will be.

Sincerely,

Your HCRF/Gesu Family

Brian J. Smith

President, Honduran Children's Rescue Fund

*Looking for a unique Christmas gift this year?*

This holiday season, give a timeless gift: an inscribed brick or paver in honor or memory of a friend or loved one. The piazza outside Gesu's Madonna della Strada Pastoral Center has many bricks and pavers that commemorate a milestone such as an anniversary, a graduation, or a Gesu legacy family. The bricks (\$100) and pavers (\$175) may be purchased through our website [www.churchofthegesu.org](http://www.churchofthegesu.org), or call the Development Office at (216) 932-0617. **Happy Shopping!**

STAY CONNECTED WITH OUR NEW

## PARISH APP

Gesu has recently launched a new parish app and it's a way to stay connected with us! This app allows you to be engaged, learn about upcoming events, receive important messages, grow your faith and much more.

To download the app, simply go to the Apple App Store:

<https://apple.co/3fLcN5e>

or

Google Play Store:

<https://bit.ly/32KuH46>

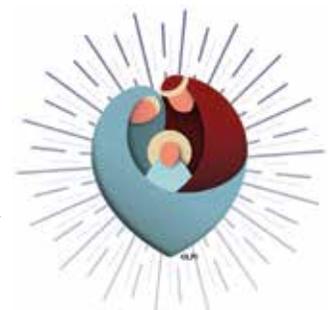
Select WeConnect Parish App and, once open, choose Church of the Gesu. If you have any questions, please reach out to us at [communications@churchofthegesu.org](mailto:communications@churchofthegesu.org).



## CHRISTMAS MASSES AT GESU

This year, Gesu Parish will be celebrating Christmas Masses. We are very sensitive to the COVID-19 pandemic and will be following the directives of the Diocese of Cleveland to ensure the safety of our parishioners and guests. So please be aware that seating will be extremely limited. Please go to our website [www.churchofthegesu.org](http://www.churchofthegesu.org) for up-to-date information and the Mass Schedule.

We wish you and your family a very safe and healthy Christmas Season. God Bless you.



## MISSION STATEMENT

*Gesu Parish, a Catholic community in the Jesuit tradition, is committed to:  
Eucharistic living, Lifelong learning, Generous serving "all for the greater glory of God."*

### EUCHARISTIC LIVING

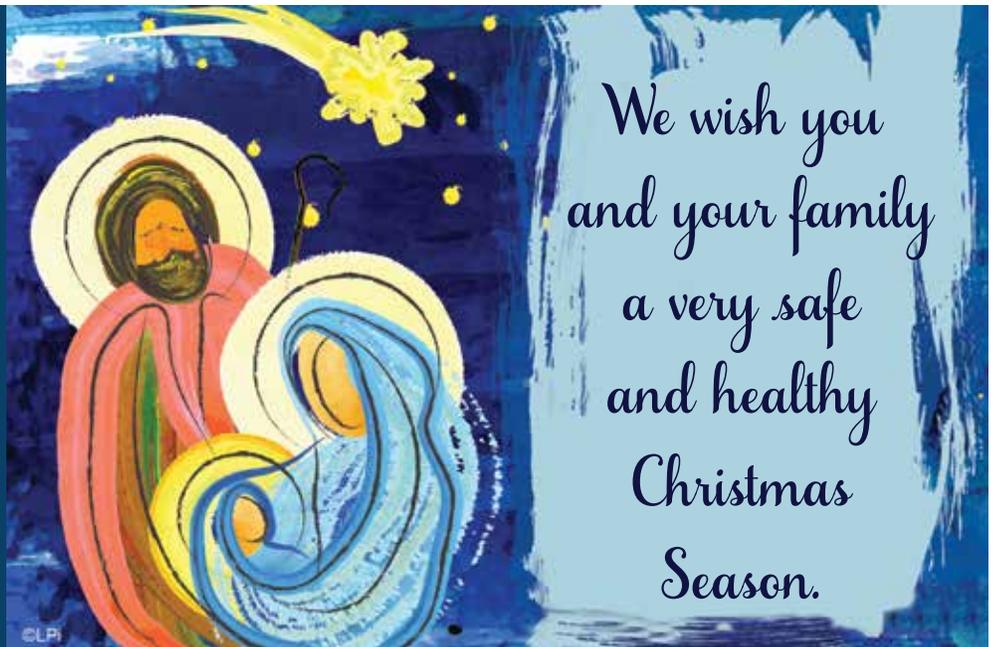
We center our lives in Christ and the celebration of the Eucharist.

### LIFELONG LEARNING

We engage, at all ages, in learning and being formed in the image of Christ.

### GENEROUS SERVING

We use our gifts to serve God and others.



*We wish you  
and your family  
a very safe  
and healthy  
Christmas  
Season.*

## PARISH AND SCHOOL STAFF

Rev. Karl Kiser, SJ, Pastor  
Rev. Michael Vincent, SJ, Associate Pastor  
Rev. Gregory Hyde, SJ, Priest in Residence  
Rev. Dr. James O'Donnell, Deacon  
Sr. Kathleen Flannery, OSU, Parish Life Director & Liturgist  
Marcia Leous, Co-Director of Faith Formation  
Mary von Carlowitz, Co-Director of Faith Formation  
Mark Ehrbar, Director of Music Ministry  
Jennifer Lee, Youth Minister

Therese Blumenthal, Business Manager  
Mary Kate Farrar, Development & Communications Director  
Amy Zucca, Outreach Coordinator  
Lucy Iemmolo, Principal  
Mary Carol Jones, Assistant Principal  
Regan Kazel, Assistant Principal  
Debbie Lautenbach, Preschool Director  
Matthew Culkar, Athletic Director  
Michael Martinek, Technology Director

**VOLUNTEER EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:** Gesu Communication Committee

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*All efforts have been made to provide accurate information. Please contact us for corrections.*