

# ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

CLEVELAND, OHIO

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## The Pilgrim Way of Ignatius Loyola *Everyone Is Called to Pray*

**A**s fellow Christians, we have one fundamental facet in common with each other — we all desire to pray better.

“Absolutely everyone has questions about prayer,” says Fr. Michael Troha. “I have yet to meet the person perfectly happy with how he or she prays! We all ask, ‘How can I pray better?’”

The Pilgrim Way of Ignatius Loyola is a special Lenten program offered at St. Ignatius of Antioch Catholic Church that invites us to consider more deeply our prayer lives.

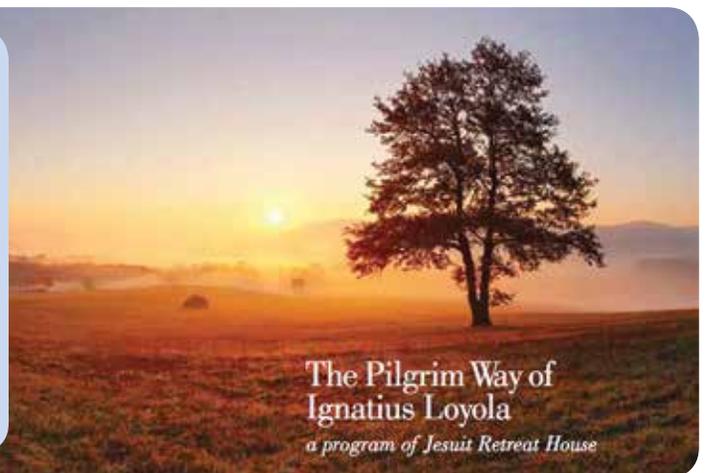
“This is a opportunity to learn to pray and to learn to pray better — to do so in a tried and true way of opening our hearts to God,” Fr. Troha says.

The program consists of four Tuesday evening gatherings beginning on Feb. 13, the day before Ash Wednesday, from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Kathy Haag of the Jesuit Retreat House will facilitate the evenings that will focus on different aspects of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola.

*continued on back cover*

### You are invited

*to discover more  
about the dynamic practice  
of Ignatian Spirituality,  
a spirituality that helps  
us to be open to the call  
of God in our life.*



The Pilgrim Way of  
Ignatius Loyola  
*a program of Jesuit Retreat House*

## Making the Most of Every Sunday *Putting God First*

**M**any Americans set aside their Sundays to enjoy various leisure activities. Indeed, Sundays during the summer months may include cookouts, or perhaps afternoons spent at the swimming pool or baseball stadium. And when fall arrives, many fans will certainly be spending their Sundays in front of the television, as they become engrossed in the excitement of the National Football League's highly anticipated Sunday games.

Sunday is also the day when more than 18,000 Catholic parishes in the United States will be celebrating Masses. But if recent statistics are any indication, the percentage of the U.S. Catholic population attending Mass that day will stand in stark contrast to the percentage of the U.S. television audience watching Sunday football games.

According to the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life's U.S. Religious Landscape Survey published in 2008, Catholics account for roughly 23.9 percent of the adult population in the United States. But of the 70 million-plus registered Catholics in the U.S., only 36 percent attend Mass once a week or more, according to Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate. Only 12 percent of U.S. Catholics participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year, and a mere 17 percent of Catholic men say they have ever slightly considered becoming a priest or religious brother.

God gives us leisure time to clear our heads and recover from what can often be a hectic daily life. But it is important that we glorify God in all that we do, and time away from

work or school provides a great opportunity to regularly celebrate the sacraments. As Catholics, we are obligated to attend Mass on a weekly basis, barring illness or extenuating circumstances. But this is just the first step. Spending time in prayer, Eucharistic Adoration and Reconciliation provides us with the grace, healing and the wisdom to live as disciples of Christ on a daily basis. And sharing our time, talent and treasure through ministry participation and charitable giving enables us to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ, thus ensuring that we are placing God at the top of our list of priorities.

Each Sunday presents an opportunity for us to foster our discipleship commitments to Christ. So, make the time and discern ways that you can put God first, on every Sunday throughout the year.



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## A Letter From Our Pastor

# Resolve to Give Back to God in 2018

Dear Parishioners,

Another new year — 2018! There was a time in my life when this date (and others) seemed so far in the future. It is amazing how those dates start to pile up and stream by, isn't it? I have reached a point where measuring one's life by the years and dates is not as significant as many other things.

I recall reading somewhere, "The world around us asks, 'What does a person own?' But God asks, 'How does a person use what he or she has been given?'" This month of January is one filled with reminders of holiness — the official end of the Christmas season; the Epiphany of our Lord; the Baptism of the Lord; and the return to Ordinary Time, which, as we know, is not "ordinary" at all.

At Epiphany we hear, "Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts" (Matthew 2:11), a reference to the Magi and their visit to the Christ Child. The image of the Magi kneeling before the infant Jesus and opening their gifts for Him is one we should all try to follow. Each of us is called to open our gifts before Jesus and offer Him what He needs. I heard a suggestion once that if you have a problem with this thought, you should perhaps keep one of the Magi from your Christmas Nativity set and place it on your desk as a reminder.

During the Baptism of the Lord, God makes it clear when He proclaims from the Heavens, "You are my beloved



Son; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). God has given us the greatest gift He could give. He gave His only Son. When we think about the enormity of that gift of Jesus sent to save us, in addition to all the other blessings that God has entrusted to us, it is very humbling. God has given us so much. What do we give in return?

Making resolutions is common at this time of year. We will also hear this month about how Jesus called the first apostles.

The Lord calls us as well to follow Him. Let us resolve to try to do that better — all of us. That does not mean we have to leave our work and our families behind, but we do need to put our service to Jesus. That should be our top resolution.

In *The Theology of the Hammer*, Habitat for Humanity co-founder Millard Fuller wrote, "The only truly safe investment one can make in life is what is given away." First and foremost, God wants us. That should be our real resolution — to give ourselves to the Lord. May we all do a better job of that in 2018. God bless you all.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Michael Troha  
Pastor

## Bill and Donna Woods Strive to Perform

*“Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...”* Of course, we have recited these familiar words from the Our Father countless times throughout our lives. So much so, that we may only rarely think of the profound meaning behind this simple prayer. Yet, for St. Ignatius of Antioch parishioners Bill and Donna Woods, these words remain a powerful reminder of what stewardship is truly all about — namely, doing our best to perform God’s will here on earth.

“We’re supposed to teach others what it means to be Catholic through our daily actions, to show others what it means to be kind to one another by being helpful whenever we can,” Donna says. “And in the process, that brings me so much closer to God because I’m seeking to live the way he would — to do His will here on earth.”

Donna and Bill have been part of our St. Ignatius of Antioch family throughout almost their entire marriage, first joining 30 years ago. It’s the place where their

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— Donna Woods



*Despite experiencing some of life’s greatest tragedies, Donna and Bill Woods continue to profess themselves as blessed by God.*

three sons received their grammar school education and all of their sacraments. It’s the parish where Bill attended RCIA formation, fully embracing the Catholic faith in 2010 after years of participating in the community with his family. And it’s the church family that has seen

them through both some of life’s most joyous and tragic moments. But through every new phase of life, every high and low, the Woods family has strived to live out the words “Thy will be done,” serving in whatever ways they could and trusting wholeheartedly in the Lord’s plan.

“As complicated as life can get sometimes and as difficult as it can be to serve, I really can’t imagine not doing some of the things that we do,” Donna says.

“It truly brings me joy and even calms me at times to know that I’m helping to support our church,” Bill adds. “Even when I wasn’t Catholic,

# Form God's Will Here on Earth

Donna would always be volunteering for things and I'd tag along, helping wherever needed. And to me, there was always a joyfulness to it. We had fun doing it together and there was just this overwhelming good feeling that came from us giving back."

Together, the couple has served for countless parish and school functions. Following his conversion, Bill has played an active role in the parish's RCIA process, continuing to serve as a sponsor whenever needed. Bill has also enjoyed participating in parish Bible studies over the years and is currently a member of the Parish Council. Donna, meanwhile, has played countless roles within the parish, working in the St. Ignatius School office, serving as the PTU president, and running the before- and after-school care program for a number of years.

Yet, beyond their extensive list of services, what's even more inspiring about the Woods family is the way they have chosen to view life's struggles as blessings. Over the years, they've had to face the loss of both of their fathers, Donna's sister, and then in 2015 the very sudden death of their eldest son, who was only 26 years old. Yet, despite this intense loss and tragedy, Donna and Bill continue to profess themselves as blessed.

"Many don't understand how we can continue to keep our faith when we have this tragedy," Donna

says. "But you have to kind of look at things a little bit differently. It's not that it's a blessing that our son died, but it's a blessing that we *had* him. I'm thankful for the gift that we had. I wish that it had been longer, but he was a really great guy who did a lot of good while he was here. I'm thankful every day that God chose us to be his parents. So how can I turn that around and be upset with Him now that our son's gone?"

"The way I see it is that we have an obligation to honor them for being in our lives — to do everything we possibly can to move forward and help other people out," Bill says.

So, Donna and Bill strive to perform God's will here on earth,

giving wherever they can — whether it's here at church or to a homeless person on the side of the road. And in the process, their faith continues to grow and blossom, anchoring them during the tough moments and filling their hearts with hope and joy.

"I think that we can't help but think that God has a plan — it's not for us to try and figure out and manipulate, because we can't," Donna says. "But I consider all the things that we have a blessing. And looking back, our faith has truly brought us much closer together than we've ever been. It's what grounds us and gets us started for the week. It's our source of comfort and support."



*Donna and Bill Woods with their three sons*

## Mass Reverence and Etiquette

For many of us, when we are invited to a wedding, one of our first considerations is “what am I going to wear?” We wouldn’t think of showing up at a formal event in our workout clothes. How many of us search for just the right outfit to wear to our annual office party or on a date? Compare that to how much thought we put into what we wear to Mass on Sunday.

How we dress for an occasion indicates the importance that we place upon that particular celebration. At Mass, we encounter God through the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Dressing appropriately for Mass is one way that we show respect both for God and for our faith family. And this respect is important at all Masses – no matter what time of day or night.

Think about what you are teaching your children when you all wear your “Sunday clothes” to Mass. You are reminding them that Mass is a special celebration. After all, we are going to Jesus’ house.

Some people may quickly point out that Mass shouldn’t be a fashion show – a place to show off your finery – and they are right! We also know that some parishioners come to Mass on their way home from work, and they certainly should not feel embarrassed about arriving at Mass in their work clothes. And no one should ever stay away from Mass because of simplicity of clothing.

But one rule should apply in all instances – our attire at Mass should always be modest. Our clothing should never distract others from what we are gathered together to celebrate – the life, death and resurrection of our Lord.

The celebration of Mass is always a holy occasion and thus should be treated in the most holy manner – in body, mind and spirit.



## Highlights of Our 2017 Stewardship Renewal

PRAY AT  
*All Times*  
ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

2017 COMMITMENT CARD  
*My offering of time, talent & treasure*

First & Last Name (use one card per family)

Street Address

City State ZIP

Telephone (important)

Email address

Please bring this card to Mass on October 28th/29th, or mail using the envelope provided. Thanks and God bless you for your involvement in our parish community!

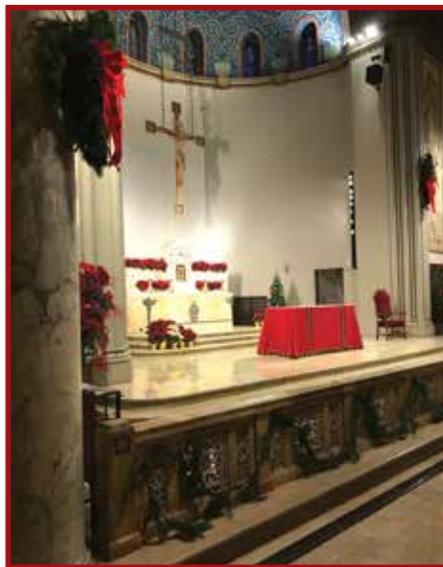
This past fall, our parish leadership conducted the 2017 Stewardship Renewal. We are happy to share with you some of the highlights of the Renewal:

- ✦ A total of 122 Commitment Cards were received, for a return rate of 32 percent.
- ✦ There were 374 Prayer Commitments – or commitments to Stewardship of Time.
- ✦ There were 354 Ministry Commitments – or commitments to Stewardship of Talent. Of these, 92 were new commitments, while 262 were recommitments to parish ministries.
- ✦ There were 82 Offertory Commitments – or commitments to Stewardship of Treasure. The average annual offering pledged was \$1,509.51.

We thank all of those who took part in the 2017 Stewardship Renewal and returned a Commitment Card. If you did not return a Commitment Card as part of the Renewal, we encourage you to consider the many ways you may become involved in parish life at St. Ignatius of Antioch. May we all continue to strive to live out stewardship in the New Year of 2018 and beyond!

# Christmas at St. Ignatius of Antioch

*As our parish community gathered to celebrate Christmas this past December, our church environment most certainly reflected the reverence and joy of this season.*



# ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

10205 Lorain Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44111  
216-251-0300

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[sioa.weconnect.com](http://sioa.weconnect.com)

Change Service Requested

## Mass Schedule

Saturday, 5:00 p.m.

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

## The Pilgrim Way of Ignatius Loyola: Everyone Is Called to Pray

*continued from front cover*

“Ignatian spirituality is a wonderful way of directing one’s life towards holiness,” Fr. Troha says. “The evenings will include teaching, personal witness and stories, sharing, conversation and fellowship.”

Different individuals trained at the Ignatian Spirituality Institute at John Carroll University will address respectively the main focus questions for each week:

Session 1 – What happens when you encounter Christ?

Session 2 – What is my deepest desire?

Session 3 – Is it possible to find God in all things?

Session 4 – How can I love as God loves?

*If you would like more information about The Pilgrim Way of Ignatius Loyola, please reach out to the parish office at 216-251-0300.*

“The speakers are two women and two men, including one Protestant minister,” Fr. Troha says. “After each of the talks, there will be a period of silent reflection and a small group discussion.”

Everyone is invited, and if you’re unable to make the four-week commitment, then attend when you can.

“I intend to take part in the retreat myself, and don’t be afraid when you hear the word ‘retreat’” Fr. Troha says. “It is for everyone. I guarantee you’ll learn to pray better.”

The Pilgrim Way of Ignatius Loyola is a retreat that will not only help us to create habits of prayer, but also help us maintain these habits in our daily lives, drawing us into a deeper relationship with Christ.

“Everyone is called to pray,” Fr. Troha says. “The commitment is the big step, just like an athlete commits to practice every day. From that commitment, there are materials and methods to help us continue the habit of daily self-reflection and prayer.”