



ST. IGNATIUS CATHOLIC CHURCH

MONTHLY ENGLISH BULLETIN

May 2021

MONTH OF MAY: ITS NOT JUST THE GOLDEN WEEK!

The month of May. What immediately comes to mind is Golden Week—that cluster of holidays that results in an extended break for most of Japan, a time when huge swaths of the population embark on domestic and international vacations. But this year, due to COVID-19, Golden Week was different, right? It was for most of us a “Stay Home Week.” And so, what is there left to look forward to, for the rest of the month?

A lot! In the Catholic Church, May is a wonderful month. We continue to savor the joy of Easter for two more weeks. Then we have three Solemnities to look forward to, the **Ascension of the Lord** (May 16), **Pentecost Sunday** (May 23), **The Most Holy Trinity** (May 30) and the **Feast of the Visitation** of the Blessed Virgin Mary (May 31). What is the difference between a Solemnity and a Feast? Solemnities mark the highest degree of Catholic celebrations. They celebrate the most important mysteries of the Catholic faith. Second in line of importance are Feast days. These are special days set apart on the liturgical calendar to celebrate the lives of the saints and other events in the life of Christ, like the Visitation. To know more of what they are all about, do read the article of Neil Day on page 3 about THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

May is also the month of Mary, our Blessed Mother — that joyful month of

spring when many children and young people in Christian countries offer flowers to Mary and sing songs, and adults recite rosaries for special needs of their own or of the world. At St Ignatius, we have the **LIVING ROSARY**. Two years ago, we had a beautiful concert in the main church participated in by various church groups and nationalities. Last year, even in the midst of the pandemic, we had a candle-lit rosary on the church lawn. How about this year? A novelty is that there will be children in the forefront supported by their catechists and parents. Do open page 4 and see the beautiful poster for details.

Last but not the least, this month of May is the start of the “**Ignatian Year**.” Being a Jesuit parish, together with the

by Sr. Flor Florece, F.I

whole Church, the Society of Jesus and all our friends, we will celebrate in keeping with the chosen motto, “To see all things new in Christ.” What is the reason for such a celebration? How should it be celebrated? Go to page 6, the Special Feature section, where you can read the letter of Fr. Renzo de Luca, Provincial of the Jesuits in Japan, as he addresses all Jesuits of the Province and Co-Workers. “Co-workers” means us, the John de Britto English Center and our many volunteers, right?

Yes, in this month of May there are definitely many things still to look forward to. **All these are a way to God.** May our Blessed Mother be our intercessor, inspiration, and guide!





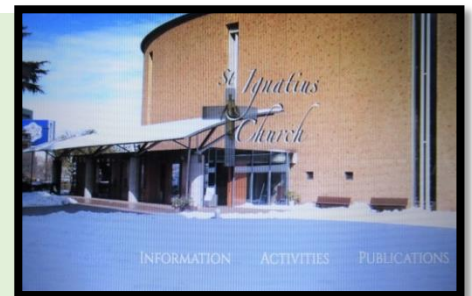
That vaccination in various Prefectures has begun and some people are undecided what to do. Regarding this, the Vatican has announced guidelines that Catholics are allowed to get vaccinated. Pope Francis himself has already been vaccinated (see the following website link: <https://www.cbcj.catholic.jp/2021/01/26/22002/>). However, because of your religious beliefs you also have the freedom not to be vaccinated. Vaccination is not compulsory. Please decide based your own judgment. See printed matter or English website article on Announcement from Pastor (April, 2021)

That applications are now being accepted for the Sacrament of Confirmation? Three dates have been marked for the Ceremony:

June 27 at 3:30 p.m. (Archbishop Isao Kikuchi, SVD)
 July 25 at 10:00 a.m. (Fr. Ryūichirō Hanafusa, SJ)
 August 29 at 10:00 a.m. (Fr. Ryūichirō Hanafusa, SJ)

Unfortunately, the first date is already full and so only the other two are still open. Catechism classes are required, and applicants can choose either of two languages. For Japanese, inquire at the Church Office. For English, at the John de Britto English Center. For the international community, the deadline for applying is May 23.

That the combined number of user hits of our Website in English and Spanish has reached more than 1 million already? The Web site was created in 2017 and has since undergone various changes to meet the needs and interests of the users. The pandemic, without doubt, has heightened the thirst of people for information, formation, and evangelization through this media format.



That the church will have a General Cleaning on June 5, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.? We need as many volunteers as we can. The church is God's house and our second home, so with joy and great energy let us make it spic and span! Come to the English Center and have your name entered on the list!

That with this new fiscal year, seven new members joined the Parish Council? We thank the old members for their selfless dedication and tenacity in serving this huge parish community in the midst of many challenges due to the pandemic. Otsukare-sama deshita! And for the new ones, Yoroshiku onegai shimasu!



That the Ushers Group, our "frontliners" during the 12:00 p.m. English Sunday Mass, have come up with their own LOGO and ACRONYM? These show how they envision their identity and mission. They will be wearing T-shirts with these on them so that you can clearly identify them as they make themselves available at your service before, during, and after Mass.

The Catholic Faith

A May Month full of Feast Days and Celebrations

by Neil Day



**Pentecost by Jean II Restout
(1692-1768)**

Source: Wikicommons



**The Gonzaga Family Worshipping the
Holy Trinity by Peter Paul Rubens
(1577-1640) - Wikicommons**



**The Ascension by
Benjamin West
(1738-1820)
Wikicommons**

The month of May immediately brings back fond early memories of schoolyard banner-spectacled parades for our Blessed Mother lead by the nuns singing, 'Hail Queen of Heaven'. This year, drawing back the curtain, we can see that May is truly the month of Mary and yet we also have other significant feast days and celebrations making May a wonderful month for reflection, prayer and inspiration. In particular we have the Ascension of the Lord, Pentecost Sunday, The Most Holy Trinity, and the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Let us also remember St. Joseph the Worker, (May 1st) in this 'Year of St. Joseph.

In the Church, celebrations apart from Sundays consist of Solemnities, Feasts and Memorials, with a Solemnity being the highest in rank (The Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Assumption of Mary, the Birth of John the Baptist, and some others) and are sometimes a Holy Day of Obligation, such as Christmas and the Solemnity of the Mother of God (Jan. 1). A Feast, second in importance, marks a mystery or title of the Lord or Our Lady and includes patron saints or saints of historical impact. Memorials, third in importance, may or may not necessitate following a predetermined liturgy.

Some celebrations may be moved to the following Sunday, such as the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord (May 16th). The 'Ascension' is the departure of Christ into Heaven. It is celebrated forty days after His Resurrection and falls on a Thursday, though in Japan it is moved to the following Sunday.

The Solemnity of Pentecost, 'the birthday of the Church', (May 23rd, 2021) occurs fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus and ten days after his ascension into heaven. Pentecost also heralds the end of the Easter season and the birth of the Church. It is here that the Holy Spirit descended in tongues of fire onto the Apostles and Our Blessed Mother, bestowing on them the spiritual and temporal gifts needed to grow the Church and evangelize the world.

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity (May 30th, 2021) falls on the Sunday after Pentecost. It lauds the central mystery of our Faith, namely, the three persons in one God - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (May 31st, 2021) celebrates her visit, though pregnant with Jesus, to her relative Elizabeth, who was pregnant with John the Baptist.

These special Solemnities and Feasts of the Church provide wonderfully rich opportunities for special prayers, meditation and joy. Combined with the many other Feast days and Memorials of May, this month can be the month for renewed hope, inspiration and re-energizing our spiritual journey, whatever our trials, temptations, and weaknesses may be, and they can certainly be a source of comfort in the face of this virus pandemic.

St. Ignatius Church News and Events

Feast of the Divine Mercy



Since the time of Saint Pope John Paul II's papacy, the Second Sunday of Easter has been celebrated as "Divine Mercy Sunday." In the twentieth century, a Polish nun, Sister Faustina Kowalska, had a private revelation about God's mercy expressed in a visual image of mercy flowing like rays of light coming from the body of Christ.

In the 12:00 p.m. Sunday English Mass celebrated by Fr. David Wessels SJ, a large picture of the Divine Mercy was placed beside the altar upon the request of several devotees. At the beginning of the Mass, Fr. Wessels said, "It is an occasion for us to deepen our faith and hope and love of God who continues to pour out his mercy on our world, on all peoples, as we stand in need of forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace amid all the troubles that come from our failures to follow Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

One Japanese, Masako Sakaguchi, wrote afterwards, "Personally since I started in Poland to deepen my devotion to the Divine Mercy, I really feel myself much closer to God's love. Reading and reflecting on the diary of St. Faustina make me feel that Jesus is next to me. Having dialogues with Jesus warms my heart, and in the end, I feel wrapped in his unconditional love. It brings me great peace, hope, and courage to continue on my journey. During the Mass, I strongly felt that to be united with God means to show our love and mercy to our neighbors as well."

Year End Evaluation

Last year, when the world was so preoccupied with COVID 19 and many church activities were cancelled, evaluation of the activities of the John de Britto English Center was not possible. Fortunately, this year, we were able to hold an evaluation on April 17 via ZOOM and attended by 29 participants. An evaluation form had been given to the various Ministries and Groups ahead of time and a summary was reported by the representatives. A fresh impetus from the Spirit came in the presence of four Parish Council Members who were attending our meeting for the first time.



The objectives were to evaluate our services during the past year of pandemic and to help improve our services in this new year April 2021-March 2022. Evaluated were the newly created activities, the sacraments, the celebration of feasts, including suggestions for improvement, joys and challenges, and how volunteering had helped each one personally as a member of their Ministry/Group and as a Christian.

Most of the activities got **Very Good** ratings, especially those newly created to cope with the pandemic—like having two English Masses, the creation of a Roaming Team at the start to assist Mass-goers with on-line registration, the vigilance of the Ushers to enforce protocols. Likewise, celebration of the sacraments and the solemnity of liturgical celebrations and feasts and the greatly reduced choir got very good ratings. The new format of the English Bulletin and its placement on the parish website was greatly appreciated for being able to reach more people. Also, the efforts exerted to produce videos as tools for children's catechism. Online meetings and retreats were deemed **Good** as long as face-to-face meetings are not yet possible. However, the present location of the confessional was evaluated only **Satisfactory**.

Regarding joys, the volunteers were extremely grateful that, in spite of the pandemic, we had Masses, had opportunities to meet even though limited in numbers, and thus felt "we are not alone, the Church is there." Volunteering in the Center had given people "more life," greater purpose, and connected them more deeply to God and the community. It was also acknowledged that the Coordinators with Fr. Bony are doing their best in addressing the needs of the whole congregation.

When asked for some feedback, the Parish Council said that the challenges mentioned by the Group, like the On-Line registration for Masses, are also experienced by the Japanese community. One said that listening to the sharing was very enlightening and she learned a lot. Another was surprised at how coordinated the activities are. On our part, their presence has brought the Council closer to us. Hopefully, we will be able to work together more and more to unite the various parish groups and become one big family of God.

Homily Corner

First Communion



On April 18, 2021, 3rd Sunday of Easter, two children and two young adolescents received the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time in their lives. One was Japanese, another Indian, and two were Filipino-Japanese. Three priests concelebrated the Mass—Fr. Hanafusa SJ, Fr. Bony James SJ, and a guest priest, Fr. Antony Susai SVD, who came all the way from Nagoya.

Fr. Susai, who delivered the homily, said, “For the last 2000 and more years, it is the celebration of the Eucharist and consumption of Holy Communion that has kept the Church going during good and bad times. All the saints, all our forerunners in our Catholic Church derived their strength and inspiration from Holy Communion.” Citing Mother Teresa of Calcutta, he said, “It was Christ in Holy Communion who gave her the power and energy to serve the poorest of the poor. In our daily life.” He continued, “we Christians are gifted with the sacraments, which give us the strength and grace to overcome all our difficulties and problems. Sacraments are the external manifestation of internal grace. In the different stages of our life, we receive God’s abundant grace through them. And of the seven, Confession and Holy Communion are administered very many times.”

Addressing the First Communicants, Fr. Susai asked about the Sacrament of Reconciliation, “How was your experience?” He said, “Whenever we go to confession, we feel very light and pure in our heart and mind. It is because we unload the unnecessary baggage of our sins. We feel very serene, calm, peaceful and holy. The more we go to confession, the more we are blessed with God’s grace.” Of the Holy Eucharist, he said, “The only way to become very close and intimate with Christ is to receive Holy Communion as often as possible. We are spiritually nourished. Christ becomes part and parcel of our body and soul.”

In conclusion, he said, “Dear Communicants, remember only two things today. Jesus is eagerly waiting for us in Confession and in Communion. Remember also: ALTAR: Adore, Love, Thank, Ask, Resolve.

God’s Time and Our Time

Gospel Homily for the Second Sunday of Easter (Jn 20:19-31)

by Fr. David Wessels, SJ



One of the ways the Church helps us come closer to God is through the seasons that we celebrate throughout the liturgical year. We have completed the forty days of Lent and now for the last eight days we have been celebrating Easter. The complete Easter Season lasts fifty days, including the Solemnity of the Ascension of our Lord, and continues until the Solemnity of Pentecost.

Our relationship with time can get all mixed up. We become victims of clocks and calendars and schedules. Many people have said that during this year of struggle with the Covid-19 pandemic, they feel stuck in monotony, in a feeling that time is unchanging, that there is no future, just a dull, repetitive, even threatening present. God in his eternity certainly does not look on us that way, and the Church helps us through liturgical celebrations to see ourselves through God’s eyes of eternal love.

If you look at a calendar, you will see eight different days printed there. But the Church says, “This is the day the Lord has made.” The great day of Easter, the Lord’s Resurrection, continues in a sacred NOW that is ours to relish, to enjoy, as if time has stopped for us and we can enter into the eternity of God. For these past eight days, the Preface of the Mass has said, “It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, but ON THIS DAY above all to laud you yet more gloriously, when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.” We are given these eight days of Easter to let the grace and hope of the Lord’s Resurrection sink into us.

This time that God has given us means that we can slow down to rest in Jesus, in his glory, in his mercy. To rest in Christ is our special joy during these fifty days of the Easter season. Indeed, we have the words of Jesus himself in the Gospel of Matthew: “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

Our Gospel today is very appropriate for the occasion. It recounts two events, eight days apart. Jesus came to visit his disciples on the first day of his Resurrection. But Thomas was not there, and Thomas doubted. So Jesus came again and called Thomas to faith eight days later.

Jesus can use this Second Sunday of Easter, or really any time, to be with us, to call us to faith, to make His Resurrection a living, vivid experience for us. We, too, can say each day, each moment, with Thomas, “My Lord and my God.”

Special Feature

**To all Members of the Japan Province
and our Co-workers**

March 8, 2021

At the Start of the “Ignatian Year”

The Peace of Christ

In 1521, while Ignatius was recovering from the leg wound received from a cannon ball during the fight at Pamplona, God led him to conversion and a decision to follow Christ. In commemoration of this event, the Society of Jesus throughout the world will observe an “Ignatian Year” beginning from May 20, 2021, the 500th anniversary of his wounding in battle, until July 31, 2022, the feast of St Ignatius.

Father General Sosa desires that, during this Ignatian Year, we Jesuits and the whole Ignatian Family living in this present time, might experience a “conversion” similar to that of Ignatius. He stresses that this is not meant to be a mere commemoration of an historical event, as is usually done with the offering of Mass, but urges that this memorial year be an occasion for “renewal.” He also wishes that it should be an occasion for promoting vocations and to refocus the spotlight on our Universal Apostolic Preferences.

Last year we were afflicted with the ravages of a new corona virus never before experienced by humanity. Even now, we go on from day to day without a clear vision of the future. Indeed, we too, like Ignatius, are experiencing being hit by a “cannon ball.” Lest this event simply end up as something we suffer through, I hope we can discern what our Lord Jesus Christ desires of us and that we may find here the opportunity for a renewal of our manner of being.

Even amid the corona virus, the Japan Province has continued to engage in its various apostolates and in communal discernment. I hope that we will regard this Ignatian Year not as a burden or a duty, but as a chance to deepen our apostolates and our process of discernment.

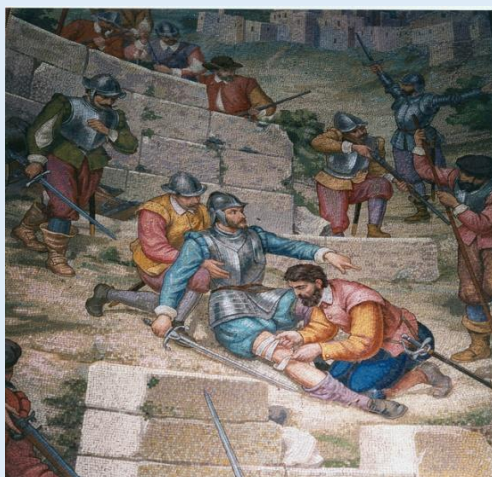
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I ask for your cooperation.

Here are some points for discernment in planning projects for the Ignatian Year

1. How will the plan lead to an experience of “conversion” for ourselves and our co-workers?
2. How will the plan tie in with the Universal Apostolic Preferences?
3. How will the plan be an occasion to deepen collaboration, communication, and networking?

Renzo De Luca, SJ
Provincial



St. Ignatius wounded at Pamplona
Detail of mosaic at St. Ignatius Church of
Loyola, New York City
Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org>

St. John de Britto English Center Ministries and Groups



Celebration of the Sacraments Congratulations!

Baptism

Eyla Erisa Yoon (Eyla)
Irie Hohl (Joan)
Kie Matsui (Catherine)
Atreus Lapera (Xavier)

First Confession and First Communion

Kenichi Takahashi
Misaki Takahashi
Adeline Oviya
Aiko Satomi



Baptism (April 18, Our Lady's Chapel, officiated by Fr. Bony James, SJ)



From a parent:

"Thank you again for the support at my daughter's baptism. We are grateful to God and very happy about this important milestone for her and our family."

First Confession and First Communion (April 18, Main Chapel)



From two Communicants:

"Before receiving Jesus I was very excited and nervous. My parents were also very excited for me and I really appreciate that they bought all the things that I needed. All my relatives watched the ceremony live on You Tube and I really appreciated them for participating even though they were not with me in Japan. I am eagerly waiting to get my Holy Confirmation."

"After my First Confession, I felt very happy. I felt Jesus took my burden and the one I am carrying became very light. I felt I am now a clean person and I want now to live a "good" life. When I received the host in Holy Communion, I felt very light. I felt Jesus Christ inside."

From a parent:

"I gave thanks and praise to God the Father when my daughter received her First Communion. It is grace I can never give her, as her mother. It is important and necessary that she be connected with Eternal Life. Through this Sacrament she can unite herself to Jesus Christ physically as His bride and can be a part of Him. As Father Susai advised in his homily, I hope she will often receive these two Sacraments until she goes back to the Father's place someday and that the Holy Spirit will help her avoid being separated from Jesus Christ."

God must be rejoicing in heaven for having these children part of His big family, the Church. With the continuing guidance of the parents and catechists we hope the seed of faith planted in their souls that day will continue to grow!"

Upcoming Event!

(Subject to change due to State of Emergency)

COME AND JOIN US
in our

**LIVING ROSARY IN HONOR
OF OUR BLESSED MOTHER!**



WHEN: May 23, 2021 (4th Sunday)
TIME: 5:45 - 6:45 p.m.
WHERE: St. Ignatius Church Lawn

Sponsoring Group:
St. John de Britto English Center Sunday School Children and
Angel's Group

Important Notices

Schedule of Masses, etc.

WEEKDAYS: All in Japanese, Main Church

7:00 AM*	EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION
12:00 NN / 6:00 PM*	MASS OR EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION
6:00 PM (SATURDAY)	ANTICIPATED MASS FOR SUNDAY

SUNDAYS: Main Church

7:00 AM / 8:30 AM / 10:00 AM / 6:00 PM	JAPANESE MASS		
12:00 NN	ENGLISH MASS**	1:30 PM	SPANISH MASS
3:00 PM	VIETNAMESE MASS	4:30 PM	ENGLISH MASS**

Note:

All Weekdays and Sunday Masses in St. Ignatius are presently suspended while the State of Emergency in Tokyo is in effect. The decision to resume will be taken based on the easing of the current emergency declaration. Please go to the English or Japanese website for further updates.

* To register and confirm whether there will be Mass or Eucharistic Adoration, please access <http://www.ignatius.gr.jp> or call the **Parish Office 03-3263-4584**

** Limited to 100 attendees. Registration is open starting Monday, 9:00 AM and ends Friday 5:00 PM or when the number limit is reached. To register, access the QR codes below or the English website, www.stignatius.jp/en/

Pope's Prayer Intentions for May 2021

The World of Finance

Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its dangers.

Mission 2030 Prayer Intention:

Month of May

May people who visit the church with various thoughts be comforted by the seasonal flowers blooming along the road. May the children play cheerfully on the green grass.

Staff of St. Ignatius Church

Pastor: Fr. Ryuichiro Hanafusa, S.J.

Associate and Support Priests:

Fr. Kiyoshi Shibata S.J. Fr. Bony James S.J.
Fr. Manuel Silgo S.J. Fr. Generoso Florez S.J.
Fr. Javier Garralda S.J.

Brother: Bro. Hiroaki Yoshiba S.J.
Sister: Sr. Ivette Sanchez, M.C.

John de Britto English Center:

Fr. Bony James, S.J. Director

Sr. Leny Fery FdCC Sr. Flor Florece FI



For all those who made this Monthly Bulletin possible, we express our deepest gratitude.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH and GOD BLESS!



<http://www.stignatius.jp/>



<https://www.facebook.com/stignatius.jp/>

English Mass
Registration Links

12:00 NN



4:30 PM



St. Ignatius Catholic Church
www.stignatius.jp/en/

Address: 6-5-1 Kojimachi, Chiyoda-Ku, Tokyo 102-0083
Tel No. 03-3263-4584 / 03-3263-4576 Fax No. 03-3263-4585