



St. Ignatius Catholic Church

Bi-Monthly English Bulletin

APRIL – MAY 2026

Congratulations on the Lord’s Resurrection!

by Fr. Toshiaki Koso, SJ
Pastor of St. Ignatius Church



“We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of sharing in God’s glory” (Romans 5:1-2).

The Holy Year, proclaimed by Pope Francis with the motto “Pilgrims of Hope” and the Apostolic Letter *Spes Non Decipet* (“Hope Does Not Disappoint”), was officially concluded by Pope Leo XIV on January 6 of this year.

The Synod (the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops), which Pope Francis initiated before the Holy Year, invites each parish to develop a medium-to long-term vision and pastoral plan. Our St. Ignatius Parish in Kojimachi will also draw from the Synod’s vision of “A Church That Walks Together—Communion, Participation, and Mission.” While discerning the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will move forward with the creation of a pastoral plan titled “Walk with Jesus.”

On March 22, we celebrated the 90th anniversary of Kojimachi Parish, and on April 17, we marked the 77th anniversary of the consecration of the old St. Ignatius Church building. Looking ahead to the 100th anniversary of Kojimachi Church in ten years’ time, the Preparatory Committee for the Kojimachi 100th Anniversary Plan began its deliberations last March to define our vision for the future and to clarify the specific tasks needed to achieve it.

Based on the recommendations of this Preparatory Committee, the Kojimachi 100th Anniversary Plan Formulation Committee was established after the Feast of the Resurrection this year. Its guiding principle aligns with the parish’s theme for the 2026 fiscal year: “Let Us Be One in Christ—A Church Walking Together—Journeying Together as One with Jesus.”

A Sunday Mass attendance survey conducted last October revealed that the number of participants at Masses celebrated in foreign languages (English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Portuguese, and Polish) exceeded that of the Japanese-language Masses. This result strengthens our hope and expectation that, in light of this reality, we will be formed into a church that shines with the light of Christ by walking together with all parishioners, transcending differences in language, nationality, generation, and cultural background.

These hopes and expectations are also reflected in the “Prayer for a Church Walking Together,” which has been composed in six languages and is recited on various occasions. As our church becomes increasingly international, we pray for the grace that each of us—as we gather around Christ’s table, transcending differences in language, nationality, generation, and background—may be “pilgrims of hope,” members of a “church walking with Jesus,” and able to serve society as “light and salt.”

For the 100th Anniversary Plan, a first-term committee of twelve members has been selected to serve a two-year term. The committee members, ranging in age from their 30s to 70s, include foreign-born parishioners. Taking into account the distinctive character of our parish, as well as changes in society and the local environment, this committee will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit and propose a path toward the spiritual renewal and structural reform of our community, addressing all aspects of parish life—faith and spirituality, organization, administration, activities, facilities, and finances.

To advance this initiative, your active cooperation and collaboration are essential. Together, through prayer, action, spiritual dialogue, and discernment, let us strive to create a pastoral plan that will help our church grow into a vibrant community of “Communion, Participation, and Mission.”

CONTENTS

Congratulations on the Lord’s Resurrection! p 1

Did You Know? p 2

The Catholic Faith p 3

St. Ignatius Church News and Events p 4-5

Special Feature p 6

John de Britto English Center. p 7

Important Notices p 8

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

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

DID YOU KNOW?

5 Mistakes Catholics Make at Mass...

The Holy Mass is the most sacred moment on earth – where heaven touches earth, and we encounter Christ in the Eucharist. Yet many Catholics unknowingly fall into habits that diminish the reverence this mystery deserves. Here are five common mistakes we should all be mindful of:

1. Arriving Late to Mass:

Coming in after the Mass has begun means missing the penitential rite, the readings, and the preparation of our hearts. Arriving early allows us to pray, recollect ourselves, and enter the sacred mystery with reverence.

2. Treating the Church Like a Social Space:

Conversations, laughter, and noise before or during Mass can distract others from prayer. The church is a sacred place where Christ is truly present in the tabernacle.

3. Receiving Holy Communion Without Proper Disposition:

The Eucharist is not ordinary bread. If someone is conscious of grave sin, the Church teaches that one should first receive the Sacrament of Confession before approaching Communion.

4. Not Participating in the Mass:

Mass is not a performance we watch. We are called to pray, respond, sing, and unite our hearts with the sacrifice of Christ on the altar.

5. Leaving Immediately After Communion:

Some people leave right after receiving Communion or before the final blessing. Staying until the end shows respect for the sacred liturgy and allows us to receive the priest's final blessing.

The Mass is the greatest gift Christ gave His Church. The more reverence and attention we give it, the more grace we receive.

Which of these do you see most often? Share this to help others rediscover the beauty of the Holy Mass.

Source: [#catholic](#) [#Eucharist](#) [#HolyMass](#) [#mistakes](#) totustuusglobal.wordpress.co

I am the RESURRECTION

and the LIFE...

John 11:25



Fr. Domenico Vitalli, SJ
1937 - 2026

Former Pastor, St Ignatius Church
(2007-2012)
Died: April 5, 2026



Sr. Marcela Rosas, MC
Coordinator of Centro Loyola (2 years)
Died: March 11, 2026



Francisca Okada
JdBEC Volunteer (25 years)
Died: March 19, 2026

*We remember with deep gratitude
your tireless, dedicated, and generous
service to God through
St. Ignatius Church.*

May you now rest in peace!

THE CATHOLIC FAITH

(Excerpts from different internet sources, abridged)

The number of Catholics around the world has topped the 1.4 billion mark, according to the latest research from the Vatican. The global Catholic population increased by 1.15 per cent between 2022 and 2023, rising from approximately 1.39 billion to 1.406 billion, according to the Pontifical Yearbook 2025, which was compiled by the Central Office of Church Statistics, a department of the Vatican's Secretariat of State.

<https://thecatholiceraid.com/article/global-catholic-population-passes-1-4-billion>

Africa remains the fastest-growing Catholic region, accounting for 20% of the global total and increasing by 3.31% to 281 million faithful, led by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria. The Americas continue to host the largest share at 47.8% of the world's Catholics, with Brazil alone representing 13%, while several countries in the region record Catholic affiliation above 90%. Asia accounts for about 11% of the global Catholic population, with steady growth. Europe shows minimal increase despite a high Catholic presence, and Oceania's Catholic population surpassed 11 million in 2023.

<https://www.facebook.com/SaintsOfToday>



Photo Credit: Vatican Media

Increases in the number of people joining the Catholic Church

Adult conversions are soaring. Some dioceses have even seen record-high numbers of unbaptized people becoming Catholic.

"We've seen this great rise over the last couple of years, and it's really intriguing. It's really joyful," said Jon Marc Grodi, executive director of The Coming Home Network and host of EWTN's "The Journey Home," in an interview with "EWTN News Nightly." The organization's mission is "to help non-Catholic Christians, clergy and laity, discover the truth and beauty of Catholicism and to make the journey home to full communion with the Catholic Church." It is seeing "a huge increase" in the number of people joining the Church "across the board. Here at The Coming Home Network ... we're working in

particular with people who are on that journey, who are asking questions, who are looking for help," Grodi said. "And over the past years, we saw a 50% increase in the number of Protestant pastors who reached out to us for help in becoming Catholic."

Draw to the faith

It's a "pretty wide demographic" of those joining the Catholic Church, as it "is not just a local phenomenon," Grodi said. "This is true around the U.S. and around the world." "I think 20 to 30 years ago, we were seeing a lot of relatively older, more well-educated, more doctrinally interested people. Nowadays, I think we're seeing a much wider demographic interest in the Catholic Church for all sorts of reasons. There are also "a lot of people who were brought up or who were born Catholic coming back to the Church," he said.

"Oftentimes, with people who were brought up Catholic and leave, it's hard to bring them back because they think that they already get it, they already know what Catholicism is," Grodi said. But, "there's a renewed visibility of Catholic identity that is drawing people back home who were brought up Catholic."

Grodi said the reasons are "all over the place" as to why so many are converting to the Catholic faith, but noted, "there's a great desire for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist."

"We have an increase in noise in the world, and people are looking for a solid foundation, a place to go where they can have a right relationship to truth, and to seek the truth. I think also there have been things that have broken down barriers for people considering the Catholic Church," he said.

Pope Leo XIV may be helping to inspire people with "his very visible, clear witness to Catholic identity, as well as a lot of notable public conversions that I think have broken down the walls for some people to consider Catholicism," he said.

"When it gets down to the individual person, though, I think so many people are looking for the sacraments. They're looking for these great gifts from God of his presence, where he promises to show up and be with us in the midst of all the noise," Grodi said.

"The Church, guided by the Holy Spirit with Scripture, tradition, and the magisterial teaching authority of the Church, gives people a place to come, bring their questions, and seek answers and trust that there's been 2,000 years of this tradition of seeking truth," Grodi said.

<https://www.ewtnnews.com/world/us/catholic-church-sees-increase-in-conversions> Article by Tessa Gervasini

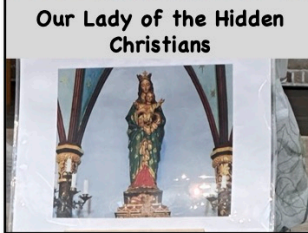
At St. Ignatius Church, a noticeable trend has emerged. Since 2018, I have had the opportunity to accompany English-speaking foreigners and some Japanese individuals interested in learning more about the Catholic Church, with the aim of conversion. In the past years, only two or three people would attend the OCIA Course (Order of Catholic Initiation for Adults), but last year, that number tripled. These participants come from various continents, and 95 percent of them, after a year of study and exposure to the Church, request the Sacraments of Initiation, which include Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation. Remarkably, this year, even before the announcement of the course's opening, nine individuals, all "walk-ins," have already expressed the desire to join. (Sr. Flor Florece, F.I.)

ST. IGNATIUS CHURCH NEWS & EVENTS

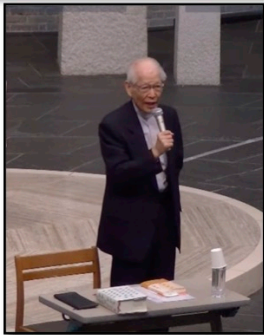
Images of March...



European Mass celebrating the Feast of St. Patrick, Patron Saint of Ireland



PALM SUNDAY, marking the start of the Holy Week



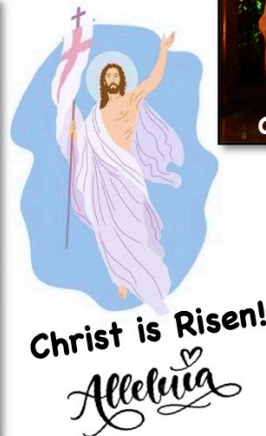
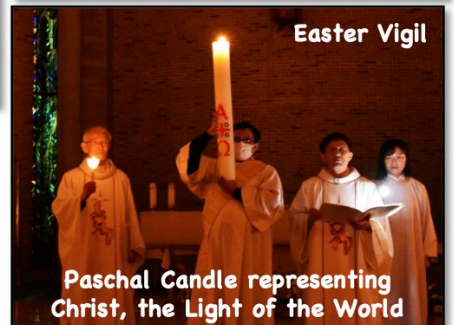
HOLY THURSDAY: First Day of the Paschal Triduum



GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY



EASTER VIGIL LITURGY



ST. IGNATIUS CHURCH NEWS & EVENTS



Churchgoers lining up for the 12NN Easter Mass



Easter morning crowd outside the Church



Sunday School kids enjoying the SIIYM Presentation on Jesus's Resurrection



Support Staff @ the gate

Easter Eggs prepared with love for everyone!



Vietnamese Easter Mass Choir (Sophia University Auditorium)



Jesus is Risen!
ALLELUIA



Vietnamese Easter Baptism



SIIYM Hanami

SPECIAL FEATURE

Faith, Family, and the Digital World: My Sunday School Parents' Formation Reflection by Josephine Dinglasan

When I attended the two sessions of the Sunday School Parents' Formation, "On the Effects of Social Media on Children and Teens" by Sr. Flor Florece, FI, I didn't expect them to touch me as deeply as they did. I walked in as a mother of three Gen Alpha children and a woman grounded in Catholic faith. I walked out with a renewed sense of purpose—and a clearer understanding of the role we parents must play in this digital age. Both sessions opened my eyes to the realities our children face and reminded me that parenting today requires not only awareness and communication, but also grace.

Session 1: Social Media's Influence on Children and Teens

The first session focused on the impact of social media on the well-being of today's generation. Listening to Sr. Flor and hearing other parents' experiences, I felt a mix of concern and compassion. Our children are growing up in a world where their sense of identity is shaped not only by family and school, but also by screens, algorithms, and online communities.

What struck me most was the idea that social media creates a constant mirror—one that reflects not who they truly are, but who they think they should be. The pressure to be "liked," the comparison with filtered perfection, and the fear of missing out are burdens we never carried at their age. I see these in my own children. I often assume they are simply "playing on their phones," when in reality, they may be navigating something else. This became even more evident when I began hearing surprisingly mature questions from children as young as twelve, ten, and even seven.



Session 2: Understanding the Generations

The second session shifted toward solutions, and this is where I felt both challenged and inspired. Sr. Flor presented a series of videos showing the differences among generations—from grandparents to parents, children, and even imagined future grandchildren. Watching them, I quietly absorbed the stark contrasts in how each generation learns, communicates, and carries its burdens. After watching, questions stayed with me: How and where do I begin to bridge our gap? What steps must I take to understand my children more deeply? How will I build a relationship with them that's strong enough to hold our differences yet never feel disrespected as a parent? The digital world undeniably creates a gap between my children and me, shaping how we think, feel, and connect. Yet I believe, in God's grace, this division can be bridged through understanding, patient listening, and intentional relationship—choosing connection over control so that love becomes the common ground.



Conclusion: A Sustainable Path Rooted in Faith, Consistency, and Catholic Values

As the session ended, I found myself asking once again: What is the long-term solution? How do we ensure continuity, not just temporary change, in a world where the digital noise grows louder every day? The answer, I realized, lies in three things: communication, consistency, and Christ-centered guidance. And for me, one of the most concrete expressions of that consistency in Christ-centered guidance is bringing my children not only to Sunday Holy Mass but to Sunday School class week after week.

In a digital world where it is increasingly difficult to discern what is right, where trends shift faster than values can take root, Sunday Mass and Sunday school have become our steady ground. It is where my children encounter the unchanging truths of our Catholic faith—truths untouched by algorithms and online approval. By consistently bringing them to church, I am praying and hoping that the "seeds" planted in them will guide them long after the screens fade. It is crucial to bring them while they are still young, curious, and malleable. Even if they do not fully understand, even if they have doubts or questions that stretch beyond what I can answer, I am trusting that the simple act of showing up consistently every Sunday forms something deep within them. I witnessed this myself growing up. As a child, I watched my mother go to church faithfully—praying, kneeling, and whispering her intentions. Prioritizing the Sunday obligation before anything else revealed the depth of her unwavering devotion—a faith that carried her through every struggle. Now, as a mother struggling to navigate parenting in this digital world, I find myself relying on that same faith she anchored in me.

Bridging the generational gap is not a one-time effort. It is a daily choice—a commitment to walk with our children, to understand their world, and to guide them with wisdom and compassion. As I left the room, I felt grateful—grateful for the insights, grateful for the reminder of my role, and grateful that faith gives me the strength to parent with hope. The digital world may be complex, but with love, presence, and God's grace, we can help our children navigate it with confidence and peace.

JOHN DE BRITTO ENGLISH CENTER GROUPS AND MINISTRIES



We need

Volunteers!

“Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.” — Mother Teresa of Calcutta

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

Composed of multicultural children. Classes are divided into Primary, Intermediate, and Teen levels. Meets 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, from 1:30-2:30 p.m., to learn about the basics of the Catholic faith.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP GROUP

Held every 1st Sunday of the month in Arrupe Hall Rm. 203B, 10:00-11:30 AM. Gathers to praise the Lord through songs, give thanks, and listen attentively to his live-giving Word. Personal intentions are received to be offered up in prayer

INTERNATIONAL GROUP MEETING

Held every 2nd Sunday of the month, Kibe Hall Room 307, 1:45-3:30 PM. Gathers to plan and think of better ways to serve St. Ignatius Church.

FAITH FORMATION GROUP FOR ADULTS

Held 1st Sunday of the month, Kibe Hall Room 310, 2:00-4:00 PM. For adult Catholics who wish to deepen their understanding of the faith through selected videos and on-line talks. Non-Catholics are welcome.

YOUTH MINISTRY

An international group that leads the Youth Mass every 4th Sunday of the month followed by a Youth Catechism at 1:45 PM in Kibe Hall Room 307. Conducts various activities such as the “Hangout” (3rd Sunday), Language Café (4th Sunday). Meet them in Room 103.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION (EMHC)

Composed of different nationalities, by turns they serve in the 12:00 noon English Mass, assist the celebrant and give Holy Communion to the faithful. Special formation is required for this ministry.

ALTAR SERVERS

Serve before, during, and after the English Mass assisting the priest and the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC). They are boys and girls from ages 10-15 who have already received their First Communion.

ANGELS GROUP

Composed of adults and young people who love children, they serve every 1st Sunday of the month. Just after the Opening Prayer of the Mass, they gather children in Xavier Chapel and provide stories of the Gospel in language understood by them.

CHOIR

Sings at the 12 noon Sunday English Mass. Practices in Room 401 11:00a.m.

SUNDAY READINGS FAITH SHARING

Held every 3rd Sunday of the month, Arrupe Hall Room 404, 2:00-4:00 PM. For those who want to deepen and share the Sunday Readings of that day. Everyone is welcome!

READERS' GROUP

Serve at the 12:00 noon Sunday English Mass. They are those who would like to proclaim the Word of God and serve as lectors guiding the assembly during the liturgical rite. Practice is required.

MEDIA

Prepares the Sunday Mass power point, the bi-monthly English Bulletin, makes special posters, and takes care of the English website and Facebook Page of St. Ignatius Church.

WEEKDAY OFFICE STAFF

They open the English Center on weekdays, from 10:0-3:00 PM to attend to the needs of those who come or call for inquiries.

USHERS

Every Sunday, during the 12nn English Mass, they facilitate an orderly and prayerful atmosphere before, during, and after mass..

COFFEE WELCOME MINISTRY

Serves free coffee every 1st Sunday of the month from 1:00-1:45 PM under the tree in front of the Main Church. Facilitates the opportunity for newcomers/parishioners to meet and feel that the Church is “my second home.”

SACRAMENTS: schedule & classes

INFANT/ ADULT BAPTISM:

Schedule: 3rd Sunday of Feb, April, June, September & November

Venue: St Marry's Chapel

Time: 10:00 AM

Classes: to be arranged with the coordinator in-charge

MARRIAGE PREPARATION:

Inquire at least 4 months before the wedding day.



John de Brito English Center

Address: 6-5-1 Kojimachi, Chiyoda-Ku, Tokyo 102-0083

Office Hours:

Weekdays: 10:00 - 12:00

13:00 - 15:00

Weekends: 10:00 - 17:00

Telephone: 03 - 3263 - 4576

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Schedule of Masses & Confessions

WEEKDAYS: All in Japanese, Main Church

7:00 AM	Weekday Masses
12:00 NN / 6:00 PM	Weekday Masses
12:00 NN	Saturday Mass
6:00 PM	Anticipated Sunday Mass

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

Masses at Our Lady's Chapel

1 st Sunday: 12:30 PM (Portuguese)	4:00 PM (Polish)
2 nd and 4 th Sunday: 4:30 PM (Indonesian)	

ANTICIPATED MASSES (SATURDAYS)

5:30 PM – English Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)
6:00 PM – Japanese (Main Church)

CONFESSION

Weekday/Saturday	17:30 – 18:30
Sunday: Japanese	9:30 – 10:30 and 17:30 – 18:30
English	11:30 – 12:30
Spanish	13:00 – 14:00

Staff of St. Ignatius Church

Pastor: Fr. Toshiaki Koso S.J.

Associate and Support Priest:

Fr. Saturnino Ochoa S.J.	Fr. Kiyoshi Shibata S.J.
Fr. Bony James S.J.	Fr. Javier Garralda S.J.
Fr. Nguyễn Van The S.J.	Fr. Etsuo Sekine S.J.
Fr. Jerry Cusumano S.J.	Fr. Sozo Tsukurimichi SJ
	Sch. Antonio Soares S.J.

Centro Loyola:

Sr. Catalina Padilla Bautista, M.C.

Vietnamese Center:

Sr. Rosanna Ngoc Tuyen D.H.M

John de Britto English Center:

Fr. Bony James S.J.	Director
Sr. Flor Florece F.I.	Coordinator
Jessie Buendia NdV	Coordinator

POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS

April

For priests in crisis

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

May

That everyone might have food

Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoiding wasting food, and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food.

ST. IGNATIUS CHURCH WEBSITE & FACEBOOK PAGE



PRAYER FOR PEACE by POPE LEO XIV

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

by Pope Leo XIV

Lord Jesus,
you conquered death
without weapons or violence:
you shattered its power
with the strength of peace.

Grant us your peace,
as you did to the women
filled with doubt on Easter morning,
as you did to the disciples
who were hiding in fear.

Send forth your Spirit,
the breath that gives life and reconciles,
that turns adversaries and enemies
into brothers and sisters.
Inspire in us to trust
in Mary, your mother,
who stood at the foot of your cross
with a broken heart, firm in the faith
that you would rise again.

May the madness of war cease
and the Earth be cared for
and cultivated by those who still
know how to bring forth,
protect and love life.
Hear us, Lord of life!

ihc JESUIT CONFERENCE OF ASIA PACIFIC

Thank you

To St Ignatius Church
Photography Group for the
photos used in this issue,
and
to all those who made this
bi-monthly Bulletin possible,
our deepest gratitude
and appreciation.
God bless!!!