

For The Bulletin Of
October 16, 2016

THE FEAST OF ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

From Father Robert



Today, we celebrate the feast day of our patron saint, St. Ignatius of Antioch, also called Theophorus (*ho Theophoros*); born in [Syria](#), around the year 50; died at [Rome](#) between 98 and 117.

More than one of the earliest [ecclesiastical](#) writers have given credence, though apparently without good reason, to the legend that Ignatius was the child whom the [Savior](#) took up in His arms, as described in [Mark 9:35](#). It is also believed, and with great probability, that, with his friend [Polycarp](#), he was among the auditors of the Apostle St. John. If we include St. Peter, Ignatius was the third [Bishop](#) of [Antioch](#) and the immediate successor of

[Evodius](#) ([Eusebius](#), [Church History II.3.22](#)). Theodoret ("Dial. Immutab.", I, iv, 33a, Paris, 1642) is the authority for the statement that St. Peter appointed Ignatius to the See of Antioch. [St. John Chrysostom](#) lays special emphasis on the honor conferred upon the [martyr](#) in receiving his episcopal [consecration](#) at the hands of the Apostles themselves ("Hom. in St. Ig.", IV. 587). Natalis Alexander quotes Theodoret to the same effect (III, xii, art. xvi, p. 53).

All the sterling qualities of ideal [pastor](#) and a [true](#) soldier of Christ were possessed by the [Bishop](#) of [Antioch](#) in a preeminent degree. Accordingly, when the storm of the [persecution](#) of [Domitian](#) broke in its full fury upon the [Christians](#) of [Syria](#), it found their faithful leader prepared and watchful. He was unremitting in his vigilance and tireless in his efforts to inspire hope and to strengthen the weaklings of his flock against the terrors of the [persecution](#). The restoration of peace, though it was short-lived, greatly comforted him. But it was not for himself that he rejoiced, as the one great and ever-present wish of his [chivalrous soul](#) was that he might receive the fullness of [Christian discipleship](#) through the medium of [martyrdom](#). His desire was not to remain long unsatisfied. Associated with the writings of St. Ignatius is a work called "Martyrium Ignatii", which purports to be an account by eyewitnesses of the [martyrdom](#) of St. Ignatius and the acts leading up to it. In this work, which such competent [Protestant](#) critics as Pearson and Ussher regard as genuine, the full history of that eventful journey from [Syria](#) to [Rome](#) is faithfully recorded for the edification of the [Church of Antioch](#). It is certainly very ancient and is reputed to have been written by [Philo](#), [deacon](#) of

[Tarsus](#), and Rheus Agathopus, a [Syrian](#), who accompanied Ignatius to [Rome](#). It is generally admitted, even by those who regarded it as authentic, that this work has been greatly interpolated. Its most reliable form is that found in the "Martyrium Colbertinum" which closes the mixed recension and is so called because its oldest witness is the tenth-century Codex Colbertinus (Paris).

According to these Acts, in the ninth year of his reign, [Trajan](#), flushed with victory over the Scythians and Dacians, sought to perfect the universality of his dominion by a species of religious conquest. He decreed, therefore, that the [Christians](#) should unite with their [pagan](#) neighbors in the worship of the gods. A general [persecution](#) was threatened, and death was named as the penalty for all who refused to offer the prescribed sacrifice. Instantly alert to the danger that threatened, Ignatius availed himself of all the means within his reach to thwart the purpose of the emperor. The success of his [zealous](#) efforts did not long remain hidden from the [Church's persecutors](#). He was soon arrested and led before [Trajan](#), who was then sojourning in [Antioch](#). Accused by the emperor himself of violating the imperial edict, and of inciting others to like transgressions, Ignatius valiantly bore witness to the [faith](#) of [Christ](#). If we may believe the account given in the "Martyrium", his bearing before [Trajan](#) was characterized by inspired eloquence, sublime [courage](#), and even a spirit of exultation. Incapable of appreciating the motives that animated him, the emperor ordered him to be put in chains and taken to [Rome](#), there to become the food of wild beasts and a spectacle for the people.

That the trials of this journey to [Rome](#) were great we gather from his letter to the Romans (par. 5): "From [Syria](#) even to [Rome](#) I fight with wild beasts, by land and sea, by night and by day, being bound amidst ten leopards, even a company of soldiers, who only grow worse when they are kindly treated." Despite all this, his journey was a kind of triumph. News of his fate, his destination, and his probable itinerary had gone swiftly before. At several places along the road his fellow-Christians greeted him with words of comfort and reverential homage. It is probable that he embarked on his way to [Rome](#) at [Seleucia](#), in [Syria](#), the nearest port to [Antioch](#), for either Tarsus in Cilicia, or Attalia in Pamphylia, and thence, as we gather from his letters, he journeyed overland through [Asia Minor](#). At Laodicea, on the River Lycus, where a choice of routes presented itself, his guards selected the more northerly, which brought the prospective [martyr](#) through Philadelphia and Sardis, and finally to [Smyrna](#), where [Polycarp](#), his fellow-disciple in the [school](#) of St. John, was [bishop](#). The stay at [Smyrna](#), which was a protracted one, gave the representatives of the various [Christian](#) communities in [Asia Minor](#) an opportunity of greeting the illustrious [prisoner](#), and offering him the homage of the Churches they represented. From the congregations of Ephesus, [Magnesia](#), and Tralles, deputations came to comfort him. To each of these [Christian](#) communities he addressed letters from [Smyrna](#), exhorting them to obedience to their respective [bishops](#), and warning them to avoid the contamination of [heresy](#). These letters are redolent with the spirit of [Christian charity](#), [apostolic zeal](#), and pastoral solicitude. While still there he wrote also to the [Christians](#) of

[Rome](#), begging them to do nothing to deprive him of the opportunity of [martyrdom](#).

From Smyrna his captors took him to [Troas](#), from which place he dispatched letters to the [Christians](#) of Philadelphia and Smyrna, and to [Polycarp](#). Besides these letters, Ignatius had intended to address others to the [Christian](#) communities of [Asia Minor](#), inviting them to give public expression to their sympathy with the brethren in [Antioch](#), but the altered plans of his guards, necessitating a hurried departure, from [Troas](#), defeated his purpose, and he was [obliged](#) to content himself with delegating this office to his friend [Polycarp](#). At Troas they took ship for Neapolis. From this place their journey led them overland through [Macedonia](#) and [Illyria](#). The next port of embarkation was probably Dyrrhachium (Durazzo). Whether having arrived at the shores of the Adriatic, he completed his journey by land or sea, it is impossible to determine. Not long after his arrival in [Rome](#) he won his long-coveted crown of [martyrdom](#) in the [Flavian amphitheater](#). The [relics](#) of the [holy martyr](#) were borne back to Antioch by the [deacon](#) Philo of Cilicia, and Rheus Agathopus, a [Syrian](#), and were [interred](#) outside the gates not far from the beautiful suburb of Daphne. They were afterwards removed by the Emperor Theodosius II to the Tychaem, or Temple of Fortune which was then converted into a [Christian](#) church under the patronage of the [martyr](#) whose [relics](#) it sheltered. In 637 they were translated to St. Clement's at [Rome](#), where they now rest. The [Church](#) celebrates the feast of St. Ignatius on 1 February.

The character of St. Ignatius, as [deduced](#) from his own and the extant writings of

his contemporaries, is that of a [true](#) athlete of Christ. The triple honor of apostle, [bishop](#), and [martyr](#) was well merited by this energetic soldier of the Faith. An enthusiastic devotion to [duty](#), a passionate [love](#) of sacrifice, and an utter fearlessness in the defense of [Christian truth](#), were his chief characteristics. Zeal for the spiritual well-being of those under his charge breathes from every line of his writings. Ever vigilant lest they be infected by the rampant [heresies](#) of those early days; [praying](#) for them, that their [faith](#) and [courage](#) may not be wanting in the hour of [persecution](#); constantly exhorting them to unflinching obedience to their [bishops](#); teaching them all [Catholic truth](#); eagerly sighing for the crown of [martyrdom](#), that his own blood may fructify in added [graces](#) in the [souls](#) of his flock, he proves himself in every sense a [true](#), [pastor](#) of [souls](#), the good shepherd that lays down his life for his sheep.

- *From The Catholic Encyclopedia*

Reflecting On The Gospel

In today's gospel, every character mentioned is seeking justice. Justice as jurisprudence seeks to uphold the rights of all, to balance out differences, to apply uniformly principles of behavior and treatment. In our nation's justice system, the widow of the gospel would probably be held in contempt of court for pestering the judge. The judge would probably be tried for corruption because of his dishonest ways of dealing with people. The widow seeks justice out of need; the judge renders justice out of exasperation. The widow's persistence finally breaks down the judge. She has her day in court. She wins. And that seems to be the end of the story. We do not know what

happens to the widow after she wins her case. But this is not the end of the gospel story. If, as humans, we seek to balance fairness, then how much more might we expect from God? God bestows justice out of love for God's "chosen ones who call out to Him day and night." The widow had a legal relationship with the judge that ended the moment he rendered a decision. Our persistence in prayer bring far more than some transitory alleviation of a wrong. We have a personal relationship with God that continually deepens as we "pray always." God renders divine justice – divine-human relationship – out of the nature of Who God is. God is relational, resting in the dynamic communion of the Three persons of the Holy Trinity. Jesus is teaching us that while our prayer tends to be about immediate needs, our life is about ultimate justice, permanent relationship, life-giving communion. Our persistence in prayer really is about a faith relationship with God that reveals we are God's "chosen ones" who are in right relationship with God. This righteousness leads to eternal life.

The gospel's legal language of judge, judgment, and justice bring to mind the final judgment Jesus renders at His Second Coming. One way to prepare for this Second Coming and alleviate any fears we might have is to be persistent in faith-filled prayer. Our faith grows through persistence in prayer because through this kind of prayer we build a stronger relationship with God. When Jesus comes again, "will He find faith on earth?" Yes, if we are persistent in praying "always without becoming weary." It seems persistence in prayer is a small price to pay for salvation and everlasting life!

God faithfully hears and answers our prayer, "securing the rights of His chosen ones." What are these "rights?" To be heard by God. To be answered by God. To be loved by God into the fullness of divine-human relationship. Persistence in prayer is such a small price to pay for the most Life-giving relationship we can have!

Living The Paschal Mystery

For many setting aside any definite time for prayer during the day may seem all but impossible, especially if we are talking about ten or fifteen uninterrupted minutes. Persistence in praying always might need to take the form in our lives of developing the habit of being aware of God's abiding Presence and blessings even in our busyness. It might mean that we learn to catch little moments for prayer (like we sometimes are able to catch moments for catnaps) – while driving to pick up the youngsters or waiting in a checkout line. The place and manner of prayer aren't nearly so important as the fact that we pray – always and without ceasing. This prayer sustains our relationship with a God Who loves beyond measure.

What will be my personal response to the invitation and challenge of God's Word proclaimed in the worshiping assembly today?

- I "pray always" because...
- My prayer deepens my relationships with God when I...when God...
- When I pray, God hears...When God answers, I hear...

About Liturgy: Liturgy As Prayer

Liturgy is prayer. There are a number of indicators within the liturgy itself. For example, before the Collect and at the post-Communion prayer the presider specifically invites us to pray: “Let us pray.” The heart of the Liturgy of the Eucharist is called the Eucharistic Prayer. The universal prayer concludes the Liturgy of the Word. We pray together the Lord’s Prayer, probably one of the first prayers we learned as children. How is it, though, that liturgy is more than just a stringing together of prayers? How is the liturgy itself a single, seamless prayer?

In the liturgy we pray as one body, the Body of Christ. By praying with one voice, we lift up a single prayer to God. Because we are this community, the liturgical prayer doesn’t depend on any one individual’s ability to pray or not during a particular liturgy. It is as though we are holding each other up and enabling one another to remain strong and persistent in prayer. The constant repetition of liturgy throughout the world is a constant reminder of the persistence of the prayer of the Body of Christ.

Another consideration for understanding liturgy as a single, seamless prayer is that the liturgy has an invariable structure. Individual elements may change and vary somewhat from liturgy to liturgy, but the essential structure is the same. This invariability enables us to surrender to the action and in that surrender both encounter with God and the visibility of the church as the Body of Christ become possible.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the overall sentiments of liturgy are

praise and thanksgiving. With these attitudes we glorify God and offer our worship, and thus strengthen our relationship with God and each other. All the individual prayer – yes, even the petitionary prayer – redounds to praise and thanksgiving. All prayer converges on our acknowledging God’s splendor and being grateful for the gift of divine Presence and loving divine-human relationship.

Parish Festival Today

Following the 8:00 a.m. Eucharist this morning, our Annual Parish Festival begins up in the tent. I hope you will join us for food, fun, activities, fellowship and the Grand Raffle Drawing at 3:00 p.m. which brings the festival to a conclusion. I am deeply grateful to all those who in any way have had a part in planning, executing, and being a part of today’s events, as well as those who will clean up afterward. Please know how much all your efforts are appreciated.

“Kitchen Table Catholicism”

A new adult education opportunity is being offered by our Pastoral Associate, **Carolyn Krantz**, for parents and grandparents who are looking for creative ways to enliven the Faith for their children in the home setting through prayer, celebration and fun activities. The sessions have been scheduled as follows: Thursdays, October 20, 27, November 3, 10, and 17. Sessions will take place in our parish hall from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Our Concert Series

This coming Friday, October 21st, is the first in the series of concerts of the Fall/Spring Season. A Children’s Operetta is being premiered for the first

time and is the result of the artistry of **Nancy Bachmann**. A reception will follow in the parish hall. A free-will donation will be requested to help defray the cost of the reception. I hope you will join us for this wonderful musical event.

Commitment Weekend

Next weekend, October 22nd and 23rd is “Commitment Weekend” when every parishioner will be invited to come forward at the beginning of the Preparation Rite to bring forward their offering as well as their Commitment Form for the coming pastoral year. This is our way of indicating to God and our faith community how we will make use of our Time, our Talents, and our Treasure to support the building of God’s kingdom here at St. Ignatius of Antioch Parish. Please be sure to sign the Commitment Form which will be placed in the Chest that will be put at the heart of the Altar and which will be a constant reminder of the covenant we have made between God and ourselves to be servant disciples.

Mass of Thanksgiving for All Those in the Medical Field

Please see the announcement in today’s bulletin regarding the first “White Mass” to be celebrated in the Cathedral on Saturday morning, October 29th, at 10:00 a.m. This is for all doctors, nurses, technicians, LVN’s, First Responders who care for those in hospitals, convalescent homes, assisted living facilities, and the home-bound. We are blessed in our parish with an abundance of medical personnel and this event is a wonderful way to recognize you for all you do and even more, for who you are. I hope to see you there.

All Saints Day

All Saints Day, a Holy Day of Obligation, is Tuesday, November 1st and we will be privileged to celebrate Holy Eucharist at 8:00 a.m. and at 7:30 p.m. (*No incense*)

All Souls Day

All Souls Day, while not a Holy Day of Obligation, is a very special day of prayer and remembrance for us as Catholic Christians as we remember our loved ones who have fallen asleep in Jesus. We are privileged to celebrate Holy Eucharist for our beloved dead on Wednesday, November 2nd, at 8:00 a.m. You are invited to bring photographs, holy cards, and other memorabilia to remember your loved ones at that liturgy and to place the memorial items on the tables provided.

The Annual Liturgy of Remembrance

Each year, during the month of November, the month of All Souls, we gather as a community of faith to remember and honor the memory of all those whose Funeral Liturgies have been celebrated in our church since last All Souls Day. This year our Liturgy of Remembrance will take place on Sunday afternoon, November 6th, at 4:00 p.m. and will take the form of Sung Evening Prayer for the Dead. The names of the deceased for whom funerals were held in our church will be read aloud and Memorial Candles will be lighted for them. At the conclusion of the liturgy, the candles will be given to family members as a gift. Following the liturgy, there will be a simple reception in the parish hall. You are invited to bring photographs, holy cards, and other memorabilia to place on the Memorial Tables for this service. Also, anyone else who has suffered the death of a

loved one but whose funeral was not held in our church is also welcome to be present, to place memorabilia on the Memorial Tables, and have their loved ones commemorated. If you would like your loved one's name read aloud, please be sure to contact the parish office and leave that information so we have their name and can also provide a Memorial Candle for them.

St. Cecilia Evensong

For the past several years, our parish has participated in the Annual St. Cecilia Sing, a national event under the auspices of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians that honors the patron saint of church music. This year, the event takes place on Sunday, November 20th and our choir will be joined by the members of choirs from within our Deanery for the celebration of Sung Evening Prayer. The liturgy will begin at 3:00 p.m. and will be followed by a reception in our parish hall. I hope you will be able to join us.

Thanksgiving Basket Outreach

Our annual Thanksgiving Basket Outreach takes place this year on the weekend of November 19th and 20th. Please take the flyer in the bulletin that lists all the ingredients, purchase them, fill an appropriately decorated box, and bring the box to any of the liturgies that weekend. On Monday, November 21st, our St. Vincent de Paul Society will distribute the boxes and add a turkey to each box. Last year, more than 250 boxes were donated!

The Solemnity of Christ the King and the Conclusion of the Jubilee Year of Mercy

On the weekend of November 19th and 20th, we will celebrate the Solemnity of

Christ the King and the conclusion of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. **Fr. George Griener, SJ**, will be our homilist for the liturgies which will include the closing of the Doors of Mercy at the conclusion of each liturgy.

Thanksgiving Day

Please plan to join us for this year's Thanksgiving Day Liturgy on Thursday, November 24th, at 9:00 a.m. This is always one of the most special liturgies of the year. The homily that day is given by a parishioner who reflects on Thanksgiving and its meaning for us.

Thank You

We are very blessed by the number of volunteers who offer themselves in service to our community on a regular basis. Our thanks to those who cleaned the church last weekend: **Jun Bajet, Cathy Romeo, Emilia Freking, Mercy Osborne, Kelly Wetzel, Tracy Wetzel, and Steve Rojek.**

...Our thanks to those who cleaned the bathrooms in the church and parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Mary Ewing, Harlan Young, and Gino Ramos.**

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who washes and irons all the sacred linens each week.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week: **Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.**

...to our **counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week: **Melodye Costanza, Harlan Young, Karen**

Oliver, Alicia Perez, Rowena Cayaban, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.
...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Bob Carvalho and Barbara Jackson.**
...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Dave Costanza, Judy Quicho, Vangie Parrilla and Belen Farin.**

Beer 'n Brats

Thank you to all the parishioners who attended our Beer 'n Brats Oktoberfest on October 1st. It was a fun evening with German food, drink and music! We want to thank the following for their help in making this event such a wonderful success! Thank you to **Brian & Vicki McCoy, Clem Bushman, Will & Catherine Avitabile, Paul Schmidt, Emily & Marc Douville, Rich & Pam Confetti, Bob & Marla Plurkowski, Lorraine Lohmeier, Samantha Peralto, Carol Fanfa, Maryann Peddicord, Reggia Desmond, Frances and Steve Rojek, MaryAnne Douville, Sue Batterton, Rachelle Martin, Gail Burgarino, Jose Palomino and Ken Douville.** All proceeds will benefit the church. Until next year, "Prost!"

Gubbio Project

Thank you to all who donated to our third annual sock drive, Over 500 pairs of socks were dropped off at the liturgies last weekend. The socks will be packaged and transported to St. Boniface Church in San Francisco. St. Boniface sponsors the Gubbio Project, an outreach ministry that serves the homeless men and women in San Francisco.

Liturgical Ministry and Community Outreach Fair

Last weekend, the parish held its first combined Liturgical Ministry and Community Outreach Fair. A number of new candidates for Lector, Eucharistic Ministers, and the Christmas Children's Choir stepped forward. Our SPRED ministry also received a number of inquiries regarding the program. Other parish organizations participating included Faith Formation, Children's Liturgy of the Word, Knights of Columbus, YLI, and Catholic Daughters of the Americas. Community organizations included East County Veterans, Bay Area Crisis Nursery, Contra Costa Interfaith Housing, Winter Nights Shelter, the Antioch Shelter Project, Brighter Beginnings, Caring Hands, Meals on Wheels, and Multi-faith Committee – Housing.

NOTHING BUT A DISTRACTION?

The way women are treated is never to be considered a "distraction" from more "important" issues. The treatment of women is the principle indicator not only of the character of individuals but of society itself. The time has passed for anyone to be tolerant of the abuse of women or to think that such behavior can be easily dismissed. The Interfaith Peace Project has long upheld the full rights and dignity of women. We encourage all women to claim their dignity, find their voice, and stand up for what is right, just, true and good. We are deeply concerned about the safety and well-being of women whose lives and health are endangered by the abusive rhetoric infecting the current political campaign for President of the United States. We encourage everyone to understand that such language and behavior enables abusers. We offer the

following considerations in this highly charged political environment in which women have been both demeaned and attacked.

1) It is important for women to support one another with respect, patience and care as they confront the assault against them that dominates the current environment,

2) Religious communities must reconsider their teachings and beliefs regarding women insuring that they teach or believe nothing that endangers a woman's right to live in peace,

3) Religious communities must confront any political positions that manipulate or compromise the rights of women to live as full-fledged human beings,

4) Religious communities must encourage women and all victims of abuse to seek the help they need,

5) We must realize that apology for past abuse is not enough. Religious communities must insist that the systematic causes of abuse be recognized and corrected,

6) Religious communities must encourage the creation of "safe places" for those who are threatened by abuse. In fact, we encourage religious communities to ensure that their houses of worship be safe places for all.

Our comments are not politically motivated. Rather, we are deeply concerned about the issue of abuse of women that is an unfortunate and dangerous part of our culture. The time is long overdue for us to seriously

confront this issue. The lives of real women and girls depend on how honestly and courageously we confront the issues of abuse.

Peacefully,

Thomas P. Bonacci, C.P.
Director, Interfaith Peace Project

Father Tom has written a book entitled, "Christmas Meditations" and it is available from Blurb.com 580 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94104, Suite 300. The cost is \$19.95 for the book. With shipping and tax, the total is \$24.75. This will make a great Christmas Gift for yourself, family members, loved ones, and friends.