



July 29, 2021

Dear Friends,

I hope you are having a wonderful summer and that everyone you know and love is safe and healthy.

On Saturday, the Church will celebrate the great Memorial of St. Ignatius of Loyola, made even more marvelous this year as the Society of Jesus and all Jesuit works have begun an initiative called “The Ignatian Year.” This celebration goes from May 2021 until July 2022 and honors the 500th anniversary of the transformation of Inigo the glory seeker into Ignatius the humble pilgrim and future saint. You will hear more about the Ignatian Year in weeks to come but, for this year’s feast, I hope you will find much consolation and grace in remembering that our University is a strategic and integral part of a dynamic mission that goes back nearly five centuries and, with God’s help, will continue for many more to come.

This Saturday also marks the birthday of our beloved past president, Fr. Scott Pilarz. It’s a beautiful coincidence, or perhaps no coincidence at all, that he was born on the anniversary of the feast of the founder of the Jesuits and author of the Spiritual Exercises. Having now spent nearly six weeks here at Scranton, it’s very clear to me why Fr. Pilarz referred to our University as “the miracle in the mountains.” Please remember him in your prayers in a special way this weekend.

Over the past several weeks, our campus has come to life with the presence of various groups of people, from middle-school children in the Regis High School REACH Program to harpists and their friends with the Welsh Heritage Society to the National Point Guard Basketball Camp and on it goes. I can only imagine how good it will be when all of our students and you will be back on campus in the fall. That said, I am very grateful for those who are here now –dedicated staff in offices and on the grounds, our excellent faculty teaching summer courses here or online, the student ambassadors leading visitors up and down the campus, and other student volunteers involved in service.

As you know, the effort to protect our community through COVID-19 vaccination and other safety measures is continuing. Various campus facilities are being readied for the fall opening.

And the summer is flying by, as it always does. But I wanted to take a moment to call our collective attention to the spiritual dimension of life, which is always with us, by wishing you a very happy feast on St. Ignatius Day 2021. May the spirit of Ignatius fill our minds and hearts with the desire to seek God in all things and the energy to advance the service of faith and promotion of justice.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and be assured of my prayers and very best wishes on the feast and always!

Yours faithfully,
Fr. Marina