



SAINT TIMOTHY
CATHOLIC CHURCH



Grateful for the Greatest Sacrifices in Our Community, Gold Shield Foundation Provides Essential Assistance

When our police officers and firefighters step bravely into the line of duty, they assume a great risk – that of the greatest sacrifice, their own lives. So we should always be thankful for all that our police and firefighters give to our community. And as a community, we share in grief when these responders give their lives in times of the most urgent need, and turns to support those left behind when a police officer or firefighter loses their life in the line of duty – the families, the spouses and children. And this essential support is the purpose of the Gold Shield Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization supported by annual dues of \$100, as well as contributions from concerned citizens and businesses.

In 1981, Hillsborough County faced the loss of two firefighters and one police officer killed in the line of duty – and left behind were their widows and children. Understanding the great needs in the



wake of these tragedies, the late George M. Steinbrenner, the former owner of the New York Yankees, organized a group of citizens to make sure the families of these responders and subsequent fallen heroes in Hillsborough County could receive essential early financial help and funds to go towards college educations for their children.

In 1989, the foundation's coverage was expanded to include Pinellas

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Gold Shield Foundation *continued from front cover*

County. In turn, coverage has been extended to Citrus County, Pasco County, Polk County, Hernando County and Marion County. In addition, MacDill AFB Law Enforcement and Firefighting personnel are also under the Gold Shield umbrella.

Here at St. Timothy, we and our pastor, Fr. Malley, have been closely connected to the Gold Shield Foundation in a number of ways. In addition, the annual Blue Wave Service is celebrated at St. Timothy Catholic Church for those employed in the public safety field, such as police officers, firefighters, correctional officers, 911 operators and EMS personnel. The service, which honors those who have died in the line of duty and those currently serving as first responders, offers an opportunity for the community to show gratitude to first responders and their families.

The current President of the Foundation Board of Directors is parishioner Tom Shannon, Jr. The current Executive Director of the Foundation is Joe Voskerichian, who has been involved in it from the beginning.

“The purpose of the Foundation is, as stated, to provide immediate financial assistance and ensure a college education or vocational training for the spouse and dependent children of Florida law enforcement officers and firefighters of Hillsborough, Pinellas, Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Polk and Marion Counties killed in the line of duty,” Joe says. “This includes financial assistance in the form of \$5,000, which is immediately provided to the slain hero’s family to assist in their time of need.

“In addition, we provide financial educational assistance in the form of scholarships to cover tuition, books and fees, as well as room and board [at State of Florida University rates],” he adds. “The foundation’s policies are set by a Board of Directors whose



members represent broad community interests with diversified business and professional backgrounds.”

Our parish community members are encouraged to become members of the Gold Shield Foundation. “The people we help are most deserving,” Joe says. “Each year, we hold an annual banquet for members which features excellent speakers and entertainment. Fr. Malley has done the invocation at that banquet multiple times. Last year, we had more than 600 attend. Although we do not award it every year, we give a Gold Shield Award to deserving people.”

If you would like more information or are interested in membership, please visit the website of the Gold Shield Foundation at <http://goldshieldfoundation.com>, or call Joe Voskerichian at the foundation at 813-969-0417.

A Letter From Our Pastor

November: A Time of Faithful Celebration and Sharing in Thanks

Dear Friends in Christ,

As I look over the calendar for November, my mind is filled with thoughts of thanksgiving. These aren't just thoughts about Thanksgiving Day, although I look towards it with happy anticipation — more than that, they are thoughts filled with a variety of reasons for why we should be thankful.

The month began with a great celebration, and a day of thanksgiving for all of us — All Saints' Day. This great feast celebrates the great company of Christians now in heaven — a company we shall eventually join, whether or not we're formally canonized, if we remain faithful to Christ.

And the communion of saints — the sharing of spiritual goods by those in heaven to us who are still in our pilgrimage — is a great cause for thanksgiving. We read the lives of the saints to be encouraged and inspired by their examples. Plus, we are strengthened by their fellowship in the Body of Christ, and we are aided by their prayers.

And then, the very next day, we celebrated All Souls' Day. Although this day commemorates all the faithful departed who are being purified in Purgatory, it is natural for us to concentrate on the members of our own family and our friends who have died. While we pray they may soon experience the joys of heaven, at the same time we also are thankful for the love they gave us and for the faith they passed on to us.



Then, later in the month comes Thanksgiving Day, the national holiday celebrating all the things for which we are thankful. The fact that it comes toward the end of autumn reminds us that it was originally a harvest festival. For Christians today, it's a wholesome reminder that we should thank God for everything we receive, especially the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. In light of that, I hope that you will participate in the Church's Great Thanksgiving, the Holy Eucharist, on Thanksgiving Day. It's the ultimate way to give

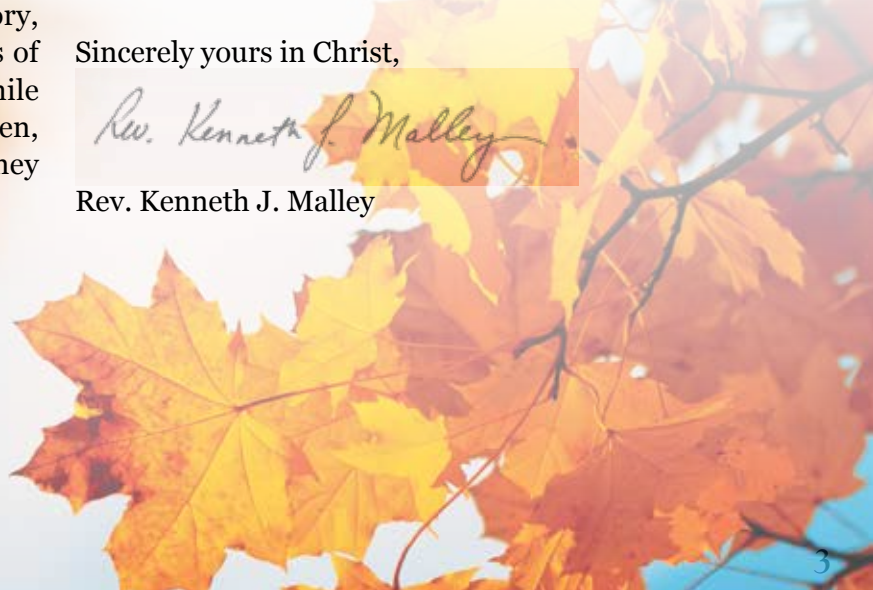
thanks.

A reminder — while much of our attention this month may be drawn to the often contentious dialogues and actions in our country, we need to remember that God is in charge of the universe, even though He has given us free will. If we trust in His loving care, demonstrated by returning to Him a portion of the time, talent and treasure He has entrusted to us, we can withstand the troubles of life. It's a good principle to follow, not only in this month of thanksgiving, but throughout the year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Kenneth J. Malley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed over a rectangular area that has a background of autumn leaves.

Rev. Kenneth J. Malley





ALBERTO AND MATILDE HIDALGO:

When Alberto and Matilde Hidalgo look into their past, they can't help but think of the famous poem, *Footprints in the Sand*.

"If I look back over our journey as a family, I see only one set of 'footprints,' in a lot of places," Alberto says. "That is because during the many difficult times we have been through, Our Lord was carrying us."

Having begun their marriage with the blessing of God, they have been capable of enduring many tough times, all for His glory.

"By God's grace we were drawn to each other immediately and started dating, and we are still dating after 60 years!" Alberto says. "In 1957, we discerned our vocation to the Sacrament of Marriage while doing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. We celebrated our engagement with the blessing of our parents on May 17, 1958, and were

married in the Chapel of Colegio de Belen on Feb. 8, 1959, in Cuba."

Soon after, Alberto and Matilde welcomed their first baby daughter, Tillie, in 1960.

"At this time, the Communistic regime in Cuba took over everything, and they closed down all of the Catholic institutions," Alberto says. "As the Communist takeover of Cuba advanced, we supported the work of the anti-communist underground, providing shelter in our home for young people that were being persecuted."

After the debacle of Bay of Pigs in 1961, the Hidalgos experienced an amazing rescue from the hand of God.

"God's mercy was truly with us, and in 1961, He made it possible for us to escape and find freedom in the United States," Alberto says. "We were welcomed in Atlanta, Ga., by my parents and soon were blessed with the birth of our second daughter, Maria."



Alberto and Matilde Hidalgo were married on Feb. 8, 1959.



Matilde and Alberto are faithful stewards of their time, talent and treasure by serving at our parish in various ways.

Carried in Our Lord's Arms

As our Lord promises in the Scriptures, He will protect all of those who trust in Him.

"The Lord protected us," Matilde says. "When we came to this country, we didn't have any money or even a change of clothing. All we had was our faith and each other. Everything was such a miracle! We trusted in the Lord and He came through for us. We have many friends who were killed and some that had to spend 25 years in prison, but we were spared. Soon after we arrived in the United States, Alberto was accepted in full graduate standing at Georgia Tech, where he completed a master's program in Chemical Engineering in 1963. We worked very hard, and within 10 years, we raised six children: Tillie, Maria, Ana, Albert Jr., Patti, and Tina."

Over the years, Alberto worked as Vice President of Research and Development for Colgate-Palmolive with global responsibility for development and commercialization of household products. The Hidalgos now have 21 grandchildren, three step-grandsons and six great-grandchildren. Recently, one of their grandsons, Fr. Nicholas Dolan, was ordained as a priest by Bishop David M. O'Connell, of the Diocese of Trenton, N.J.

Matilde and Alberto are faithful stewards of their time, talent and treasure by serving at our parish in various ways. For example, Alberto serves as a lector, and both he and Matilde are Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. They also find great peace in serving with the Marian Servants in Clearwater. As Marian Servants, they follow a rule of life which includes a commitment to holiness, obedience

to the Magisterium of the Church and humble service. They are both very active in healing ministry, intercessory prayer, and offer spiritual direction.

"We have been very blessed by God, and we give Him all the honor and glory," Matilde says. "He has forgiven us, provided for us and led us through many trials. We know that He will continue to draw us to Himself always. We enjoy being able to use the skills and gifts that we have been given."

Further, the Hidalgos enjoy helping out with the Alpha Program, which is a powerful evangelization ministry that involves sharing the life of Jesus with others through relationships, retreats, weekly faith formation meetings and other social exchanges.

Last but certainly not least, Matilde and Alberto express their commitment to stewardship by being devoted parents and grandparents, witnessing our faith and supporting our community of Marian servants.

"At this point in time, we witness our faith to our family by how we live," Alberto says. "We make an effort to be with our grandchildren whenever there is an important event in their lives so we can honor them."

Being together as a Catholic family has always been a real priority for the Hidalgos.

"When our children were growing up, we took them on a family retreat every year," Matilde says. "Nowadays, whenever one of our grandchildren turns 12, they get to come alone with us for one week in our motorhome, to any place they want to go. It really helps us to develop a relationship with each grandchild."

"We have been very blessed by God, and we give Him all the honor and glory. He has forgiven us, provided for us and led us through many trials. We know that He will continue to draw us to Himself always. We enjoy being able to use the skills and gifts that we have been given."

— Matilde Hidalgo



LIVING OUT *Gratitude* AND *Stewardship* DURING THANKSGIVING AND BEYOND

Every November, as the holiday season fast approaches, we are filled with a deep sense of sentimentality and gratitude for all our blessings. At the same time, we encounter many wonderful ways to give — to cheerfully share our own gifts — during this time of Thanksgiving.

It is with this spirit of gratitude that we can truly live out the stewardship way of life. This Thanksgiving, there are plenty of opportunities to do this in a direct way. Is there a new neighbor you haven't met, or someone who might be spending the holiday alone? Invite them over for Thanksgiving dinner. Perhaps you could volunteer at a soup kitchen or donate a Thanksgiving meal to a family in need who wouldn't have one otherwise.

If you go shopping on Black Friday, make it a point to donate old clothes that you or your family members no longer need. And as the winter draws closer, you might participate in — or even organize — a coat drive, and then gather a small group to go out into the community to give the coats away to homeless shelters and others in need

during the winter months. There are countless other opportunities to live in gratitude and thanksgiving — opportunities that go beyond just having a meal with family and friends on the fourth Thursday of November.

Of course, we must remember that this spirit of thanksgiving should not end after the holidays. We must always consider how to give, even as the sentimental glow of the holiday season fades after the New Year. In January, if there is space at your table, fill it. In February, if there is abundance in your closet, give away from that abundance. In March, if there are volunteers needed at the soup kitchen, rally a team and give of your time. We need a renewed spirit of stewardship and thanksgiving that lasts the whole year so that our giving becomes habitual, and not just seasonal.

This Thanksgiving, ask the Holy Spirit where He is calling you to give. And may the joy of the Thanksgiving season flow into our lives as good stewards each and every day.

The spirit of thanksgiving should not end after the holidays. We must always consider how to give, even as the sentimental glow of the holiday season fades after the New Year. In January, if there is space at your table, fill it. In February, if there is abundance in your closet, give away from that abundance. In March, if there are volunteers needed at the soup kitchen, rally a team and give of your time. We need a renewed spirit of stewardship and thanksgiving that lasts the whole year so that our giving becomes habitual, and not just seasonal.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS:

A Powerful Prayer Tradition in the Catholic Church

As Catholics, we are blessed to be part of a faith tradition that stretches back over 2,000 years to its founding by Jesus Christ. Along with the history of our faith come many customs and sacred rituals that become even more beautiful when we delve a little deeper into their origins and meanings. Certainly, such is the case with one of the most visible outward signs of our Catholic faith — the Sign of the Cross.

Since we say and make the Sign of the Cross so often, it may easily become a rote, perhaps even thoughtless, action. However, it is important to remember that the Sign of the Cross is much more than a simple gesture. Even in its most basic form, the Sign of the Cross — accompanied by the spoken or unspoken words “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” — is a prayer, a creed stating our belief in the Holy Trinity, the dual nature of Jesus Christ, and the dependence of our salvation on His crucifixion and resurrection.

In addition, making the Sign of the Cross is an indication of a willingness to take up our own cross and suffering for the sake of Christ. The prayer is considered one of the greatest weapons against Satan and all demons, and an added strength against the temptations of the flesh.

In the Roman Catholic Church today, the Sign of the Cross is typically made with either three fingers or an open hand touching first the forehead, then the chest, followed by the left shoulder and then the right (in the Eastern Church, the right shoulder is touched before the left). The concept of making a sign, or “setting a seal,” upon the forehead of those who place their faith in the Lord appears in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible — see Ezek. 9:4 and Rev. 7:3, 9:4, and 14:1.

Early versions of the Sign of the Cross were traced on just the forehead, using the thumb and forefinger held together in the shape of a tiny cross. We still see this version of the blessing performed during Baptisms (with the cross traced on the infant’s forehead) and on Ash Wednesday (with the cross traced in ashes on the foreheads of the faithful). Similarly, when the Gospel is read during the Liturgy of the Word, the priest or deacon leads the congregation in forming this small cross on the forehead, mouth, and chest, indicating a willingness to keep the Word of the Lord in our minds, on our lips, and in our hearts.

There is no doubt that our early Church fathers were strong believers in the sanctifying power of the Sign of the Cross. A second-century ecclesiastical scholar,

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The Sign of the Cross *continued from page 7*

Tertullian, and a third century saint, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, both wrote about the necessity of performing the Sign of the Cross at one's waking and one's lying down, at entering and leaving a room, at mealtimes, and more. St. Augustine also referenced the importance of marking the cross on the faithful's forehead during the administration of the sacraments.

It is likely that the sign transformed from the tiny cross on the forehead to the larger, full-body cross used today sometime in the fifth century, when heretics began questioning both the dual nature of Jesus Christ — fully human and fully divine — and the unity of the Holy Trinity. Believers in these crucial Church doctrines began forming the cross with three extended fingers (representing the Trinity), keeping the ring finger and little finger pressed down into the palm (representing Christ's dual nature), and tracing a cross on their entire upper body so there could be no mistaking the gesture.

Today, the Sign of the Cross still figures predominantly in our prayer life as Roman Catholics. We commonly perform it upon entering a church (with the holy water as a reminder of our Baptism); at the beginning and end of the Catholic Mass, a Benediction, or the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; when opening and closing our personal prayers; at mealtimes; and when passing by a Catholic Church (in recognition of Christ, present in the tabernacle). As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us, the frequent, intentional use of the Sign of the Cross can help the faithful dedicate each day to the glory of God and provide strength in the face of trial and temptation (2157).

Now, each time we cross ourselves and proclaim, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," let us do so with an increased awareness of the rich history of the Sign of the Cross and the abundant graces that come to us through this powerful prayer tradition!

• *Mass Schedule* •

Saturday Vigil: 5:30 p.m. • Sunday: 7:30, 9, 11 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. • Daily: Mon-Sat 9 a.m., Wed 6:15 p.m. • Holy Days: 9 a.m. & 7 p.m. Vigil: 7 p.m.