

Immaculate Conception Parish



Please visit our website at
www.icworc.com and Facebook

RECTORY ADDRESS

353 Grove Street, Worcester, MA 01605

Phone: 508-754-8419

Fax: 508-306-9718

Religious Education Phone: 508-868-8119

Rectory Hours: M: 9:30am-1:30pm, T: 9:30am-1:30pm

W: 9:30am-1:30pm, F: 9:30am-1:30pm

MOST REV. ROBERT J. MCMANUS, **Bishop of Worcester**

REV. WALTER RILEY, **PASTOR**

REV. ENOCH KYEREMATENG, **IN RESIDENCE**

KEVIN DEIGNAN, **PERMANENT DEACON**

FRANK MYSKA, **PERMANENT DEACON**

MARY SYCKS, **ADMINISTRATOR OF RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION AND YOUTH MINISTER**

C. HENRY MASON, **MUSIC DIRECTOR**

BRIDGET KLOFFT, **CANTOR**

ROBERT NOBERINI, **PARISH OFFICE MANAGER**

MATTHEW FOSTER, **PASTORAL COUNCIL CHAIRMAN**

LYNDA MONAHAN, **SAFE ENVIRONMENT COORDINATOR**

SUNDAY MASSES

SATURDAY VIGIL: 4:00 PM

SUNDAY: 7:30 AM, 10:00 AM

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday 2:45 - 3:45 PM

(or by appointment)

WEEKDAY MASSES

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY 9:00 AM

THURSDAY 8:00 AM

NEW PARISHIONERS

Anyone is welcome to join the Parish Community.

Please contact the Rectory and introduce yourself.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Parents and godparents of infants to be baptized are expected to participate in a preparation session. Call the Rectory to register for this process and set a date for the actual Baptism. For Baptism of adults please contact the Rectory.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Please contact the rectory one year prior to your desired wedding date

SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Father Walter can be called whenever someone can benefit from this sacrament of healing.

PROTECTING OUR YOUTH AND CHILDREN

If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by a priest, religious or lay person working for the Church, and you want to share feelings of hurt or betrayal, call Cathaleen Peloquin, Victim Services Coordinator, Office of Healing and Prevention, 508-929-4363 (direct, confidential line).

MASS INTENTIONS

Sat.	Jan 06	4:00 PM	John Murdock, 2nd Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Jan 07	7:30 AM	Richard Gamache, 1st Anniversary, from Family
		10:00 AM	Norman Lovely, 4th Anniversary, from Family
Mon.	Jan 08	9:00 AM	Grace Shea, 2nd Anniversary, from Family (<i>Baptism of the Lord</i>)
Tues.	Jan 09	9:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Wed.	Jan 10	9:00 AM	Therese Cronican, 24th Anniversary, from Daughter
Thurs.	Jan 11	8:00 AM	
Sat.	Jan 13	4:00 PM	
Sun.	Jan 14	7:30 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
		10:00 AM	

THIS WEEK the text for The Epiphany of the Lord, may be found at #898 in the *Journeysongs* hymnal.

ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE WISHES ALL PARISHIONERS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

We also want to thank everyone that has helped or have supported the 2017 Activities. We are looking to have some New Activities in 2018 and hope to expand the Activity team. The Committee has donated the following for 2017.

Partners in Charity	\$1,500
Fran Mahoney Scholarship Fund	\$500
Catholic Charities	\$200
Food Pantry	\$150
Sick Gifts (Flowers)	\$50
Two New Cooler for the Connor's center	\$329
Two Tables for the Connor's center	\$80
Boy Scouts	\$100
Camp for the Handicapped	\$100
TOTAL	\$3,009

Activities Committee will start up the coffee shop on the first and third Sunday each month starting with (Jan. 7, 2018) and (Jan. 21, 2018).

Note: If anyone can volunteer please call or email. Jim Hester 508-852-3473, bevhester13@gmail.com. Thank you.

FRIDAY FASTING AND INTENTION

We thank all our parishioners who continue to fast for one meal and abstain from meat each Friday as we commemorate our Lord's saving act on that day. This wonderful Catholic tradition is reemerging, calling us to be mindful of our Lord's crucifixion every Friday of the year. Such a particular awareness in our lives can only deepen our faith and love in Christ. As we fast and abstain, we do so each week for an intention that is to us on a local, national, or world level, always effecting our faith. Next Friday's intention is *for those seriously affected by the cold weather, that they find the warmth and attention needed to carry on each day.*

PRAYER SHAWLS

We have a few prayer shawls in our possession that we would like to give out to anyone who feels the need of having one. Or, if you know of someone who may be dealing with cancer or any other disease and would benefit from the comfort and peace of a prayer shawl, please speak with Fr. Riley. We thank the Prayer Shawl Group at Our Lady of Good Counsel in West Boylston for making and donating the beautiful work of their shawls to us.

CONVERSATION WITH BISHOP MCMANUS

Conversation with Bishop McManus, will air as follows:

Charter Communications 29 cities/towns that carry WCTR TV3 on Channel 193	Saturday, Jan. 6 at 6 p.m. Rebroadcast on the following: Sunday at 6 a.m. & Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.
SPAC TV28 (Shrewsbury)	Sunday, Jan. 7 at 7:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m. and on Monday, Jan 8 at 7:30 a.m.
WCCA, TV13 (Worcester Ch. 194)	Tuesday, Jan. 9 at 8:00 p.m.

WORDS OF POPE FRANCIS FROM The Joy of Love

FAMILY LIFE AS AN EDUCATIONAL SETTING: "The family is the primary setting for socialization, since it is where we first learn to relate to others, to listen and share, to be patient and show respect, to help one another and live as one. The task of education is to make us sense that the world and society are also our home; it trains us how to live together in this greater home. In the family, we learn closeness, care and respect for others. We break out of our fatal self-absorption and come to realize that we are living with and alongside others who are worthy of our concern, our kindness and our affection. There is no social bond without this primary, everyday, almost microscopic aspect of living side by side, crossing paths at different times of the day, being concerned about everything that affects us, helping one another with ordinary little things. Every day the family has to come up with new ways of appreciating and acknowledging its members." Par. 276

RCIA CLASSES FOR 2017-2018 AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Classes for this year's RCIA Program have begun. They are held on Monday evenings from 6:30 -7:45 p.m. in the rectory. The next class will be January 8. These classes are for any adult (16 years or older) who has yet to receive what we call the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist), meaning full initiation into the Church. This can be someone who has yet to be baptized, or baptized in a faith tradition not recognized by the Catholic Church, or an individual who has been baptized in the Catholic Church or validly baptized in another faith tradition, but has yet to receive Holy Eucharist and/or Confirmation. For anyone who is uncertain about any of the possible situations that exist in their own spiritual life, or that of someone they know where there is an absence of any of the 3 above Sacraments, please speak with Fr. Riley at Mass or call the rectory at 508-754-8419. Each year the RCIA program leads adults to full initiation into the Church at the Easter Vigil Mass, which next year will be March 31, when the reception of the Sacraments will take place.

HOPE FOR HOUSING FOOD CARDS

Please consider purchasing food cards for the purpose of helping to stop homelessness here in Central Massachusetts. 5% of each card purchased will be donated by the participating grocery chain, while the purchase receives the full value of the card that is purchased. The money raised from this ministry has helped to prevent hundreds of families from being homeless, a situation that no one in our country should have to experience. Last week at Immaculate Conception our parishioners purchased \$50.00 in cards. **Thank you** to those who continue to participate in this very worthy program.

ROSARY MOVED TO FIRST SATURDAY JANUARY 7th

The outdoor Rosary led by parishioner Mike Mitchell has moved indoors to the Church. The timing will now be on the first Saturday of each month. The next indoor Rosary will be held on Saturday, January 7th at 2:30 PM for all who wish to join Mike in prayer.

Religious Education Classes take place on Sunday, January 7th, 8:45AM-9:45AM for children in grades K-6, 7:00PM-8:00PM grades 7 & 8 and 7:00PM-8:15PM for students in grades 9 & 10 and Confirmation Class.

Inclement weather policy ~ For cancellations of Religious Education classes due to weather conditions please check the Immaculate Conception website or Facebook Page. You can also call the Office of Religious Education at 508-868-8119.

MARCH FOR LIFE, 2018

The annual March for Life, which we pray will one day no longer be necessary, will be held in Washington, D.C. on Friday, January 19. Buses from the Diocese of Worcester will be traveling to Washington for the event. There will a Mass for Life at St. Paul's Cathedral on Thursday, January 18 at 7:30 P.M., followed by departure of the buses to Washington. The cost for the event is \$90.00. Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Forms can be filled out on the Diocese of Worcester website under the Respect Life Office Department, March for Life. Anyone in the Parish who may need financial assistance in order to attend this event, please speak with Fr. Riley.

NEW DEACON INTERN AT OUR PARISH

There will be a new face in the sanctuary beginning this weekend at many of the Sunday Masses. Michael Cahill, who is studying for the Diaconate for the Diocese of Worcester, will be joining us here at Immaculate Conception for an internship for the approximately 6 months in preparation for his ordination. Mike comes to us from Our Lady of Providence Parish at St. Bernard's Church on Lincoln Street (the other side of the tracks, and Fr. Riley's home Parish), a lifelong parishioner at that Parish. Mike is a very spiritual, genial, and most kind person. Please welcome him to our Parish when the opportunity arises in the coming weeks, and keep Mike in your prayers as he begins the final phase of the Diaconate program that leads to Holy Orders. May God bless Mike and keep him as he learns many of his future responsibilities from both of our Deacons, Kevin Deignan and Frank Myska.

NOTRE DAME BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Grief is a normal response to a loss and is unique to each person. when a loved one dies, our lives are forever changed. There is neither a right or wrong way to express grief, be it depression, anger, or guilt. Notre Dame Healthcare, 555 Planation Street, holds a Bereavement Support Group the first Tuesday of every month in their Educational Center from 6:00-7:30 p.m. For more information call Peggy Arcouette, Bereavement Coordinator, at 508-852-5505, extension 1142.

SIGN OF PEACE

It's the time of year again when colds and sniffles are all around us. For those who have a cold or not feeling 100% healthy, we recommend you refrain from physically passing on the sign of peace during Mass with a handshake. Your neighbor will thank you. For those who are not physically offered the sign of peace by someone sitting near you, don't take it personally. They are saving you from getting their sickness. Thank you to all for being considerate in this matter.

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 14th THE 2nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1st Reading: Samuel 3:3b-10, 19

Psalm: 40

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20

Gospel: John 1:35-42

From the Pastor continued from the following page

But the Magi had to travel long distances to arrive at God's presence, and travel they did. They knew, as their journey progressed, that they were heading toward something (Someone) great and powerful. So great and powerful that he would touch them in ways that converted their hearts to the one God. May their search be ours. Don't stop searching. Keep asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews?" It makes for a loving spiritual motto for 2018, and every year after.

Peace, Fr. Riley

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

FEIGNED ADORATION; Matthew 1:8: "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word.' Appropriately did Herod say, 'Bring me word,' for the one hastens to come to Christ always brings a word of renunciation to the devil. When the priest says to the future Christian, 'Do you renounce the devil?' the latter will answer, 'I do renounce him.' Properly therefore are the magi instructed to bring word to Herod, who realized he was taking the place of the devil. Satan knew how to corrupt a person. 'That I may come and worship him.' He wants to lie but ha cannot. He who feigned adoration will come that he might bow to abuse, kneel to inflict punishment, recline to do harm...But when the clouds of treachery have passed, in the fair weather of emerging Christian faith, the magi beheld again the star they had seen, preceding and leading them on. Finally they arrive at the most holy place of the Lord's birth."

St Peter Chrysologus (406-450)

PAPAL STATEMENTS ON MERCY

THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF MERCY: "The wisdom of fraternal love, which is manifested in virtues and deeds that are rightly qualified as Christian, the historical journey of the holy Church, will explode with a new fruitfulness, victorious joy, and regenerating warmth. It will no longer be rooted in hatred, conflict, and greed, but rather in love, love that generates love, the love of man for man, not for any short-term, mistaken interests, not for any bitter and poorly tolerated condescension, but a love for you; a love for you, O Christ, revealed in the sufferings and needs of our fellow human beings. The civilization of love will prevail over the troubles caused by relentless social struggles, and lead to the transformation of the world of which we dream, a humanity that is finally Christian."

Pope Paul VI, Christmas Homily, 1975

COLLECTION FOR CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Envelopes for the annual collection for Catholic University in Washington, D.C. may be placed into the first collection basket this Sunday. This collection helps to support the university founded by the U. S. Catholic Bishops to serve the educational needs of the Church as well as our nation.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: 12/31/2017

Sunday Ordinary Income	\$ 10,505.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$ 636.00
Christmas	\$ 1,417.00
Total Online Donations for December 2017	\$ 1,755.00

ON THE EUCHARIST

"The Eucharist creates communion and fosters communion. Saint Paul wrote to the faithful of Corinth explaining how their divisions, reflected in their Eucharistic gatherings, contradicted what they were celebrating, the Lord's Supper. The Apostle then urged them to reflect on the true reality of the Eucharist in order to return to the spirit of fraternal communion. Saint Augustine effectively echoed this call when, in recalling the Apostle's words: 'You are the body of Christ and individually members of it' (1 Cor 12:27), he went on to say, 'if you are his body and members of him, then you will find set on the Lord's table your own mystery. Yes, you will receive your own mystery.' And from this observation he concludes: 'Christ the Lord...hallowed at his table the mystery of our peace and unity. Whoever receives the mystery of unity without preserving the bonds of peace receives not a mystery for his benefit but evidence against him.'"

St. John Paul II, from Ecclesia de Eucharistia (Encyclical)

FROM THE PASTOR

If we're looking for a spiritual motto for 2018, there's a perfect one in the Gospel this week. It's the question asked to King Herod by the Magi upon their entrance into Jerusalem, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews?"

This question would make for a holy meditation each day, beginning with our morning prayer, asking ourselves, "Where is the newborn king, not only of the Jewish people, but of the world? Where is he in my life, in my world, in my work, in my relationships, in my family dynamics, in my watching the Patriots as I yell at the television?" But seriously, where is Jesus for each of us?

What the Three Wise Men teach us above all, as they come into the presence of a king (Herod) who is not so nice, is the spiritual importance of searching. I remember a gentleman who worked at a company I delivered to in my UPS days back in Hopedale, a sleepy quiet town down next to Milford on the way to Gillette Stadium. And, once again, some things we just don't forget... I remember him telling me one day that his search for God pretty much came up empty. He said he went into a Church, sat there, was waiting to "hear" someone say something to him, waiting for God to talk to him, but he heard nothing. To him, his search for God came up empty because of the silence he encountered in a religious setting. Therefore, God must not be real.

Of course, as we grow over the years in spirituality and girth, we come to realize that we find the presence of God in exactly what that gentleman experienced; in silence. Profound silence in a religious setting is an experience of God's presence. His divine presence will come at us in a million different forms and settings, but silence is one of the more powerful and touching ways that God will speak to our hearts. Those who see nothing in silence in a Church are missing the experience of being close to God. However, I give this worker at a manufacturing shop from Hopedale all my admiration for searching, because no one can do so unless the Spirit is moving them.

The Magi teach us the fundamental importance of our obligation towards gaining and maintaining an active, healthy, and loving relationship with our Savior. If Jesus had spoken to this gentleman noted above when he entered the Church that day, and he heard a voice say to him, "Go out and make disciples of all the nations, beginning with your own home," would he have heeded the Voice, or thought he was hearing things? Our search for God requires further action on our parts when any divine encounter manifests itself, be it a Voice or total silence. God speaks to our hearts much more than our ears. A heart that is open to God's Voice will proceed to Bethlehem, as the Wise Men do, and draw closer and closer to the Christ, until our proximity to him is at the door of the stable. This is the degree of closeness, I pray, we search for in any attempt on our part to be touched by God's presence.

"Where is the newborn king of the Jews? Should I go to a Church to see if he will speak to me in a real voice? Should I head to the beach to see if I can encounter him in the crashing of the waves, or the silence of a calm ocean? Should I drive north to a Maine forest, enter the midst of nature created by his hand, to see if I can catch a glimpse of him in the colors of autumn, or the chirping of birds, or the falling of leaves? Should I head to Gettysburg to see if I can encounter the presence of God as I walk amidst the fields that were once strewn with dead bodies as a result of civil war, but is today a place where silence reigns? (Answer, Yes). Where is my Bethlehem? Do I have more than one Bethlehem, being a place where God's presence can be had? If so, that's a very good thing.

The Magi represent the best of the Gentiles. In antiquity, the Jewish people didn't have to search for God's presence so much because He revealed Himself in the most explicit ways.

Continued on Previous Page

THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Sat.	Jan 06	2:30 PM 2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Rosary Confession Mass
Sun.	Jan 07	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Jan 08	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Jan 09	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Jan 10	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Jan 11	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Jan 13	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Jan 14	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass



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**YES, WE WOULD LIKE TO REGISTER
AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION!!**

Name _____

Address: _____

**City
& Zip** _____

Phone _____

Envelopes yes ___ No ___

Number of People in Household _____

**PLEASE, TEAR THIS OFF AND PLACE IN THE
COLLECTION BASKET! THANK YOU!**