

# Immaculate Conception Parish



Please visit our website at  
[www.icworc.com](http://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 13	4:00 PM	Agnes Dervan, 4th Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Jan 14	7:30 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
		10:00 AM	Intentions of the Kuakumensah Family for Blessings and Good Health in the New Year
Mon.	Jan 15	9:00 AM	(Weekday in Ordinary Time)
Tues.	Jan 16	9:00 AM	(Weekday in Ordinary Time)
Wed.	Jan 17	9:00 AM	(St. Anthony, Abbot)
Thurs.	Jan 18	8:00 AM	(Week of prayer for Christian Unity begins)
Sat.	Jan 20	4:00 PM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Sun.	Jan 21	7:30 AM	
		10:00 AM	Edward F. Kennedy, 1st Anniversary, from Family

**THIS WEEK** the text for The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, may be found at #952 in the *Journeysong* hymnal.

**ON THE EUCHARIST**

“The Eucharist’s particular effectiveness in promoting communion is one of the reasons for the importance of Sunday Mass. I have already dwelt on this and on the other reasons which make Sunday Mass fundamental for the life of the Church and of individual believers in my Apostolic Letter on the sanctification of Sunday *Des Domini*. There I recalled that the faithful have the obligation to attend Mass, unless they are seriously impeded, and that pastors have the corresponding duty to see that it is practical and possible for all to fulfill this precept... Precisely through sharing in the Eucharist, the Lord’s Day also becomes the Day of the Church, when she can effectively exercise her role as the sacrament of unity.”

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

**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 15. 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 will be March 31, when the reception of the Sacraments will take place.

**CURSILLO WEEKENDS**

Cursillo or "short course in Christianity" is an uplifting and educational experience. The weekend is facilitated by a team of laypeople and clergy who deliver organized talks and discussions. Our 2018 dates are: Men’s - February 22-25 & June 14-17; Women’s - May 3-6 & October 25-28. All weekends will be held at the Immaculate Conception Spiritual Renewal Center in Putnam, CT. For additional information, please contact Sue Leighton at 508-278-3155 or sleighton1958@gmail.com.

**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 the grace to live out God’s will for us in our lives.*

**RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

“In order to be able to love God much in Heaven, it is necessary first to love him much on earth. The degree of our love for God at the end of our life will be the measure of our love for God during eternity. Do we want to gain certitude that we will no longer be separated from this Supreme Good in the present life? Let us embrace him more and more by the bonds of our love ... Make me love you, and may I be loved by you; I do not desire and do not have to desire anything else.”

*St. Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787)*

**WORDS OF POPE FRANCIS FROM The Joy of Love**

**FAMILY LIFE AS AN EDUCATIONAL SETTING:** “In the family too, we can rethink our habits of consumption and join in caring for the environment as our common home. ‘The family is the principal agent of an integral ecology, because it is the primary social subject which contains within it the two fundamental principles of human civilization on earth; the principle of communion and the principle of fruitfulness.’ In the same way, times of difficulty and trouble in the lives of family life can teach important lessons. This happens, for example, when illness strikes, since ‘in the face of illness, even in families, difficulties arise due to human weakness. But in general, times of illness enable family bonds to grow stronger... An education that fails to encourage sensitivity to human illness makes the heart grow cold; it makes young people ‘anesthetized’ to the sufferings of others, incapable of facing suffering and of living the experience of limitation.” Par. 277

**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.

**OPEN HOUSE AT ST. STEPHEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

St. Stephen School will hold its Open House on Sunday, Jan. 28 from 1-3 p.m. The snow date will be Saturday, Feb. 3 from 1-3 p.m. We look forward to welcoming students for grades Pre-K3 through grade 8 and their families. St. Stephen School is located at 355 Grafton Street in Worcester. For more information, please contact the school at 508-755-3209 or visit our website at [www.st-stephen.net](http://www.st-stephen.net).

**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.

**Religious Education** There are no Religious Education classes on January 14th due to the holiday weekend. Classes will resume on January 21st at 8:45AM for children in grades K-6, 7:00PM for children in grades 7-10 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.

### **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 \$20.00 in cards. **Thank you** to those who continue to participate in this very worthy program.

### **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.

### **READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 21st THE 3rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

1st Reading: Jonah 3: 1-5, 10

Psalm: 25

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

### **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: 01/07/18**

Sunday Ordinary Income	\$ 6,759.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$ 125.00
Christmas	\$ 220.00
Winter Fuel	\$ 136.00
Catholic University	\$ 252.00
Christmas Flowers	\$ 25.00
Catholic Free Press	\$ 117.00

*From the Pastor continued from the following page*

The Cycle of Readings has a purpose, the purpose being that we use much of the four Gospels throughout the 3-year Cycle, as well as a good percentage of the Old and New Testament. For example, this Sunday the 1st reading is from the Old Testament First Book of Samuel, which tells us the story of Samuel being called by God. This scene should speak to all of our lives. And, the 2nd reading from Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians, that speaks to the importance of the body being the temple of God, which should resonate in a culture that abuses the human body in countless ways. All leading to the Gospel story of Andrew and Peter being called by Jesus, two Apostles whose bodies will be martyred in the name of Christ.

Having regard for why we do what we do in the Church is far better than attending Mass each week and simply waiting for the final blessing to come around. When we're open to some new knowledge of our faith, like how the Church chooses readings, then we hunger for more. May we grow in such knowledge this year, as we wait for some green grass to grow that can't happen fast enough.

*Peace, Fr. Riley*

### **NOTRE DAME BEREAVEMENT GROUP**

Greif 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.

### **PRO-LIFE MASS**

All are invited to attend the Pro-Life Mass with Bishop McManus on Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7:30 p.m. at Cathedral of St. Paul, 19 Chatham St., Worcester. Please join us as we remember the 45th tragic anniversary of Roe v. Wade and pray for an end to abortion and the conversion of our nation. We will also pray in a special way for all those who will be travelling to Washington, DC for the March for Life. All are welcome!

### **JOIN THE NATIONAL NOVENA FOR LIFE SPONSORED BY THE USCCB**

9 Days for Life is a focused period of prayer, penance, and pilgrimage set aside to mark the tragic anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision which legalized abortion during all nine months of pregnancy. The novena will take place nationwide from January 18 through 26, 2018. During this time, all are invited to participate by joining together with thousands of Catholics across the country in prayer for a new intention each of the nine days. Visit [www.9daysforlife.com](http://www.9daysforlife.com) to learn more and to download a free app for your smartphone or to sign up for daily emails or text messages with each day's prayer intention. Your prayers matter! Your sacrifices make a difference!

### **SPRED PROGRAM AT ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE CHURCH IN WORCESTER**

SPRED stands for Special Religious Development. The goal of SPRED is to assist parish churches to integrate persons with developmental disabilities and persons with learning problems into parish worship through the process of faith development. We have openings for teens and adults for the winter/spring session. Visitors are also welcome to come and observe a session at St. Andrew the Apostle Church, Worcester. For details contact Carolyn: 978-422-8512 or [carolynprinceton@aol.com](mailto:carolynprinceton@aol.com). To learn more about the SPRED program visit <https://worcesterdiocese.org/spred>.

### **PARISH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE**

Our Parish Activities Committee will be serving food and refreshments in the Coffee Shop after the 7:30 & 10:00 Masses this Sunday, January 7. Consider coming down to join us for a cup of hot coffee in the cold weather, along with some delicious choices for food, be it a sandwich, donut, muffin, and other selections from our food table.

### **PAPAL STATEMENTS ON MERCY**

THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF MERCY: "If we wish to inaugurate and promote the civilization of love, we should not delude ourselves that we can change these sad years on the banks of time into a river of perfect happiness... Why do we refer to this distance of time and vision in achieving the true and perfect form of Christian life that has been entrusted to us? Oh, you know the reason, and it should not disturb our security or the joy we await and hope for. The reason is the Cross, erected at the highest pass between this present life and the future life. The Cross is not part of the mystery of love, but constitutes its very center, which we have chosen as the true and complete program of our renewed life." *Pope Paul VI, Christmas Homily, 1975*

## **FROM THE PASTOR**

The green has returned. Unfortunately, it's not the green grass that I wish I was talking about. That stuff still remains buried under mounds of snow, some of which looks like it went through the junkyard. Is there anything uglier in nature than dirty snow?

Anyway, the green I refer to is the green of Ordinary Time. The green vestments, the green altar cloth, and the green binder for the Prayers of the Faithful. Have you ever noticed the binders we use for the Prayers correspond to the color of the liturgical season? If you're too far in the back of the Church to notice, then, you're too far in the back of the Church. Green is back in for a handful of weeks until Ordinary Time gets interrupted by the purple Season of Lent in mid-February this year. Wednesday, February 14 to be exact. This year we receive ashes on Valentine's Day.

Until then, the green dominates the scene. The scene of the altar and elsewhere, meaning that we are outside of any particular season we celebrate at other times of the year. As we begin Ordinary Time for 2018, the Gospel to be used most Sundays will be the Gospel of Mark. Mark is the Gospel of Cycle B in the 3-Year cycle of readings. The order is Matthew, Mark and Luke, the order in which the Gospels appear in the Scriptures. Mark, however, as most theologians would tell us today through their close study of the word, was most likely the first Gospel written of the four. Reason being that it is the shortest. Thus, Matthew and Luke likely used Mark as a source for their Gospels, and expanded their own narrative of Jesus' ministry through their own particular sources, thus giving us longer Gospels than Mark by a number of chapters.

So, with Mark being the shortest Gospel, and a somewhat short Gospel in total, the Church uses the Gospel of John to fill in the weeks of Ordinary Time during the year to make sure we have enough Gospels for the good People of God to listen to every Cycle B year. (I hope I haven't lost you yet!). And also, John's Gospel is used to make sure that Fr. Riley, and every priest and/or deacon throughout the cosmos, has a narrative from the life of Jesus to preach about each Sunday, the day we celebrate the Lord's resurrection every week of the year. John's Gospel, for example, will be used for a period of 4-5 weeks at one stretch of time this coming summer, which cannot arrive fast enough. And the Church couldn't possibly use a better set of Gospel readings for that future stretch of time by using John, chapter 6, the Bread of Life Discourse, where Jesus refers so explicitly to the himself and the Eucharist.

Whereas Matthew and Luke will fill in all the weeks of Ordinary Time during Cycles A and C, respectively, Cycle B requires both Mark and John to ensure that God's people will have much to ponder on the life of Jesus when they enter through their respective Catholic doors during this present Cycle.

Why is all such understanding of the Scripture readings so important, which it is? It's important, first of all, because all Catholics should hold a basic understanding of how the Scripture readings are used, especially the Gospels that touch directly on the life of Christ. Coming to Church each week with basic knowledge of why the Church gives us what She does each week works in our favor. The more prepared we are, the deeper our experience of the Holy Liturgy. I think of Evangelical Christians and how their love of Scripture allows them a more intimate love for Christ. I'm not sure if they are as organized as Catholics are, and know what the Scripture readings will be each Sunday. But one thing is for certain, they know where everything is in the Bible by the time they reach the 5th grade.

And, a second reason why it's important to know some of the inner workings of our faith is to understand how everything we do in the Church has a purpose.

*Continued on Previous Page*

**THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

Sat.	Jan 13	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Jan 14	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Jan 15	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Jan 16	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Jan 17	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Jan 18	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Jan 20	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Jan 21	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

**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.

**ROSARY MOVED TO FIRST SATURDAY FEBRUARY 3rd**

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, February 3rd at 2:30 PM for all who wish to join Mike in prayer.

**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!**