

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

WEEKDAY MASSES

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY 9:00 AM

THURSDAY 8:00 AM

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday 2:45 - 3:45 PM

(or by appointment)

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.	Feb 10	4:00 PM	Virginia H. Murphy, 4th Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Feb 11	7:30 AM	Mr. and Mrs. Hervey Gregoire, from Family
		10:00 AM	Timothy Hase, Sr., Anniversary Mass, from Family
Mon.	Feb 12	9:00 AM	Thomas McNamara, Month Mind, from Family
Tues.	Feb 13	9:00 AM	Claire Burke, Month Mind, from Parish Family
Wed.	Feb 14	7:00 AM	(Ash Wednesday)
		9:00 AM	
		5:30 PM	
Thurs.	Feb 15	8:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Sat.	Feb 17	4:00 PM	Mary Karpowicz, from Family
Sun.	Feb 18	7:30 AM	
		10:00 AM	Emelia Menard, 3rd Anniversary, from Family

THIS WEEK the text for The 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time, may be found at #964 in the *Journeysongs* hymnal.

CHRIST THE KING WOMEN'S GUILD LENTEN EVENING OF RECOLLECTION

Christ The King Women's Guild invite all women to our Lenten Evening of Recollection on Wednesday, February 21st. Fr. Paul O'Connell, former pastor of CTK, is our presenter. The Evening will begin with 5:30pm mass followed by light dinner and presentation in the Johnson Room. Donation for the Evening is \$15. To make a reservation or if you have any questions, please contact Donna Byrnes at 508-753-3024 or dbyrnes@charter.net.

HOLY HOUR AND STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR LENT

Each Friday during the Season of Lent, our Parish will be holding our annual Holy Hour at 5:30 p.m., followed by Stations of the Cross at 6:30 p.m. All are invited to come and spend some time with the Lord in Eucharistic Adoration, and walk the way of the Cross in preparation for Holy Week and Easter Sunday. Holy Hour and the Stations will begin this Friday, February 16.

MAINE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

The 7th annual Maine Catholic Women's Conference, which features dynamic speakers, the "His Own" music ministry, Mass, adoration, and vendors, will be held May 5 at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland. This year's theme is "Come...magnify the Lord with me." The keynote speaker will be Sister Miriam James Heidland, a member of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity, who has traveled throughout the world inviting others to deepen their relationship with God. Once a successful college athlete attracted to a partying lifestyle, Sister Miriam James says she wasn't truly happy until she found God. She shared her story in the 2014 book, *Loved as I Am, An Invitation to Conversion, Healing, and Freedom through Jesus*. Registration for the conference opens on March 5. For more information please visit our website at <http://portlanddiocese.org/womensconference> or follow on Twitter! @mainecwc.

PAPAL STATEMENTS ON MERCY

Mercy is rendered concretely by serving the poor: "We incarnate the duty of hearing the cry of the poor when we are deeply moved by the sufferings of others. Let us listen to what God's word teaches us about mercy, and allow that word to resound in the life of the Church... This message is so clear and direct, so simple and eloquent, that no ecclesial interpretation has the right to relativize it. The Church's reflection on these texts ought not to obscure or weaken their force, but urge us to accept their exhortations with courage and zeal.... Whoever experiences divine mercy, is impelled to be an architect of mercy among the least and the poor... Jesus awaits us; let us receive mercy and let us give mercy!"

Pope Francis

TAX STATEMENTS FOR 2018

Any parishioner who wishes to receive a statement of contributions for 2017 for tax purposes can do so by calling the rectory at 508-754-8419 during business hours found on the front of the bulletin, by emailing the rectory at icworc@live.com, or stopping by the rectory during business hours.

ASH WEDNESDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Ash Wednesday this year, which begins the Season of Lent, is this week on February 14. Masses on Ash Wednesday will be held at 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., and 5:30 p.m. If you know of someone who is homebound or otherwise unable to come to Church to receive ashes, feel free to speak to Fr. Riley with the hope of such people receiving ashes at home or other place of residence. Thank you.

PARISH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Our Parish Activities Committee will be serving food and refreshments on the 3rd Sunday of the month, February 18. A meeting of the Activities Committee will take place on the same morning at 8:30 a.m. to discuss and prepare for our upcoming Irish Dinner. The Committee is always looking for new members to assist with different events throughout the year. More information can be offered at the monthly meeting.

ON THE EUCHARIST

"Our longing for the goal of unity prompts us to turn to the Eucharist, which is the supreme sacrament of the unity of the People of God, inasmuch as it is the apt expression and the unsurpassable source of the unity. In the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice the Church prays that God, the Father of mercies, will grant his children the fullness of the Holy Spirit so that they may become one body and one spirit in Christ. In raising this prayer to the Father of lights, from whom comes every good endowment and every perfect gift, the Church believes that she will be heard, for she prays in union with Christ her Head and Spouse, who takes up this plea of his Bride and joins it to that of his own redemptive sacrifice."

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

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 *all the ill in our Parish, may God's healing peace and touch be with them.*

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

THE SIGN OF TOUCHING: "He did not simply say, 'I will, be cleansed,' but he also 'extended his hand, and touched him' – an act we do well to analyze. If he cleansed him merely by willing it and by speaking it, why did he also add the touch of his hand? For no other reason, it seems to me, than that he might signify by this that he is not under the hand of the law, but the law is in his hands. Hence to the pure in heart, from now on, nothing is impure... He touched the leper to signify that he heals not as servant but as Lord. For the leprosy did not defile his hand, but his holy hand cleansed the leprous body."

St. John Chrysostom (349-407)

Religious Education Religious Education classes take place Sunday, February 11th at 8:45AM-9:45AM for children in grades K-6, 7:00PM-8:00PM for children in grades 7-8 and 7:00PM-8:15PM for students in grades 9, 10 and Confirmation Class.

Star Student of the Week Our Student of the Week is Katie O'Connor! Katie is a first grade student in our Religious Education program. She was nominated by her teacher, Ms. O'Brien. Katie is an amazing student filled with excitement to learn about our faith each week. She comes to class prepared for questions and discussions about Jesus and His teachings. Katie participates in the Children's Liturgy and was an angel in the Christmas Pageant. She is a great sister and helps Mom at home. Katie is a strong representation of living our Catholic Faith. Congratulations Katie!

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 \$200.00 in cards. **Thank you** to those who continue to participate in this very worthy program.

18th ANNUAL DIOCESAN CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE AT ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

Men (of all ages, including teens and college students) are invited to this important annual Conference, scheduled for Assumption College on Saturday, March 17. Visit the conference website at www.firstmensconf.org for information and to purchase tickets online and elsewhere. Come and hear dynamic talks from outstanding Catholic leaders: Marcellino D'Ambrosio, Father David Cavanagh, Robert Rogers, Ryan Tremblay, and Elvis Grbac. Bishops and priests will hear confessions. Bishop McManus will offer the Conference Mass. For a Conference brochure, further information or registration, call Sara Smillie at 508-929-4345. Adult tickets are \$45 until February 28, afterwards \$60. Student tickets are always \$30.

WORDS OF POPE FRANCIS FROM The Joy of Love

THE NEED FOR SEX EDUCATION: "A sexual education that fosters a healthy sense of modesty has immense value, however much people nowadays consider modesty a relic of a bygone era. Modesty is a natural means whereby we defend our personal privacy and prevent ourselves from being turned into objects to be used. Without a sense of modesty, affection and sexuality can be reduced to an obsession with genitality and unhealthy behaviors that distort our capacity for love, and with forms of sexual violence that lead to inhuman treatment or cause hurt to others." Par. 282

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18th THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

1st Reading: Genesis 9:8-15
 Psalm: 25
 2nd Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22
 Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

From the Pastor continued from the following page

New names, new faces, new athletes, new red, white, and blue uniforms made from the imagination of some gifted designer. The Winter Olympics make our winter a little bit shorter as we enjoy watching the incredible talent of the world's best athletes. Their goal of perfection is admirable and noble. May we seek to do the same with our faith. Becoming a "perfect" Christian is not as hard as it sounds. But it does take a daily commitment to Christ that reflects how much we love him and his people. Accept the challenge in your life, and you may be surprised how easy it is to win a Gold Medal.

Peace, Fr. Riley

RETREAT FOR POTENTIAL PRIESTLY CANDIDATES

Have you thought of a vocation to the Priesthood? Come and learn more. The Diocese of Worcester's annual discernment retreat, directed by Bishop McManus, will be held on March 23 & 24. This retreat begins at 6:00 p.m. on Friday and ends at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. It is for men high school, college age, and older. The retreat center is only 30 minutes from Worcester at the Immaculate Conception Retreat Center in Putnam, CT. There is no cost, and transportation is provided if needed. Contact Fr. Jim Mazzone at jmazzone@charter.net, or by phone at 508-340-5788 to sign up.

MSGR. RICHARD COLLETTE THIS SUNDAY AT MASSES

This Sunday at all Masses, Msgr. Richard Collette, a priest of the Diocese of Worcester for 65 years, will be at Immaculate Conception to give a short talk on his book, *Shepherds for my People*. The book will be on sale at all Masses. The 45 stories in his book recall many memorable moments in Msgr. Collette's ministry as a parish priest. The \$15.00 cost for the book will be donated to the Priests' Retirement Fund for the Diocese of Worcester. We welcome Msgr. Collette, and thank you for your support.

PARISH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE IRISH DINNER SAVE THE DATE!

Our Parish's annual Irish Dinner will be held this year on March 17 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. It's an opportunity for us this year to hold our dinner on the actual date of the feast of St. Patrick. Live music will be provided that evening by John Riley, a skilled guitarist with a breadth of knowledge of Irish songs and culture. Tickets for adults will be \$10.00, for children \$7.00, and families of five or more \$30.00. there will be a 50/50 raffle as well as door prizes to be given away. The Activities Committee will be collecting donations of Irish baskets for the raffle from anyone who wishes to donate. This is a BYOW event (Bring Your Own Wine). Also, if anyone can volunteer to help set up the Fr. Connors Center for the dinner on the 17th, please call Jim Hester at 508-852-3473, or email bevhester13@gmail.com. Thank you.

PARISH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE TICKETS FOR MENS CONFERENCE

Our Parish Activities Committee is generously donating 10 tickets to our Parish for the upcoming Men's Conference at Assumption College on Saturday, March 17. If you would like to secure a ticket for this popular daylong, spiritual event, please speak with Fr. Riley. The cost of each ticket is \$45.00, making it a donation of \$450.00 on the part of the Committee. We thank them for their gracious generosity.

BULLETIN INSERT

This week's bulletin has a letter insert written by Bishop McManus connected to a possible Diocesan Capital Campaign later this year. I ask parishioners to read the insert, and then consider providing input on the Diocesan website or in the Catholic Free Press connected to the campaign. Such input is necessary and important for the potential success of any Capital Campaign that may be held. Thank you for your consideration. Fr. Riley.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: 02/04/18

Sunday Ordinary Income	\$ 3,433.00
Winter Fuel	\$ 75.00
Catholic Home Mission	\$ 135.00
Catholic Free Press	\$ 115.00

FROM THE PASTOR

As we draw closer to mid-February for 2018, there's a good "distraction," if you will, that comes our way every four years. It's called the Winter Olympics. The Winter Olympics are more exciting because the time of the year presents an opportunity for us in New England and other cold weather climates to enjoy some amazing talent from athletes who have worked hard the past four years, honing their skills and now ready to bring them forth for the world to see.

In every set of Olympic Games, there seems to be one or two athletes who draw our nation's attention to their talent beyond the other Olympians, be it an ice skater, a skier, a luger, a curler, or some other winter sport that we hardly ever see televised outside of the Olympics. There's always a couple of individuals who "arrive at the top of Mt. Olympus" in their respective sport and steal our attention. Who will they be in 2018?

Olympic athletes, for the most part, are of the unusual sort in that we see most of them once every four years. The Red Sox can change 75% of their roster in four years' time, and the Patriots the same (except for Brady & Belichick who live forever, even with a Super Bowl loss). Olympians in the meantime are crafting their skill to near perfection over this length of time, be it at Lake Placid, or an outdoor site during the warmer months. They work at every move they will need to make on the skating rink, or flying down the mountain, and work on it until they believe they have perfected what needs to be accomplished when the time arrives for their performance.

When such time finally arrives after years of practice, they have, in many cases, one chance at getting it right. Think about that; four years of practice for an ice skating performance that will be finished in five minutes. Or a skiing performance that will be done in less than three minutes. It almost sounds like a wedding. From their performance under pressure, Olympians will arrive at the conclusion that the past four years of their lives have been either a success or not. They fully understand how much time and effort has been put in to their reach for a Gold Medal. And it all comes down to performing to near perfection for a few moments under pressure. I'd rather listen to Confessions, thank you. Perfection is the mindset and goal of the Olympian. Perfection is reached, if at all, through repetition. Thousands and thousands of repetitions on a certain move that will highlight their skill in ways that raise them above the skills of other greatest athletes from around the globe in their respective sport. All of us are very good at something connected to our lives. Be it our daily work, our raising a family, our assisting those in need, or simply being a good friend. Things we do most every day. We may or may not seek perfection, if you will, and be cognizant of it as a goal. But we certainly become very adept over time at whatever it is we live out each day, with repetition being the process that makes us better.

As Christians, what is it that we seek to perfect in the context of our faith, in the same way St. Teresa of Calcutta perfected serving the needs of the poor? We presently have a Confirmation Class about to receive a Sacrament that will deepen their baptismal grace. While they all have the things in life they enjoy and are very good at, what is it within their faith in Christ that they will become "perfect" at? How will they give their lives to Christ in such ways where they can still enjoy the many sports, schooling, and other hobbies they so much enjoy, while testifying to the world that they also "work" for the Lord of all? Olympians have it sort of easy. They focus on one area, one sport, and seek to perfect it. They seek the one-time perfect performance. But do they, as St Paul writes this week, "do everything for the glory of God?" If they do, they're in a great place in life. If not, then what they do will eventually pass.

The Winter Olympics are a breath of fresh air every four years, especially for us cold weather people in New England.

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THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Sat.	Feb 10	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Feb 11	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Feb 12	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Feb 13	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Feb 14	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Feb 15	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Feb 17	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Feb 18	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

ADULT RETREAT IN WORCESTER

“Becoming Missionary Disciples”, an adult retreat will be held on Saturday Feb. 17, 8:30 am-4 pm (snowday April 14) in Rieger Hall, Our Lady of the Angels Parish, 1222 Main St., Worcester. Fr. Robert Jalbert, Maryknoll Missionary, offers reflections from Pope Francis’ The Joy of the Gospel. Lunch may be purchased (\$10) or bring your own. To register contact: Darleen Farland by Feb. 7 dfarlandola@gmail.com or 508-791-0951 x18.

OUR LADY OF CZESTOCHOWA TRIP TO POLAND

Our Lady of Czestochowa Church in Worcester is sponsoring a pilgrimage to Poland and Prague from July 16-31, 2018 with Fr. Richard Polek, in the footsteps of St. Maximilian Kolbe, St. Faustina Kowalska, and St. John Paul II. The all-inclusive cost, with 3 meals a day, is \$3,290. Detailed itinerary can be requested in the parish office at 34 Ward St, Worcester, MA, or by calling 508-577-5959, or online at www.olcworchester.com. For more information or to register please call Christine at 508-865-9390.

**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!**