

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. | Apr 28 | 4:00 PM | Alfred Porcaro, 1st Anniversary, & Joan Porcaro, 4th Anniversary, from Family |
| Sun. | Apr 29 | 7:30 AM | Parishioners of Immaculate Conception |
| | | 10:00 AM | Margaret and Daniel O'Brien, Requested by Daughters |
| Mon. | Apr 30 | 9:00 AM | (<i>St. Pius V</i>) |
| Tues. | May 01 | 9:00 AM | (<i>St. Joseph the Worker</i>) |
| Wed. | May 02 | 9:00 AM | Paul Campbell, Month Mind, from Parish Family, (<i>St. Athanasius</i>) |
| Thurs. | May 03 | 8:00 AM | Ed Russell, Month Mind, from Parish Family, (<i>St. Philip and St. James</i>) |
| Sat. | May 05 | 4:00 PM | |
| Sun. | May 06 | 7:30 AM | Parishioners of Immaculate Conception |
| | | 10:00 AM | |

THIS WEEK the text for 5th Sunday of Easter, may be found at #931 in the *Journeysongs* hymnal.

SPRING SCRIPTURE PROGRAM

Everyone is invited to participate in a program on St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians to be held on four Tuesdays during May from Noon to 1:00 p.m. in the Church basement. The dates are May 1, 8, 15, and 22. Fr. Riley and Dr. Frank McGuire will serve as discussion leaders. Second Corinthians is one of St. Paul's major letters in which he proclaims beautifully what it really means to "put on Jesus Christ." Moreover, in this letter, he lets us know just how difficult it can be to live out our commitment to Jesus Christ. His words, backed up by his example, afford a rich source of consolation and strength for anyone who seeks to imitate Christ. Feel free to bring your lunch. Beverages and dessert will be provided. We look forward to your joining us.

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

THE GRAPEVINE HANGING ON THE CROSS: John 15:1.... "Jacob spoke of our Lord as a grape, because Christ hung on the wood like a grape. He is the vine; he is the grape. He is the vine because he cleaves to the wood and the grape because, when his side was opened by the soldier's lance, he sent forth water and blood.... water for baptism, blood for redemption. The water washed us; the blood redeemed us." *St. Ambrose (337-397)*

WEDDING BLISS

Congratulations to James Vargas and Annie McGuirk who were married last Saturday, April 21, in Stonington, CT at St. Mary's Church. Fr. Riley was blessed to preside at Jim and Annie's Wedding Mass, which turned out to be a perfect day for a wedding along the seashore of Connecticut where much of Jim's family now resides. The Vargas family has a long history in our Parish, where his grandmother, Therese Murray, was the organist for decades, and his parents Mary and Frank were involved our Parish for so long before their move to Connecticut. May God bless this wonderful couple with His abundant graces as they begin together their life of Marriage. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." Mt 19:5

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.

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 6th, THE 6th SUNDAY OF EASTER

1st Reading: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48
 Psalm: 98
 2nd Reading: 1 John 4:7-10
 Gospel: John 15:9-17

ON THE EUCHARIST

"Blessed is she who believed.' Mary also anticipated, in the mystery of the incarnation, the Church's Eucharistic faith. When, at the Visitation, she bore in her womb the Word made flesh, she became in some way a 'tabernacle' – the first 'tabernacle' in history – in which the Son of God, still invisible to our human gaze, allowed himself to be adored by Elizabeth, radiating his light as it were through the eyes and the voice of Mary. And is not the enraptured gaze of Mary as she contemplated the face of the newborn Christ and cradled him in her arms that unparalleled model of love which should inspire us every time we receive Eucharistic communion?"

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 those who till the soil, for farmers and all who grow the food we enjoy, that their harvest may be abundant this year.*

WORDS OF POPE FRANCIS FROM *The Joy of Love*

GATHERED IN PRAYER IN THE LIGHT OF EASTER: "Family prayer is a special way of expressing and strengthening this paschal faith. A few minutes can be found each day to come together before the living God, to tell him our worries, to ask for the needs of our family, to pray for someone experiencing difficulty, to ask for help in showing love, to give thanks for life and for its blessings, and to ask Our Lady to protect us beneath her maternal mantle. With a few simple words, this moment of prayer can do immense good for our families. The various expressions of popular piety are a treasure of spirituality for many families. The family's communal journey of prayer culminates by sharing together in the Eucharist, especially in the context of the Sunday rest. Jesus knocks on the door of families, to share with them the Eucharistic supper. There, spouses can always seal anew the paschal covenant which united them and which ought to reflect the covenant which God sealed with mankind in the cross." Par. 318

BUS TRIP TO HART'S TURKEY FARM & "EVITA" MUSICAL

Bus Trip to Hart's Turkey Farm & "Evita" Musical in Meredith, NH. Thursday, July 12, Depart Immaculate Conception Church parking lot at 8:30 a.m. (be there at 8:15). Trip includes lunch and musical. Select lunch: Roast Turkey, Sirloin of Beef, or Baked Haddock. We'll see the Lakes Region Theatre's production of "Evita" and visit the Kellerhause Ice Cream Shop. Cost is \$89 per person. Registration deadline is June 1. Send check payable to FOX TOURS, with your name, phone number, parish name AND lunch choice to Michelle Deignan, 227 St. Nicholas Ave., Worcester, MA 01606. Questions? Call Michelle at 508-853-0820 or mmdeignan@charter.net.

Religious Education The last classes for the 2017-2018 Catechetical Year takes place on Sunday, April 29th at 8:45AM-9:45AM for children in grades K-6, 7:00PM-8:00PM for children in grades 7-10.

Thank you! We would like to thank the following parishioners for volunteering their time to teach Religious Education at Immaculate Conception. Anita Callahan, Karen O'Brien, Joanna Jalbert, Nicole Hermance, Lee Morin, Marissa Phaneuf, Cathy Tardie, Ken Borowy, Kathy Haggan, Callie Foster, Ed DeHoratius & Stephen Sycks. Your generosity with your time and devotion to the children of our Parish is a wonderful demonstration of God's love.

First Communion Prayer Cards A number of children in our parish will share in an event of great joy for them and the entire Catholic Community. On Saturday, May 5th, they will receive Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time. They and their families have been preparing for this sacrament for some time now, learning what the gift of Eucharist is about and what it means to share that gift with others. Please visit our display of the First Communion Class located near the entrance of the church. Please take a prayer card from the display and keep all of the children in your prayers as they take the final steps in preparing for the sacrament of First Holy Communion

Vacation Bible Camp We are very excited to offer Vacation Bible Camp at Immaculate Conception! VBC will be the week of June 25th-29th from 9:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. and is FREE! Children 5-12 years old are welcome to join us for a fun week of many activities including Bible Stories, Games, Music, Crafts, Snacks and more! Contact Mary Sycks at mks723@msn.com for registration forms and more information. Spots are filling quickly.

"FATAL FLAWS: Legalizing Assisted Death."

All welcome! All are encouraged to come and watch this documentary film at a special viewing scheduled for Thursday, May 17, at 7:00 pm, in the Hagan Campus Center at Assumption College. Bishop Robert J. McManus will be present and will lead a discussion following the movie, which depicts the dangers of physician assisted suicide world-wide. This free event is sponsored by Witness for Life and Emmanuel Radio. There are multiple ways of reserving your seat. You can register on the website: witnessforlife.com. Or, call Mindy Dulude at Christ the King Parish, 508-754-5361 (press 2 after the prompt). Or, call Emmanuel Radio at 508-767-1230. You can watch the film's trailer at: Witnessforlife.com/our-programs/fatal-flaws.

FIRST COMMUNION PRAYERS

As a Parish, please keep in your prayers our First Communion Class who will be receiving the Sacrament in a short two weeks on Saturday morning, May 5. A heartfelt thank you to their teachers Joanna Jalbert and Nicole Hermance for sharing their time and wisdom with the children since this past September. May God all our 2nd-graders as they continue to prepare for their big Sacramental day of receiving the Lord for the first of many times over the course of their lives.

ASCENSION THURSDAY HOLY DAY AND MASS SCHEDULE

The Solemnity of the Ascension of our Lord into Heaven will be celebrated this year on Thursday, May 10. This day is a Holy Day of Obligation for all Catholics. Our schedule will consist of 2 Masses: a Vigil Mass on Wednesday, May 9 at 5:30 p.m. and Thursday, May 10 at 8:00 a.m.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT: 4/22/18

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|-----------------|-------------|
| Sunday Ordinary | \$ 3,590.00 |
| Spring Fuel | \$ 50.00 |

From the Pastor continued from the following page

This is the natural result of the absence of true faith and worshipping God. Rather, I like to believe that our Parish children and youth are presently being set up for healthy, loving relationships that will bring them much happiness and joy in their adult years. Learning about Christ and his Holy Mother in the present increases the chances many times over that our children will embrace and choose healthy relationships in Christ, refusing what our culture has to offer, instead bringing Christ to others.

Thank you again to Mrs. Sykes and our gifted teachers for helping to form healthy religious minds and bodies for our Parish children and youth. We've done our part here as well as we can, praying that the religious education of those entrusted to us will continue at home in ways of family prayer, conversations of God, and other ways that create a Christian mindset in the Domestic Church. May God's grace and blessings be upon our entire religious program and all who participate.

Peace, Fr. Riley

PARTNERS IN CHARITY FOR 2018

Our Parish is now in the midst of the Partners in Charity campaign for 2018. For 2018, our Parish goal remains at \$88,500, the same as last year. Ways to donate on behalf of Immaculate Conception are: 1) filling out an envelope that can be found in each pew, and either placing it into the collection basket any given Sunday, mailing it to the Parish, or mailing it directly to the Diocese of Worcester at 49 Elm St, Worcester, MA 01609 in care of Partners in Charity. Donations can be made either by check or credit card; 2) going online at www.partners-charity.net, and follow the easy instructions thereafter, which more parishioners are opting to do for their donation. Donations can be spread out over the course of 10 months to make it easier for all families and individuals in our Parish to give. Please consider doing so. If you have any questions about this year's campaign, please speak with either Bill Stanton, our Partners in Charity Chairman, or Fr. Riley. Thus far, our Parish has had 134 donors totaling \$81,256 dollars, reaching 92% of our Parish goal. Thank you, and we hope to have another successful Partners in Charity campaign this year, as we have in each of the past years. - Fr. Riley

PARTNERS IN CHARITY WITNESS

Another one of my community service experiences with Catholic Charities involved delivering meals on Christmas day to people who would have otherwise gone without one. The meals included turkey with all the fixings that were prepared by a local restaurant but were paid for by Catholic Charities. Every Christmas and Thanksgiving, as well, Catholic Charities coordinates delivery of approximately 2000 meals to low income Worcester area residents for each holiday.

Most years I would deliver the meals to some of the toughest neighborhoods in Worcester where the need was obvious.

One year I decided to take my entire family along with me in the hope of teaching my sons a valuable lesson about poverty in America and how many people are forced to live. I was almost disappointed when we were assigned to the solid middle class neighborhood of greater Burncoat Street. However, it turned out to be an eye-opening experience for all of us when we saw how much need existed even in the Burncoat section of the city.

Once again, this is a great example of the huge difference Catholic Charities makes in the lives of thousands of people when we support Partners in Charity.

So far we have raised \$81,265 dollars from 134 donors. We have achieved 92% of our goal but are still short \$7,235 dollars to reach 100% of our goal at Immaculate Conception.

Thank you for your support! -**Bill Stanton**

SCOUTING RELIGIOUS AWARDS MASS

The annual scouting awards Mass will take place on Saturday, May 5 at 5 pm at the Cathedral of St. Paul in Worcester. This Mass acknowledges the religious emblem recipients for our various youth scouting programs. Bishop McManus will be the celebrant. All are welcome.

FROM THE PASTOR

With this Sunday being the end of another Religious Education year for the children and youth in our Parish, I take this opportunity to thank our Administrator of Religious Education, Mary Sykes, and our teachers who assist us in spreading the Good News of our Christian faith. As I say each year, we are very blessed to have committed, talented, and faithful teachers in our program willing to share their time and talent with the younger members of Immaculate Conception.

The good news regarding our Religious Education is that we have such devoted teachers. The lesser good news, if you will, is that we have the children for only 25 or so weeks throughout the Religious Education year. This translates into 25 hours of teaching about Our Lord in and through the Catholic Faith passed on to us through the Apostles. This amount of time covers the entire grade-year, and 25 hours is reached only if there are no snowstorms or freezing rain days on Sundays throughout the winter. In the end, 25 hours is not much time for our teachers to share any type of exhaustive program on the faith.

With that said, I thank also the parents of our students who are committed to our Religious Education program each year, entrusting their children to us in ways that help to build up their faith in God. My constant prayer is one of parents picking up where we as a Parish leave off each week, in the same way that good parents watch over the daily education of their children regarding what they learn and how well they are learning it. I pray the same format is implemented at home for their religious education.

The combination of Sunday morning/evening at the Fr. Connors Center of Immaculate Conception Church, Sunday Liturgy, and the Domestic Church of their homes where they continue to be taught the faith is the natural and most effective way of children grounding their lives in Jesus Christ. 25 hours on the hill behind the Church is nice, but without continued growth in the home, it's too easy for these precious souls to lose what they are taught and be overpowered by our secular culture. When what they learn here is backed up by family, and reinforced by parental guidance, the foundation of each child's life becomes much more solid, preparing them for the world when they arrive at the age of being "on their own."

In today's world, a world that is fast-paced and at times dizzying, absent a spiritual foundation of faith, these children and youth will undoubtedly be tossed around like ocean waves by a culture that can be harsh, loud, and forceful. What helps more than anything to combat and confront cultural chaos is their faith in Christ. This is the importance of the combination of Religious Education, Sunday Liturgy (which is required for every Catholic in the world), and the Domestic Church. And the approach towards learning their faith is never to be one of "graduating" one day from Christianity, but rather the lifelong continuous buildup of faith. We see too much of this approach today with students of Confirmation in many of our Parishes as they approach their faith in such a way where the reception of the Sacrament in their minds is one of graduating away from the practice of their faith, when the truth of receiving Confirmation is just the opposite.

The benefits of the combination of Religious Education, Sunday Liturgy, and the Domestic Church are numerous and lasting, when approached in ways that rejects the "graduating from the faith" mentality. A solid grounding in Christianity sets up these children and youth for healthy, loving, and productive relationships now and into adulthood. Without the Lord, without Sunday Mass attendance, and without the practice of their faith every day in their many relationships, humans will form our own ideas of how to conduct our lives. Read about the Israelites in the Old Testament, and check to see how well it went for them the many times they turned away from the Lord. It wasn't a pretty picture.

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THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

| | | | |
|--------|--------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Sat. | Apr 28 | 2:45 PM 4:00 PM | Confession Mass |
| Sun. | Apr 29 | 7:30 AM 10:00 AM | Mass Mass |
| Mon. | Apr 30 | 8:30 AM 9:00 AM | Rosary Mass |
| Tues. | May 01 | 8:30 AM 9:00 AM | Rosary Mass |
| Wed. | May 02 | 8:30 AM 9:00 AM | Rosary Mass |
| Thurs. | May 03 | 7:30 AM 8:00 AM | Rosary Mass |
| Sat. | May 05 | 2:45 PM 4:00 PM | Confession Mass |
| Sun. | May 06 | 7:30 AM 10:00 AM | Mass Mass |

ST. MARY'S SCHOOLS, WORCESTER OPEN HOUSE

St. Mary's Schools (Grades PreK-12) 50 Richland St., Worcester, MA, will be holding a Spring Open House on Saturday, May 5 from 10 AM to Noon. We currently have openings for all grade levels. Come experience the spirit-filled community of St. Mary's Schools. Tours of the schools and informational packets will be provided. For more information please call 508-753-1170 or visit our website at www.stmarysworcester.org. Be part of our 100 year tradition. St. Mary's Schools is now offering a Half Day Pre-kindergarten Program in addition to the Full Day program.

SUPPORT THE LETTER CARRIER FOOD DRIVE

The letter carrier food drive is Saturday, May 12. Food will be collected in Worcester and most of the surrounding cities and towns. Leave non-perishable and non-expired food items in bags wherever you receive your mail. The food will be distributed to food pantries in Worcester and towns which hold the collection. Last year there was over 302,000 pounds of food collected in Central Massachusetts.

**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!**