

Immaculate Conception Parish



Please visit our website at
www.icworc.com and Facebook
Email: icworc@live.com

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)

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).

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-2:30pm, T: 9:30am-2:30pm
W: 9:30am-2:30pm, F: 9:30am-2:30pm

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

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.

MASS INTENTIONS

Sat.	Mar 14	4:00 PM	Albert "Al" Menard, Month Mind, and Emelia Menard, 5th Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Mar 15	7:30 AM	Jeannette T. Burns, Brian B. Colonies, and Chuck Burns, from Family
		10:00 AM	James L. McDonald, from Family
Mon.	Mar 16	9:00 AM	Dr. Robert Holloway, Month Mind, from Parish Family
Tues.	Mar 17	9:00 AM	Joann Brosnan, from Bernie Dowd, (<i>St. Patrick</i>)
Wed.	Mar 18	9:00 AM	Ellen Geheran, from Husband, (<i>St. Cyril of Jerusalem</i>)
Thurs.	Mar 19	8:00 AM	Parishioners of I. C., (<i>Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>)
Sat.	Mar 21	4:00 PM	Joseph "Joe-Joe" Jackson, from Mother
Sun.	Mar 22	7:30 AM	
		10:00 AM	Quyen Nguyen, 2nd Anniversary, from Family

THIS WEEK the text for The 3rd Week of Lent may be found at #909 in the *Journeysongs* hymnal.

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN MORE RECEPTIVE THAN NICODEMUS: Jn 4:14; "The woman immediately believed, showing that she was not only much wiser than Nicodemus but also more courageous. For when he heard ten thousand things like this, he neither invited any others to hear what he heard nor did he himself speak openly about this encounter. But she exhibited the actions of an apostle, preaching the gospel to everyone she could and calling them to Jesus. She even drew out a whole city to hear him. When Nicodemus heard Jesus his reaction was, "How can these things be?" And when Christ set before him a clear illustration utilizing "the wind," even then he did not receive the Word. But this is not the case with the woman. At first she doubted, but afterwards, receiving the Word not only by any regular demonstration but in the form of an assertion, she immediately hurried to embrace it. For when Christ said, "It shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life," immediately the woman said, "Give me this water so that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." *St. John Chrysostom (349-407)*

SIGN OF PEACE

As noted at all Masses last week, the Sign of Peace has been temporarily suspended because of the recent outbreak of the coronavirus. This directive from our Bishop's Office was sent out last week for the reason of better safe than sorry. If and when the Sign of Peace returns to the Liturgy, we will let God's Good & Holy People know of the change. Thank you for your understanding.

ST. PETER CENTRAL CATHOLIC HOSTS 16TH ANNUAL DINNER AND AUCTION

Come join SPCC's 16th Annual "Our Time To Shine" Dinner and Auction on Friday, March 27 at 6pm at Wachusett Country Club. This is an evening you won't want to miss! Take part in a delicious buffet dinner, great prizes, and lots of fun, all while raising funds for a beautiful Catholic school of our diocese. All are welcome! For tickets, call 508-791-6496 or email spc auctioncommittee@gmail.com by March 22.

SOME LENTEN REGULATIONS REGARDING FOOD

To assist at unconfusing any of the confusing parts of our Lenten requirements regarding abstinence, fasting, and age, hopefully the following layman's terms will help: Abstinence from meat on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays during Lent is *required for all Catholics, age notwithstanding*. This includes Good Friday after Lent officially ends on Holy Thursday. Lenten fasting is as follows: on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, Catholics who have reached the age of 14, and those who have not yet reached 59, are allowed one full meal (no meat) and two smaller meals. Those who are younger and older than the above ages should consider fasting to their ability, not jeopardizing their health in any way, but considering the purpose and meaning of this penitential season. If you have any questions about fasting and abstaining during Lent, please speak with Fr. Riley, Fr. Enoch, or Deacon Kevin.

SCRIPTURE STUDY ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

Fr. Riley will be holding a Scripture Study class on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the rectory. We will read, study, and comment on the Gospel of Mark. Our next gathering will be Wednesday, March 18. For those attending, please prepare by reading chapter 14 in the Gospel of Mark, bringing to the class any insights, comments, or questions. We look forward to sharing with each other the treasure of this Gospel that is steeped in the Cross of our Lord.

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 \$260.00 in cards. **Thank you** to those who continue to participate in this very worthy program.

PARTNERS IN CHARITY 2020

The annual Partners in Charity campaign will officially begin in our Parish this weekend, March 14/15. Partners in Charity Parish Chairman Bill Stanton will briefly speak at each of the Masses to highlight the purposes of this annual campaign and why it is important that we participate as a Parish. I personally thank Bill for stepping up again, as he has done the past two years, and lead this campaign on behalf of our Parish. His expertise and wisdom in these matters are much appreciated. The goal for this year remains the same as past years, being \$88,500. Our Diocese has sent out envelopes to many parishioners who made contributions in past years. Feel free to use this envelope and place it in our collection basket at your earliest convenience. We will also have envelopes placed at the end of each pew and entrances to the Church for those in need of one. A number of parishioners, however, now donate online. For those who wish to do so, go to the Diocese of Worcester Website at www.worcesterdiocese.org, go under the heading "HOME," and Partners in Charity will come up. Last year, our Parish finished with 182 donors over the course of the campaign, raising over \$118,000. Thus far this year from early donations, our Parish has raised \$41,890 from 18 donors, which is 47% of our Parish goal. Thank you to all who choose to participate in this essential diocesan campaign that is the lifeblood of the Diocese, addressing numerous social and operating concerns our Church attends to. – Fr. Riley

ATTENDING DAILY MASS DURING LENT

For those in a position to do so, we invite you to consider attending Mass each day where possible during the Season of Lent. Not so long ago this was a common practice for many of us Catholics. The practice of our faith begins with the Liturgy, listening to God's word and reception of Holy Eucharist. So consider joining us on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday at 9:00 a.m., and Thursday at 8:00 a.m. Other Churches in the area have daily Mass every Friday & Saturday.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Religious Education classes take place on Sunday, March 15th at 8:45AM-9:45AM for children in grades Pre-K-6 and 11:15AM-12:15PM for students in grades 7-10 and Confirmation Class.

9th Grade Religious Education Class Coat Drive The 9th grade Religious Education class will be having a coat drive on the week-end of March 14th & 15th. This terrific group of students are working together in their almsgiving project this Lenten season to help their community. We will be collecting new and gently used coats, and any donations are appreciated. Thank you!

Star Student of the Week Our Student of the Week is **Isabella Tassonne!** Isabella is a fifth grade student in our Religious Education Program. She was nominated by her teacher, Ms. Anderson. Isabella participates in class and is willing to help her peers. She attends Mass with her family, participates in the Children's Liturgy and attends Vacation Bible Camp. Isabella is an altar server and greets all the Religious Education families each week when passing out the prayer of the day. She loves to volunteer at school with community service projects and reads to the younger students. Congratulations Isabella!

HART'S TURKEY FARM AND "A CHORUS LINE" JUL 9th

July 9 Bus Trip to Hart's Turkey Farm & the Lakes Region Summer Music Theatre's "A Chorus Line" in Meredith, NH. Depart from Immaculate Conception Church at 9 a.m. Return by 6:30 p.m. Choice of 3 entrees: Turkey, Sirloin of Beef, Baked Haddock. Includes all the fixings! Then we're off to the Chorus Line. The cost, including tips, is \$101 per person, check payable to FOX TOURS. Flyers are at church entrances. Give your check, registration, meal choice to Michelle Deignan or Deacon Kevin. Or mail to 227 Saint Nicholas Ave, Worcester, MA 01606. Call or text 508-596-4778 or email mmdeignan@charter.net.

MINUTES FROM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING LAST SUNDAY

For those who would like to read the minutes from our Parish Council Meeting last Sunday, March 8, they can be found on our Parish Website. Any questions or comments, or concerns, please feel free to email them to Fr. Riley at icworc@live.com, or speak with him in person.

PARISH CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS FOR TAXES

Any parishioner who wishes to have a statement of their 2019 contributions for tax purposes can call or stop by the rectory during business hours and request a copy, or email our Office Manager Robert Noberini at icworc@live.com. Thank you.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 03/08/2020	
Sunday Ordinary	\$ 3,739.00
Spring Fuel	\$ 233.00

From the Pastor continued from the following page

It brought solace to a parent knowing their child received the spiritual care needed before they died.

In this week's Gospel, Jesus thirsts for the faith of a Samaritan woman. And when Christ thirsts for something, he wins it. May he thirst so much always for our faith. In bringing the Samaritan Woman from a life filled with spiritual tragedy to a life of great joy and self-respect, our Lord has prepared this woman for better living in the present, and eternal living in the future. Obviously, at 12-years old, former Immaculate Conception parishioner Russell Rafferty didn't have much time to live a life of squalor. He was innocently playing in an area that turned out to be physically dangerous. An area where one mistake can cost a child his/her life. But over 100 years later we recall the faith of this 12-year-old and his mother, who thought it necessary to make sure the priest was called for and her son was anointed before he died.

I thank this most thoughtful gentleman from Auburn who took the time to stop by and share his incredible family story with us. I love how he was personally touched by the events of his family long ago, not having known or met either of them. He showed the strong bond of love that exists in families, even those who lived generations before us. May God bless him for his loving thoughtfulness as well as his generosity towards our Parish. And may Nellie Rafferty and her son Russell rest in peace.

Peace, Fr. Riley

20th ANNIVERSARY CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE

Men of all ages are invited to this important 20th Anniversary Conference, scheduled for Assumption College on Saturday, March 28. Come and hear dynamic talks from outstanding Catholic leaders: Dr. Scott Hahn, Luis Soto and with Bishop Robert Reed of Boston speaking on the need for confession. Bishops and priests will hear confessions. Bishop McManus will offer the Conference Mass. For a Conference brochure, further information or registration, call Joan DeMasi at 508-929-4345. Visit the conference website at www.firstmensconf.org for information and to purchase tickets. Adult tickets are \$45 until March 11th, afterwards \$60. Student tickets are always \$30.

LENTEN HOLY HOUR AND STATIONS OF THE CROSS ON FRIDAYS

During each Friday of Lent, our Parish will hold a Holy Hour and Stations of the Cross in the Church. Holy Hour will begin at 5:30 p.m. followed by Stations of the Cross at 6:30, which conclude by 7:00 p.m. Come and join us for all or part of these holy Catholic traditions each Friday during Lent, allowing the Spirit of God to lead us into the sacrifice of Christ's Passion and victorious resurrection.

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. 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 *places in our world that experience serious drought, may they be blessed with abundant water for life and survival.*

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO POLAND 2020

Our Parish is offering a pilgrimage to Poland in October 2020. Fr. Riley will be the spiritual guide for this wonderful trip that will take place from October 12-22. Places to be visited are Warsaw, Malbork Castle, the medieval town of Gdansk, the home of astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus, Our Lady of Czestochowa, the concentration camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau and the martyrdom of St. Maximilian Kolbe, Krakow, and the birthplace and of Pope St. John Paul II as well as the Museum of Cardinal Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II), and other sites. Consider joining our group for this tour of beautiful Poland and its rich religious and cultural history, with numerous historical sites. For more information on prices and the entire pilgrimage, brochures can be found at each entrance to our Church. There are 32 spaces available for this trip, of which 17 have been taken at this time. We hope you can join us.

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 22nd, THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

1st Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a
Psalm 23
2nd Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14
Gospel: John 9:1-41

FROM THE PASTOR

Our Lady's Garden continues to flourish on our Parish grounds. We're grateful to parishioner Kathy Freeman for continuing to handle the orders for memorial stones, as well as keeping a file of all those that have been placed.

Recently, the relative of a long-ago Parish family stopped by to check on the stone for her mother. Lo and behold, the family member couldn't find the stone, and after letting me know, I searched high and low for the stone with her mother's name, and it couldn't be found in the garden. Anyway, a second stone was ordered and has been placed in the vicinity of the former one. The case of the missing Memorial Stone with Mrs. O'Brien's name on it continues. Inspector Clouseau has been hired, but the case will likely never be solved.

Speaking of memorial stones, for anyone who cares to notice, there are two new ones near the front of the red brick walkway that leads to the side entrance of the Church. They are most unusual dates. One is for Nellie Rafferty with the dates 1864-1949, and the second is for her son Russell Rafferty with the dates 1898-1911. What's going on here?

Well, a gentleman from Auburn came to our rectory door about a month ago and had a group of papers in a folder with a story to tell. The story concerned his family history. He had been researching Ancestry.com and other possible avenues, including the newspaper section at the Worcester Public Library. While doing so he discovered some facts about his ancestors who belonged to Immaculate Conception Church in the early 1900's. The Nellie Rafferty mentioned above would have been, if I remember correctly, his great-grandmother, and Russell - Nellie's son - would have been the brother of this gentleman's grandfather. The story goes that in 1911, when Immaculate Conception was on Prescott Street, Russell and some friends were outdoors playing on the railroad tracks, and jumping from one rail to another, he got caught underneath, severing one of his limbs. The priest at the Church was called upon for Last Rites, and a Fr. Patrick Dowd from Immaculate Conception rushed to make sure that 12-year-old Russell Rafferty was anointed shortly before he died from his injuries. The man who came to our door, whose name has escaped me, had a copy of the newspaper article on Russell's accident and subsequent death. In the article was the mention of Fr. Dowd rushing to anoint Russell. The gentleman was so impressed and so thankful that his ancestor was anointed before dying that he made a donation of \$500.00 to Immaculate Conception as a way of saying thank you over 100 years later. And, from that \$500.00 we chose to purchase two stones for our Memorial Garden, one for Russell Rafferty, and one for his mother Nellie, whose heart ached in ways that only a mother who has lost a child can know. Again, Kathy Freeman has placed each stone near the front of the garden, close to the road that runs behind the Church.

Our Lady's Garden, we know, is not a cemetery. However, it is a most important reminder for all of us who have family stones in the garden that our loved ones are forever loved and never forgotten. It's very special that we, as a Parish, can bring forward to the Garden the above story of long ago parishioners, one born the year before the Civil War ended, and bring forward part of their story to the present time. Even though the story of Russell Rafferty's death is most tragic, we're able to make a connection with others who worshipped at Immaculate Conception, experienced great heartache and pain over the loss of a young child, and relied upon a priest at the Parish to bring a sense of solace and peace to grieving parents, which he did without hesitation. Sadly, it reminds me personally of Firefighter Christopher Roy when he died in a house fire a year ago last December. When his parents finally made it to the hospital some time after his death, his mother asked if he had been anointed.

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THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Sat.	Mar 14	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Mar 15	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Mar 16	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Mar 17	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Mar 18	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Mar 19	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Fri.	Mar 20	5:30 PM 6:30 PM	Holy Hour Stations of the Cross
Sat.	Mar 21	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Mar 22	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

PARISHIONER UPDATED COMMUNICATION INFORMATION NEEDED

Our office in the past has attempted to contact parishioners who, it seems, have done away with their landline at home, and now resort to cell phone service only. What we hear on the other end are some funny noises, but no rings. For those in our Parish who now use only your cell phone for this type of communication, *we need your number*, replacing the old one that is no longer in service. Please call our office with your new, updated information at 508-754-8419, or email our office your information at icworc@live.com. It would be greatly appreciated for those who have made the switch from landline to cell phone-only use so, if necessary, we have the capacity to contact you. Thank you.

**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!**