

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. Apr 25	Margaret and Daniel O'Brien, from Daughters
Sun. Apr 26	Nicholas C. Montecalvo, 5th Anniversary, from Family
Mon. Apr 27	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Tues. Apr 28	(<i>St. Peter Chanel, St. Louis Grignion de Montfort</i>)
Wed. Apr 29	(<i>St. Catherine of Siena</i>)
Thurs. Apr 30	Thanksgiving To God, from Young Shin
Sat. May 02	Harry Dapper, 2nd Anniversary, from Family
Sun. May 03	John G. Buczek, 4th Anniversary, from Family

THIS WEEK the text for the Third Sunday of Easter may be found at #924 in the *Journeysongs* hymnal.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ADVANTAGES OF THE ROSARY?

- 1) If, every day of your life, you say the Rosary devoutly, and all that implies, you will never lose your soul.
- 2) If you wish for peace in your heart and in your family and an abundance of heavenly gifts on your household, then assemble your family each night and say the Rosary.
- 3) If you are anxious to convert a soul to the fullness of God's love in life, teach that person to say the Rosary. That person will either stop saying the Rosary, or he will receive the gift of faith.
- 4) If a sufficient army of us said the Rosary every day, the Blessed Mother would now, as in the past, obtain from her Divine Son the stilling of the present Tempests, the defeat of the enemies of human civilization, and the real peace in the hearts of tired and straying men.
- 5) If the cooling of your charity has made you unhappy on the inside and critical of others, then the Rosary, through your meditation on our Lord's great love for you on the Cross and your Mother's affection for you on Calvary, will rekindle your love of God and of neighbor and restore store you to a peace that surpasses all understanding.

Do not think that in honoring Our Lady with the Rosary you are neglecting Our Lord. Did you even know anyone who ignored you by being kind to your mother?

Archbishop Fulton Sheen from *The Cries of Jesus from the Cross*

PARTNERS IN CHARITY 2020

The annual Partners in Charity campaign has begun in our Parish and continues throughout this time of separation. The goal for this year remains the same as past years, being \$88,500. Our Diocese has mailed envelopes to many parishioners who made contributions in past years. Feel free to use this envelope and send it to the Parish or directly into Partners in Charity. 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 \$48,265 from 31 donors, which is 55% 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

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 *the re-gathering of our Church in Word & Sacrament*.

TRIP TO POLAND RESCHEDULED TO 2021

Our Parish trip to Poland has been rescheduled for next year. The new dates for the trip will be April 12-22, 2021. Having to make a decision on the trip at this time, we decided to move this wonderful trip to a much safer timeframe for all involved. More information will be forthcoming soon in the bulletin and on our Parish website. Thank you.

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF IN THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD: Luke 24:28-30; "Remember, though, dearly beloved, how the Lord Jesus desired to be recognized in the breaking of the bread, by those whose eyes had been kept till then from recognizing him. The faithful know what I'm talking about. They know Christ in the breaking of bread. It isn't every loaf of bread, you see, but the one that receives Christ's blessing and becomes the body of Christ. That's where they recognized him. They were overjoyed and went straight to the others. They found whom they already knew. By telling what they had seen, they added to the gospel. It was all said, all done, all written down. And it has reached us." *St. Augustine (360-430)*

POSTPONEMENT OF CONFIRMATION AND FIRST COMMUNION

Because of the present pandemic, Confirmation for the youth in our Parish, which was scheduled for today, April 19, has been postponed to a later date. The date will be decided by the Bishop's office at a time when life returns to normal. When the date is made, all parents will be notified. Our First Communion was scheduled for Saturday, May 2. We will hold First Communion at the earliest possible time. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

THE NEW DICTIONARY OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY

DEATH AND DYING: "The central mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection was first proclaimed, and has been preserved in tradition, with elements from both the Jewish worldview (resurrection of the body, general judgment, transformation of the world) and a Hellenic worldview (immortality of the soul, immediate personal judgment, otherworldly heaven). Spiritually, Jesus' death provides a model that his followers may imitate in their own lives. They may adopt his attitude of trust in the power and providence of God, thereby drawing closer to the hidden but effective presence of God in their life; they may subsume their suffering into hope for the personal, immortal happiness he promised, thereby integrating the present with the future, and the material with the spiritual; or they may imitate his freedom and self-determination in the face of forces conspiring against him, thereby sharing in his sacrificial offering of life for the sake of others. Any of these aspects of Jesus' death can deepen a person's spiritual life, but they can also run the risk of turning the experience into a private relationship with Jesus."

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 3rd, THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

1st Reading: Acts 2:14a, 36-41
 Psalm 23
 2nd Reading: 1 Peter 2:20b-25
 Gospel: John 10:1-10

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION We pray all of our Religious Education families have been attending the Live streamed Mass on Sunday mornings at 9:00am. The Mass can be watched on the Immaculate Conception Facebook page. We will be sending an email every Saturday that will contain the Children's bulletin and the Readings for the Sunday Mass so families can follow the readings with Fr. Riley and Deacon Kevin.

Religious Education packets were distributed to all Religious Education families. The packets contained Textbooks, home-study materials and the Diocese of Worcester Grade Level Inventory Test. Please return your child's completed Inventory Test to Mary Sycks by April 30th. If you did not receive your packet please contact Mary Sycks at 508-868-8119.

PRAYER CARDS FOR CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES Please visit our display of the Confirmation Candidates located near the entrance of the church. Please take a prayer card from the display and keep all of the candidates in your prayers as they continue to prepare for the sacrament.

FROM THE PASTOR

“I haven’t seen anything like this in my lifetime.” If a teenager spoke those words to me, I wouldn’t be impressed. My response would likely be, “Big deal. But I do hope and pray you don’t ever see anything like this again for the next 80 years of your life!”

The comment above was spoken by a parishioner approaching the 90-year-old mark. a person who lived through the Great Depression as a youngster, World War II as a teenager, a Cold War that fearfully consumed the world for decades after the devastation of the Second World War, and all that has been topsy-turvy in the world since that time long ago, but not-so-long ago. So when an almost 90-year-old whose mind and brain are as clear as they were on the day of their birth says “I haven’t seen anything like this in my lifetime,” and is referring to the Coronavirus Pandemic, it gets a person’s attention.

At almost 60 in a few months, even if I spoke the same words, it would have more meaning than a teenager, but less meaning than a 90-year-old. After all, my earliest memory at the age of 3 is the assassination of JFK. I don’t remember statements or certain reactions. But I do remember well the confusion in my home at the time. Then a few years later the same to Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr.; Woodstock (I wasn’t there); the Vietnam War; the Cold War with the Soviet Union and witnessing the fear it produced from family and friends; and more. However, it still cannot compare with what a 90-year-old person with full capacity to recall the events of their life saying they’ve never seen anything like this virus, and the effects it has caused to the world and our country.

“Never seen anything like this.” I’m a bit surprised these words – word-for-word – never made it into the Scriptures. On second thought, I stand corrected. Gospel of Mark, chapter 2, verse 12: “We’ve never seen anything like this before.” This is the reaction of the crowd after Jesus commanded the paralytic to pick up his mat and go home. And, after picking up his mat and walking home, the crowd who witnessed this miracle reacted with truth, for, they had never seen any such event happen in their lives. How beautiful and sweet is the honesty of an entire crowd? Very sweet and beautiful I would say. They spoke from their hearts; they reacted to what they saw; they understood there were no games being played to their eyesight. *They had never seen a paralytic cured of his paralysis. And Jesus was only beginning.*

I guess where I’m surprised these words are not spoken of never seeing anything like this before, or in one’s lifetime of almost 90 years, is in reference to what we presently celebrate in the Church; the resurrection of Jesus. It would be true to speak the same words about the Lord being awakened by God the Father that first Easter Sunday morning, beginning the New Day for all of us: “We’ve never seen anything like this before.” I don’t recall these words being spoken about an event that so far surpasses a paralytic miracle in the presence of a crowd. As awesome as the miracle was that involved a guy, his mat, and a circle of friends, it would be accurate to say that the miracle of the man and his personal mat from Rotman’s is a blip when placed aside

Jesus Christ walking out of a grave after his dead body was gently placed in it. Or, more likely, those words are not spoken in reference to the Lord’s resurrection because *no one witnessed it when it happened*, unlike the paralytic who performed Jesus’ commandment in the presence of a crowd.

“Wait a minute! Hold on there, Padre! What do you mean no one witnessed the resurrection? Mary Magdalene is a witness. So are Mary, the mother of James and Salome in Mark’s Gospel. They witnessed the empty tomb! How about the Apostles catching up with Jesus in Galilee? They saw him alive after death, ate breakfast with him on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, spoke with him face to face, and witnessed his ascended into heaven. And, how about this week’s Lukan Gospel with two disciples walking 7 miles with Jesus to a town called Emmaus? Granted, they didn’t know it was him as they walked with him. But they came to find out when they invited this ‘stranger’ to stay with them, ‘for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.’ Come in and stay with us so you don’t get attacked by ghosts and goblins in the darkness of the night.”

All true. However, the moment the Spirit of Christ entered back into his body to bring forth victory over death and a resurrected body that can never die because death is now forever in the background, never to return, *no one was present to witness the most sacred and holiest moment in the history of the world.* No one. Which is likely why we don’t have the same words of a near 90-year-old parishioner spoken about an evil Pandemic, “I have never seen anything like this in my lifetime,” spoken also about the resurrection of Jesus at the stage of its primary infancy. The Eternal Conception we can call it. Jesus’ second “conception,” when death was chewed up and spit out, the moment the Devil lost the game, set, and match, was an intimate moment reserved for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

So why believe? Because we trust the witness of those who saw him, ate with him, and spoke to him after they knew he was crucified, dead, and buried. He even showed them the wounds on his hands and feet for good measure. He wants us to believe *them*. He invites us to believe *them*. We are the *Apostolic Church*, with Christ Jesus as the capstone. We can choose not to believe them if we prefer. God is a Respector of a person’s freedom to reject His gift. And we pray as a Church for the conversion of those who don’t believe that God will touch our inmost being one day with the very same life after death gift he gave to his Son. *The very same gift...no different.* But any person’s doubt can never change the truth of what the Lord freely offers to those who love him: a gift whose only appropriate response is, “I’ve never seen anything like this in my lifetime.”

Peace, Fr. Riley

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 04/19/2020

Sunday Ordinary	\$ 1,385.00
Donation	\$ 100.00
Good Friday, Shrines of the Holy Land	\$ 130.00
Easter	\$ 535.00
Online Donations 16-19 April 2020	\$ 1,070.00
Parish Activities Committee	\$ 1,000.00