

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. May 09	Francis X. Mahoney, Jr., 5th Anniversary, from Family
Sun. May 10	Juniva Glavickas, 6th Anniversary, from Family, and Mary Karpowicz, from Family
Mon. May 11	Parishioners of Immaculate conception
Tues. May 12	John Barna, Month Mind, (<i>Sts. Nereus and Achilleus, St. Pancras</i>)
Wed. May 13	Rita L. Letendra, (<i>Our Lady of Fatima</i>)
Thurs. May 14	(<i>St. Matthias</i>)
Sat. May 16	
Sun. May 17	Patricia Holloway, 4th Anniversary, and Robert Holloway, from Family

THIS WEEK the text for the Fifth Sunday of Easter may be found at #930 in the *Journeysongs* hymnal.

PARTNERS IN CHARITY 2020

The annual Partners in Charity campaign continues in our Parish and remains in place 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 \$67,110 from 72 donors, which is 76% 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

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 17th, THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

1st Reading: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17
 Psalm 66
 2nd Reading: 1 Peter 3:15-18
 Gospel: John 14:15-21

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.

THE DAY IS NOW FAR SPENT

WHERE IS THE WORLD HEADED? "Today, in order to appear modern, Westerners think that they are obliged to assume a permanent posture of rupture. The globalized elites want to create a new world, a new culture, new men, a new ethics. The only things they cannot make are a new sun, a new moon, new mountains, new air, a new world. Rupture is the driving force of their political project. They no longer want to refer to the past. People who continue to identify with the values of the old world have to disappear, whether they like it or not. For the proponents of the new world, those subhumans belong to an inferior race. It is necessary to exclude them and to eliminate them. This desire to break with the past is tragically adolescent. A wise man is aware and proud of being an heir. With dread I note attitudes that are sometimes similar within the Church. What would a Church be in which those who are attached to the treasures of the Christian tradition and are faithful to the unchangeable teaching of him who "is the same yesterday and today in forever" (Heb 13:8) were eliminated?"

Cardinal Robert Sarah, from the book *The Day Is Now Far Spent*

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

SHOW US THE FATHER: John 14:8; "When Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us,' He understood well enough that being shown the Father could satisfy him. But if the one who is equal to the Father was not enough for him, how would the Father be enough? And why wasn't he enough for him? Because he was not seen. Why wasn't he seen? Because the eye he could be seen with was not yet whole. As for the Lord's body, which could be seen with these eyes, it was not only the ones who revered him who saw him but also the Jews who crucified him. So if he wanted to be seen in another way, it means he was requiring other eyes. And that is why he gave this reply to the one who said, 'Show us the Father, and that is enough for us: Have I been with you all this time, and you do not know me? Philip, whoever sees me also sees the Father.' And to heal the eyes of faith in the meantime, he is first admonished in terms of faith, so that he may be enabled to attain to sight. And in case Philip should assume that God is to be thought of in the same way as he saw the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh, he immediately added, 'Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me?'" *St. Augustine (360-430)*

THE NEW DICTIONARY OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY

AGING: During the past century, life expectancy in the developed nations has nearly doubled, adding several decades to the normal life span. Increase awareness of the spiritual dimensions of the middle and later years has accompanied this extension of human life. Aging as a process is not restricted to the later decades of life, although it is often viewed negatively then. Judged according to standards of maximum productivity and biological functioning, these later stages can be seen as periods of diminishment and loss, as part of the downward curve of life leading eventually to death. From a spiritual perspective, however, they are periods of potential growth. The Holy Spirit is always renewing us and inviting us to fuller life. A focus on spirituality and aging allows the resources of faith to illumine the challenges and gifts intrinsic to adult growth, clarifying the deeper meaning of middle and late adulthood.

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 safe, wise, and healthy reopening of our state and other parts of our nation and world.*

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Thank you to all the families that have returned the Diocese of Worcester Grade Level Inventory Test. We will continue to collect the tests through the month of May. If you did not receive your Religious Education packet please contact Mary Sycks at 508-868-8119.

Please watch your email on Saturday morning for the Children's Bulletin and the Readings for Sunday Mass.

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

Upheaval; uncertainty; pandemic; virus; confusion; patience; unsettling, and all the other words used for this present situation we find ourselves speak to our experience. One other word that could be used is adjustment. Whether we're working, or we find ourselves out of work because of the virus that crossed the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans a few months back, we're all in a common period of adjustment.

Interestingly, some Worcesterites who were caught off guard by being at their summer home in Maine or New Hampshire, or winter home in Florida, have decided to stay put for the time being. Under "normal" conditions, they would be back here in Worcester living their Worcesterite heritage within the boundaries of our city walls. But their Worcester upbringing and formation finds them in another location, a secondary location, but a lovely one nonetheless. I think of one parishioner who would have been home by now from Florida, but decided, understandably, to remain in the warmer climes for the foreseeable future. And why not? Florida is a state opening up, for better or worse according to your preference, where movement is much freer and you don't always get looked at like your 156 pounds of poison.

Honestly, whenever I walk the circle of Indian Lake or the Wachusett Reservoir on any given day, I do my best to not see others who cross my path as being poisonous. I remind myself that most people, a very, very high percentage of people, *do not have the Coronavirus*. All the while being mindful that it takes only one Covid-19 person to sneeze in my direction as I walk the circle of nature. Even still, I refuse in the name of my better Christian nature and treatment to see others as 156 pounds of poison as I cross paths with them. Chances are slim. extremely slim, they walk near me in that geographical setting with an infection that could potentially take my life if they sneeze or cough in my bodily vicinity. Treating others like poison I do my best to avoid, while knowing full well that I am looked upon as 200 pounds of poison as I cross paths with them. Such are some thoughts and actions directed at others in a time of pandemic once every 100 years.

Anything and everything that goes against unity, community, and closeness I stand against. Virtual hugs and handshakes you can keep. I want nothing to do with them. I think it's a stupid idea, plain and simple. There's no such thing as a virtual action that can even begin to replace real, loving physical affection that God created within us to share with one another. I understand the reasons why real hugs and handshakes cannot presently happen. I'm not the dumbest priest around (believe me!). But this does not compute to some level of acceptance of virtual, fake forms of affection replacing true Christian affection. I much prefer to show my distaste for the fake stuff than somehow be complicit in its fakeness and pretend everything is hunky-dory when it's not. No Christian should ever profess joy at the separation and removal of beautiful forms of affection. Granted, not everyone likes them. Trying to hug an Irishman is akin to a Red Sox fan happily watching the Yankees win the World Series. It's like trying to fit a circular object into a square.

Either way, this column on adjustment speaks to the readings on this 5th Sunday of Easter. In the reading from the Acts of the Apostles, the chosen ones of Jesus have arrived at the point in

their ministry where they realize an adjustment is called for, without losing love and affection for one another. Love and affection for the first Christians were hallmarks of their faith in Christ. "Cold" is a word that can never be used for Apostolic relations. They loved one another with the truest affection. However, the time has arrived for them to spread their wings and tighten up their ministry on prayer and sharing the word. Remember, there was no New Testament at the time this takes place. The "word" they shared were the words Jesus spoke to them previously and remembered on their part through enlightenment of the Spirit. With all due respect to waiters and waitresses, there would be no more waiting on tables for the Apostles. This ministry would be taken up by what we now know as deacons. The adjustment the Apostles understood they needed to make was an adjustment that in no way lessened their love and affection for their Christian brothers and sisters, but one that began in earnest the process of bringing the saving message of Jesus to the ends of the earth.

In the Gospel, the necessary adjustment was brought on by Philip's statement to Jesus, "Master, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Well, this caused Jesus to give Philip and the rest of them an earful of adjustment regarding who he is: "Philip, have I been with you so long a time and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." Is not the hardest adjustment for any of us the one of heart and mind? The adjustment of body, having to move from one pew to the next, is a piece of cake compared to the adjustment of heart and mind. They were to adjust their belief that when they looked upon the face of Jesus and heard his voice, they were seeing and hearing the Father who spoke through the Son, that their relationship was pure, unequivocal Oneness. The greatest marriage in the history of the world, as good as it can be, could never enter the zone or begin to compete with the Oneness of Father and Son. How difficult was it for the Apostles to move from the thought of the one God of Israel to the one Trinitarian God and understand and believe they are one and the same. Holy Cow!

We are in a time of adjustment now. We adjust for the purpose of safety, for life, for better health, for respecting the space of others. This adjustment, we pray, does not last, for much of it is grounded in suspicion. "Does that person walking toward me have the virus?" This is not a healthy or good way to live. And God sure doesn't want this in our hearts and minds. Therefore, we pray for the time of readjustment from the present adjustment. For the "normal" to overcome the present "abnormal."

Although the Apostles move from waiting on tables to greater emphasis on prayer and ministry of the word, it's logical to assume they still had to continue to make adjustments in order for them to teach effectively while remaining in love with their fellow Christians. And we can further assume they did so with much hugging and handclasps, which are loving signs of Christian unity.

Peace, Fr. Riley

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 05/03/2020	
Sunday Ordinary	\$ 5,125.00
Donation	\$ 100.00
Spring Fuel	\$ 245.00
Online Donations 16-19 April 2020	\$ 900.00