

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 23	John Dowd, Sr., 6th Anniversary, from Family
Sun. May 24	Bernadette Hickey, 2nd Anniversary, from Family
Mon. May 25	Parishioners of I.C., (<i>Sts. Bede the Venerable, Gregory VII, and Mary Magdalene de Pazzi</i>)
Tues. May 26	Blair Deeney, from Rich Riley (<i>St. Philip Neri</i>)
Wed. May 27	In Thanksgiving to God, from Young Shin, (<i>St. Augustine of Canterbury</i>)
Thurs. May 28	
Sat. May 30	Estelle Rathay, Month Mind, from Family
Sun. May 31	Esther MacLellan, 5th Anniversary, from Family

THIS WEEK the text for the Seventh Sunday of Easter may be found at #937 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 \$68,585 from 76 donors, which is 78% 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

THE DAY IS NOW FAR SPENT

HATRED, RIDICULE, AND CYNICISM: "The atheistic ideology of the twentieth century intended to detach man from God. The new ideologies now hope to mutilate and control his nature. Man dreamed up his own earthly paradise. It was a bitter failure. Now he wants to change his own human nature. John Paul II fought with all his might in favor of the fall of Communism. The Church must now protect the weakest persons from the madness of transhumanism and from gender ideology, with which the capitalist and liberal forces seem to be perfectly satisfied."

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

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

FULL KNOWLEDGE BRINGS FULL GLORY: John 17:4; "If knowledge of God is eternal life, the more we grow in this knowledge, the greater the advances we make toward life. And we shall not die in the eternal life that is to come. For then, when there shall be no death, the knowledge of God shall be perfected. Then God will be most fully glorified because then it will be the completed glory, as expressed in Greek by *doxa*. ... But glory was defined among the ancients as fame accompanied with praise. But if one's praise depends on what is said of him, how will God be praised when he himself shall be seen? And so it is said in Scripture, 'Blessed are they who would dwell in your house. They will be praising you forever and ever.' There, where there shall be full knowledge of God, his praise will continue without end. And because it is full knowledge, the glorification will also be full and complete." *St. Augustine (360-430)*

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 31st, PENTECOST SUNDAY

1st Reading: Acts 2:1-11
 Psalm 104
 2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3b,-7, 12-13
 Gospel: John 20:19-23

THE NEW DICTIONARY OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY

DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS: In the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius of Loyola outlines his classic "Rules for the Discernment of Spirits." These function critically as the exercitant attempts to respond to the influence of God directing her or his life. The rules unite all of the factors that previous traditions included: good and evil spirits, personal and preternatural influences, thoughts and imagination, and states of affectivity, consolation and desolation. Consolation indicates any movement of affectivity toward God; desolation, any movement of affectivity away from God. These divergent influences are perceived to be casually connected, e.g., evil spirits can cause the kind of thoughts or imagination that effect desolation, or a state of desolation can issue into commensurate thoughts that place one under the personal influence of evil. The fourteen rules for the first week are offered for those who are being tempted "openly and obviously," i.e., either by the pleasure that attracts to evil or by the pain and cost that can deter from discipleship. Ignatius indicates two different subjects of such temptations and frames a matrix by which the influences upon their lives are united in contrasted."

VIRTUAL WALK FOR THE HOMELESS

We cannot physically WALK together this year, but we can still come together for our neighbors in need. Central Mass. Housing Alliance is launching its first-ever **Virtual Walk for the Homeless** so we can continue to support community members experiencing homelessness, those at risk for becoming homeless, and those struggling with hunger. In the coming months an onslaught of families will face increased and complex needs as a result of the Coronavirus. That's why this year's Virtual Walk for the Homeless is even more critical than ever to carry forward a treasured community tradition that rallies for those in need. Beneficiary agencies include Catholic Charities and St. John's Food for the Poor. Visit www.walkforthehomeless.org to learn more and to make a donation.

RECONCILIATION AND PENANCE

Disobedience to God: The first point which helps us to understand sin emerges from the biblical narrative on the building of the tower of Babel: the people sought to build a city, organize themselves into a society and to be strong and powerful without God, if not precisely against God. In this sense the story of the first sin in Eden in the story of Babel, in spite of notable differences in content and form, have one thing in common: in both there is an exclusion of God through direct opposition to one of his commandments, through an act of rivalry, through the mistaken pretension of being "like him." In the story of Babel the exclusion of God is presented not so much under the aspect of opposition to him as of forgetfulness and indifference toward him, as if God were of no relevance in the sphere of man's joint projects. But in both cases the relationship to God is severed with violence. In the case of Eden there appears in all its seriousness and tragic reality that which constitutes the ultimate essence in darkness of sin: disobedience to God, to his law, to the moral norm that he has given man, inscribing it in his heart and confirming and perfecting it through revelation."

From *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, Pope St. John Paul II

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

Memorial Day weekend. Finally. It's proper each year that Memorial Day, what can rightfully be called a secular/religious holiday, is celebrated near the end of the Easter season. We normally celebrate this special national holiday each year within 1-2 weeks of the time we move on from the whiteness of the Easter season and back into the green color of Ordinary Time. If I could choose one American National holiday that ranks above the rest, it would be Memorial Day.

The 4th of July is loved for obvious reasons. We are blessed to be living in a nation that, with all her imperfections and shortfalls, remains the land of liberty, freedom, and one that reaches out to others in need. The 4th of July rightfully celebrates the liberty and freedom that God naturally created us for. They are protected by a Constitution that, when respected and not altered, is the Magna Carta of government documents in the world's history. The Roman Empire we are not. At least we're not meant to be.

But, Memorial Day hits closer to home because of our loving remembrance for those who have gone before us, and, for us Christians we can add, "marked with the sign of faith." Memorial Day, unlike the 4th of July, is a more solemn national holiday. There may or may not be fireworks that take place on Memorial Day. If so, they would sound a bit out of place. If we hear fireworks on May 25 this year, we may think, "Did the city of Worcester get her dates wrong?" But whether we hear booming or not in May, we trust our faith that says fireworks are lit up in heaven for those we have loved and lost.

I've probably written this previously at some point, but Memorial Day was first celebrated by Civil War veterans to remember their fellow veterans who had passed "into the upper battlefield." Places like Gettysburg or Manassas were no longer just on earth. The late 1800's into the early decades of the 1900's was a time when veterans who served in the horror of the American Civil War, and those who spent time in the most ungodly prisons imaginable, were obstinate in making sure their fellow veterans would not be forgotten after they went off to meet Jesus and Abraham Lincoln. Or, as Fire Departments say, "After they answered their final bell." Remembrance of those who fought on lands far away from home, be it Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, or Mississippi, was paramount in their collective mindset. These veterans who "saved the nation" were as determined to not forget their comrades as much as they were determined to keep the "United" in the "United States of America."

From the Civil War veterans solemn starting point of remembrance, Memorial Day has evolved into a national day of remembrance for all Americans, taking on more of a religious tone over the years. Although the religious dimension of Memorial Day was present in the beginning, an dimension that coincided with the veterans' love for America, our faith has naturally advanced into the greater purpose and meaning of Memorial Day. Many of us now see Memorial Day, for those who are God-fearing people, as a day that recalls the lives of the many who have been close to us, fighting battles that we continue to fight for personal freedoms and liberty. But also as a day that allows our Christian belief in the resurrection to become part of the national celebration. It's a wonderful combination of

remembrance; national pride in this life, and the ultimate reward for faith in God in the life to come.

Memorial Day is also a day that reminds us that we have work left to do, while those who have gone before us have finished their earthly sojourn. We see this truth in this week's 1st reading from the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. After Jesus was taken up to heaven, praying the same for our loved ones who await the resurrection of the body, the Apostles returned to the city and the familiar upper room. This time, however, their return to the upper room was absent the intense fear that held them captive in that same setting before Jesus appeared after being raised from the dead. Their return to the upper room became the first Christian meeting of CEO's (Christian Executive Officers, aka, Bishops), planning who was going where, how they would share the informational wealth of the Lord being raised, and when they would "go into the whole world preaching the Good News of salvation," baptizing the nations into the life of their Christ. Their return to the "Room of the First Eucharist" was a planning session on how to go about telling the rest of the world that "the Kingdom of God is at hand." In other words, they had much work ahead of them after Jesus ascended to the eternal Upper Room.

As with us, Christ did not leave them alone. Any Christian who believes they are alone in this world, well, all I can offer is it that you are not. The toil we perform in the name of Christ is at times difficult, such as holding the line of our belief and faith during a time of separation from the Church because of a worldwide virus. However, the Spirit of Pentecost guides us through the moments of loneliness, separation, and despair, bringing us to a better place.

As Memorial Day 2020 arrives, we take time to reflect upon the origin of this day and how it has evolved in ways that touch all our lives. The Civil War veterans were blessed by the Spirit to think of a loving way to remember their fellow comrades who had died. What better way than putting aside one day each year for the entire country to remember their shared love of country and sacrifice for their nation. Today, many decades later, we are blessed to "hijack" this good idea of Civil War veterans and incorporate into it the lives of our loved ones who have come before God. We remember their sacrifices too, and the many parts of their lives that revealed their love for God and country.

Peace, 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 *all who have died from effects of the Coronavirus, as we pray for God's mercy and the repose of their souls.*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 05/17/2020

Sunday Ordinary	\$ 2,720.00
Ascension of the Lord	\$ 60.00
Food Pantry	\$ 100.00
Online Donations 11-17 May 2020	\$ 752.00