

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.	Nov 28	4:00 PM	Barbara Gillis Maher, 11th Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Nov 29	7:30 AM	Rose Sands, 1st Anniversary, from Family
		10:00 AM	Ellie Marhefka, from Parish Family
Mon.	Nov 30	9:00 AM	(<i>St. Andrew</i>)
Tues.	Dec 01	9:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Wed.	Dec 02	9:00 AM	
Thurs.	Dec 03	8:00 AM	(<i>St. Francis Xavier</i>)
Sat.	Dec 05	4:00 PM	Jeannette Lindsay, 12th Anniv., from the Ciccolini and Herrmann Family
Sun.	Dec 06	7:30 AM	
		10:00 AM	Christine Fitzpatrick, Month Mind, from her son Shawn McKinnon



FOR ADULTS DURING ADVENT

"A Time Will Come for Singing" is a four-session program for adults during Advent. Each weekly session will be online and will include a brief lesson and prayer, a short Advent-related video, and closing comments and prayer. Twenty minutes tops - from your own laptop, tablet, or mobile phone! Login whenever you want to during each of the four weeks. Take a step back from the hectic pace of the holidays to reflect on the true reason for the season. FREE, but you must register ahead of time so you can receive a link each week. Contact Romeo Marquis, Director of Faith Formation, Blessed Sacrament Church, Worcester. Rmarquis48@outlook.com for details and to register.

SCRIPTURE STUDY ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

Fr. Riley is holding a one-hour Scripture study class each Wednesday evening from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the Church Basement. We will read, study, and discuss the Gospel of Matthew. The next class will be held on Wednesday, December 2. In preparation for the December 2 class please read chapters 4 & 5. Masks are required and social distance will be practiced.

TURKEY LURKEY 2020 REPLACED BY PARISH RAFFLE

With the pandemic still hanging around here like a rotten fruit tree, we've decided it would be best to bypass our Parish Turkey Lurkey for 2020. Safety first for all involved. In its stead, we will hold a Parish Raffle through November into early December to help raise money for the many good works of our Parish Activities Committee. The makeup of the raffle is as follows: 200 tickets will be sold for \$50.00 each, totaling \$10,000 dollars. There will be one grand prize winner of \$3,000 dollars, one winner of \$1,000 dollars, 2 winners of \$750.00, and one winner of \$500, totaling \$6,000 in winnings. The remaining profit will be forwarded to the Parish Activities Committee. We will start selling tickets after all Masses beginning November 7. Tickets may also be purchased during the week at the rectory during business hours only (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday from 9:30-2:30). The winners will be drawn (by religious ed students) on Sunday, December 14, in time for Christmas. Winners will be announced by phone and in the bulletin the following week. Thank you for your support of our Parish Activities Committee with the hopeful prayer we return next year to a genuine Turkey-Lurkey.

HOPE FOR HOUSING FOOD CARDS

Because of the situation with the present pandemic, there will be times when no one will be available after Mass to sell food cards for Hope for Housing. In this situation, please speak with Fr. Riley before or after Mass so he can sell what you would like to purchase. This ministry is much too important for our Parish and local community to place aside as it assists families who are struggling to find and maintain proper housing. Purchasing cards makes it easy for us who shop at any of the stores represented, while supporting a most important form of Christian ministry. Thank you for your understanding and continued support for Hope for Housing in and through our Parish. This past week card sales amounted to \$220.00.

CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE FOR 2020 DIFFERENT FORMAT

A new format will be in place this year for the annual Christmas Giving Tree so we as a Parish can continue to assist the Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope and the thousands of children who benefit from their giving program. Because of the pandemic, Christmas tags on a tree in our Church will not be used this year. For those who wish to purchase a gift on behalf of this wonderful ministry there are two options that may be used, both through use of your computer. Option 1: You can obtain a "virtual tag" for the gift that a mother has asked for one of her children by going to www.urbanmissionaries.com and clicking on the tab "To join our virtual Christmas Giving Tree." You will receive your tag via email. If you purchase the gift and bring it home, please print off the email tag, attach it firmly to the gift and return it to our Parish by Sunday, December 13. If you purchase the gift online, you may opt to ship the gift directly to Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope, 242 Canterbury St. Worcester, MA 01603. All that is needed is to *put the tag ID number in the comment section of your order* so they will know who the gift belongs to. Option 2: Urban Missionaries can purchase the gift for you. Go to the "Go Fund Me" tab on their website, www.urbanmissionaries.com and make a cash donation. They will use your donation to purchase a gift. Any parishioner who has questions about the process of purchasing a gift, please speak to Fr. Riley. Thank you for participating in this most worthy program under the present difficult circumstances.

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 courage to receive God's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Advent season.*

RECONCILIATION AND PENANCE

The Loss of the Sense of Sin: "Another reason for the disappearance of the sense of sin in contemporary society is to be found in the errors made in evaluating certain findings of the human sciences. Thus on the basis of certain affirmations of psychology, concern to avoid creating feelings of guilt or to place limits on freedom leads to a refusal ever to admit any shortcoming. Through an undue extrapolation of the criteria of the science of sociology, it finally happens - as I have already said - that all failings are blamed upon society, and the individual is declared innocent of them. Again, a certain cultural anthropology so emphasizes the undeniable environmental and historical conditioning and influences which act upon man, that it reduces his responsibility to the points of not acknowledging his ability to perform truly human acts and therefore his ability to sin."

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

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION -

There are no Religious Education Classes on Sunday, November 29th. Happy Thanksgiving!
The First Reconciliation Class Retreat is on Wednesday, December 2nd at 6:00PM. The Reconciliation Celebration is on Saturday, December 5th at 10:00AM

From the Pastor continued from the following page

continues even now, the Pitchfork Demonic Angel is watching up close and personal, enjoying every violent move, every hacking, every fear, every hateful decision thrown at another one of God's children, saying to himself, "I have them right where I want them." The Messiah, however, comes to destroy Pitchfork Angel's reign. The Devil wishes to keep us in the Garden of Eden with the fallen Adam & Eve. The Messiah invites us to love God and neighbor, carrying our bodies and souls through death into the life of peace and everlasting security. All the violent people fooled by the Devil's fastball are openly sacrificing what the Messiah has won for them and invited them into. As well as the sickly politicians and many Church leaders who remain silent in the wake of it all, in essence being complicit because of their personal fears, whatever they happen to be.

As we begin this Church year that fast approaches the 2000-year anniversary of the birthday of the Church on Pentecost, we're presented, because of present circumstances, this opportunity to personally make straight the ways of the Lord. The first and best way of doing this is the Sacrament of Reconciliation. For those who fear the Sacrament, take a plane to Florida, find a Catholic Church, sit near a priest who knows not the first thing about you, and confess your sins in humility and truth. In other words, there are many more options than coming to see yours truly in the phone booth. I know two people who are flying to Florida soon, and they paid \$15.00 (this is not a misprint) for each of their tickets. And yes, the plane does have wings and a pilot. Point being, my brothers and sisters in the Lord, cast aside your fear and get the job done for the goodness of your soul. How many bad thoughts alone have all of us had concerning the pandemic, the Presidential election, the violence throughout this great land, the initial closing of Churches while liquor stores were opened, keeping the faithful away from Holy Mass? Time to clean it up! Get rid of the bad, filthy soil! I would say you could walk through Ernie's Carwash up the road, but not at this time of the year.

And second, make straight the way of the Lord by praying every day for peace in this present God-forsaken land, as well as peace throughout this God-forsaken world. Our Messiah is the real Prince of Peace, and not some real, phony angel who poses with a smile on his face and pure hatred in his heart. Christ is not Barabbas who was controlled by the Devil. Today, way too many are choosing the ways of Barabbas the revolutionary, the one who laughed at Jesus and his conviction when he gladly ran past the Lord when Pilate released him. Catholics are to be people of peace, imitating our Messiah, rejecting all that travels outside this wide circle of living. There is no other path to heaven.

Everyone I know is waiting for 2020 to end, for obvious reasons. We wait for a new beginning. A more peaceful, healthy, and hopeful beginning. The much better beginning begins today, November 29, the 1st Sunday of Advent. There's no need to wait until January 21, 2021. Our preparation for the Christ child entails some hard personal decisions that lead us to the true Messiah, and they have *nothing to do with Democrat or Republican*. Please God in your life this Advent and take advantage of his offer to bring peace to your soul. And keep at it when you leave the phone booth in Florida. .

Peace, Fr. Riley

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

DAILY READINESS: Mark 13:33; "The end of all things is concealed from us. For in the end of all is the end of each, and in the end of each is the end of all (on the last day). Whereas this time is uncertain and always in prospect, we may advance day by day as if summoned, reaching forward to the things before us and forgetting the things behind. For who, if they knew the day of the end, would not disregard the interval? But if ignorant, would they not be more ready day by day? It was on this account that the Savior said: 'Watch; for you do not know when the time will come.'" *St. Athanasius (c296-373)*

CHRISTMAS MASSES FOR 2020 AND TICKETS REQUIRED

This year our Parish will have four (4) Masses for Christmas instead of the normal two Masses. The reason, of course, is the limited number of seats available for each Mass resulting from the social distance requirements caused by the pandemic. Our Mass schedule will be Christmas Eve at 3:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m., and Christmas Day at 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m. Our Parish will create a signup & ticket system for each of the four Masses. All who attend will need to present a ticket at the door to ushers who will collect them, who will check off names from the signup sheet as you enter. Ushers will also assist in seating congregants to ensure there are no issues with space availability in the Church for each Mass. *There can be no standing in the back of the Church for any Mass. Every attendee has to be seated per request of our Diocese.* The signup & ticket system will be placed onto our Parish website by Friday, November 27, allowing our parishioners ample time to sign up prior to others from outside the Parish. Any elderly folks who do not have a computer *must speak to Fr. Riley or call the rectory ASAP to ensure your name is placed on the list of attendees for the Mass you would like to attend.* As of now, we are maximizing our congregation number to 135 people for each Christmas Mass. With 4 Masses, this will allow for all our parishioners, their family members, and others from outside to be able to attend Christmas Mass under present circumstances. Please be open to the possibility of adjusting to the Mass you wish to attend because of limited seating. For those who normally attend on Christmas Eve, you may have to attend on Christmas Day because of limited space. This system is only for Christmas Masses. All other Sunday and Holy Day Masses will not need this system in place since our Church has the capacity to handle social distance requirements based on the number of people who normally attend. Any questions, please speak with Fr. Riley. Thank you for your patience and gentleness in this matter.

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6th, THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

1st Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11
Psalm: 85
2nd Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-14
Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

ADMISSIONS EXAM AT ST. PAUL DIOCESAN JR/SR HS

The Admissions Exam will be held on **December 5 from 8 to 11:30 am.** Visit www.saintpaulknights.org/admissions/entrance_exam.cfm

TRAVELING HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

Join us for the traveling holy hour for vocations on **Monday, Nov. 30 at 7 pm** at Saint Mary Parish in Shrewsbury. All are welcome to attend and pray for vocations to priesthood and religious life in our diocese. Facemasks required.

FROM THE PASTOR

To be in relationship with God. To love Jesus and his life. To seek Blessed Mary and her protection and prayers. To see the Communion of Saints as friends who love us and assist us on our way. To cherish our Catholic faith without question and with obedience. To be faithful in all our relationships. And, to not belittle the purpose and meaning of what it is to be human.

As we enter the Season of Advent in preparation for the birth of our Lord, beginning another Church year that does not wait for January 1, this holy time presents to us each year the opportunity to reflect upon the deeper things of life. A new spiritual beginning, both connected and disconnected to our past spiritual life, is the refreshing impetus most of us can use at this time, whether we are young, old, or in between. Advent is a season of preparation and anticipation. We prepare for Jesus' birth among us, *knowing it is going to happen.*

Imagine living around the time of King Herod the Great in, say, 25 B.C. It was a time when most Hebrew people could feel that the Messiah was close to arriving. The tension in the air and the anticipation of the Messiah's presence could not be cut with a knife, it was so thick. They must have obsessed over God being so near to sending his Messiah. They could feel it in the air. The time was ripe to throw out the Romans and regain power in ways where the fullness of Judaism could be lived somewhat in peace and security. The tension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, of course, would not all of a sudden evaporate when the Messiah appeared. That would be akin to the Red Sox and Yankees ceasing their rivalry and becoming the best of friends. God wouldn't mind such a thing, but the respective fans of each team would dislike such odd friendliness.

The Jewish people were ready. Or so they thought. Little did they know and expect that God would throw a curveball when they were expecting a fastball. This may be hard for non-baseball players to understand. When a hitter is at the plate, expecting to see a 95 MPH fastball and gearing up for this pitch, knowing they have less than one second in their brain to decide whether they will swing or not swing at the pitch, and the pitch ends up being a 75 MPH curveball that moves up, down, and all around, and the hitter swings at it looking like a fool...well, it means they got fooled. Pretty bad. Except the Messiah-seekers of the late 1st century B.C. got fooled pretty good. How so? The Messiah turned out to be God in Person.

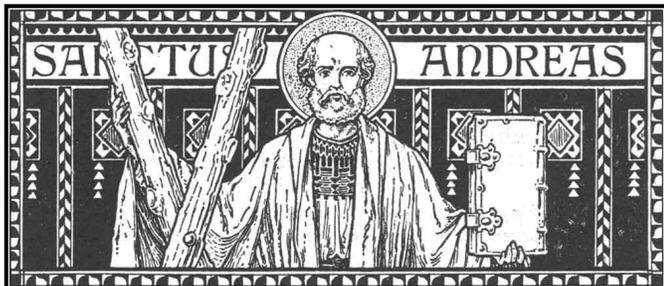
Now, if I happened to be a Jewish man around 6 or 7 B.C., the time when scholars believe Jesus was born, and I heard the scuttlebutt from friends that the Messiah was recently born in Bethlehem of Judea, my thought would have been something along the lines of, "Thank God! Finally! I get to see the person God has chosen to save us from the evil empire of Rome. I now get to worship my God in peace in the Temple. I get to now raise my family in peace, and not have Uncle Sam, or Uncle Caesar looking over my shoulder at all my moves." I would have thought there was going to be a new advent of peace for my whole race and nation. I also would have been wrong on all counts above. God threw a curveball, a slipper and slider, moving up, down, and all around, a different speed than what I expected, fooling me to the point of making me, a professional watcher for the Messiah, look like a clown in a circus (with all due respect to clowns).

Instead, he sent a Prince of Peace. A what? Yes, a Prince of Peace who brought a sword and fire to the earth, but not for use against the Romans. The fire of the Holy Spirit and the sword and breastplate of virtues were now to be used against the Devil. The Evil One. The one who causes confusion in human hearts and finds the greatest joy, if you will, when we destroy and maim each other. While we witness from afar, thus far, the violence perpetrated in American cities since this past summer that

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THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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



**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!**