

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
JENNEFER NOBERINI, PARISH SECRETARY
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.	Jan 30	4:00 PM	Doris, Kathleen, and Michael Piscitelli, from Family
Sun.	Jan 31	7:30 AM	Donald H. Letendre, from Family
		10:00 AM	T. Francis Killeen, 44th Anniversary, from Family
Mon.	Feb 1	9:00 AM	Joan Palokowski, from Family
Tues.	Feb 2	9:00 AM	(<i>The Presentation of the Lord</i>)
Wed.	Feb 3	9:00 AM	(<i>St. Blaise, Bishop and Martyr</i>)
Thurs.	Feb 4	8:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Sat.	Feb 6	4:00 PM	Dr. John W. Davis, Jr., 5th Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Feb 7	7:30 AM	Philip J. Powers, 1st Anniversary, from Family
		10:00 AM	Richard Riley, Sr., Theresa Begley, and Rich Lewis, from Family

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

KNOWING WITHOUT LOVING: Mk 1:24 “Those words show clearly that the demons had much knowledge, but entirely lacked love. They dreaded receiving their punishment from him. They did not love the righteousness that was in him. He made himself known to them to the extent he willed; and he willed to be made known to the extent that was fitting. But he was not made known to them as he is known to the holy angels, who enjoy participation in his eternity, in that he is the Word of God. To the demons he is known as he had to be made known, by striking terror into them, for his purpose was to free from their tyrannical power all who were predestined for his kingdom and glory, which is eternally true and truly eternal. Therefore, he did not make himself known to the demons as the life eternal, and the unchangeable light which illuminates his true worshippers, whose hearts are purified by faith in him so that they see that light. He was known to the demons through certain temporal effects of his power, the signs of his hidden presence, which could be more evident to their senses, even those of malignant spirits, than to the weak perception of human beings.”

St. Augustine (360-430)

ST. PETER’S SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary School, 865 Main St Worcester will host an Open House on Sunday, January 31st from 1:00 pm – 3:00pm by appointment only. Please contact by email, meg.kursonis@stpetercc.com, or by phone at 508-791-6496. Please respect COVID protocol. St. Peter’s has openings in Grades Pre-K-8. For more information, visit their website at www.stpetercentralcatholic.com.

PARTNERS IN CHARITY

The 2021 Partners in Charity campaign has begun through the mailing of pledge cards 2 weeks ago. The cards were sent through the Diocesan Office of Stewardship. Anyone using the pledge card for the purpose of your donation may either mail them into the Diocese with the envelope that accompanied the mailing, or drop the card into our collection basket any Sunday in the upcoming weeks. Many of our parishioners are now using online means to make a donation to Partners in Charity. For those of us who do so, go the Diocese of Worcester webpage, and scroll to the bottom, clicking on the Partners in Charity link and following directions. There will be more information to follow in the weeks ahead. Thank you.

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS FOR 2020

Any parishioner who would like to receive a statement for your contributions for 2020 for tax purposes, please call the rectory during office hours as found on the front page of the bulletin, or email us at icworc@live.com and we will mail you a copy. Thank you.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 1/24/2021

Sunday Ordinary (includes Online)	\$ 2,975.00
Winter Fuel	\$ 730.00
Catholic Free Press	\$ 78.00

HOLY HOUR TO PRAY FOR PRIESTS

On Friday, February 12, 2021 from 7 - 8 pm a holy hour to pray for priests will take place at Immaculate Conception Church on 353 Grove St., Worcester. This holy hour will consist of time for silent adoration, as well as a short reflection, the rosary, and benediction. Please join us to pray for our priests.

DEACON FRANK MYSKA

Deacon, Frank, at this time, remains in St. Mary’s Health Care Center in Worcester. Any parishioner who would like to send Deacon Frank an uplifting card wishing him good health and recovery, we’re sure he would like to receive a few of them from the people of his Parish. For those who wish to do so, you can send it to Deacon Frank Myska, St. Mary Health Care Center, 39 Queen St., Worcester, MA 01610.

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 on that day. 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 students who continue to learn at home, as we pray for their perseverance and good effort to remain true to their studies under difficult circumstances.*

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, February 3. In preparation for this class please read chapter 10. Masks are required and social distance will be practiced.

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 \$560.00.

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7, THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

1st Reading: Job 7:1-4, 6-7
 Psalm: 147
 2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
 Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - Religious Education classes take place on Sunday, January 31st at 8:45AM-9:45AM for children in grades K-6 and 11:15AM-12:15PM for students in grades 7-10 and Confirmation Class.

Inclement weather policy ~ For cancellations of Religious Education classes due to weather conditions please check the Immaculate Conception website or Facebook Page. You can also call the Office of Religious Education at 508-868-8119.

USCCB RESPONSE TO PRO-ABORTION MR. BIDEN

On January 22, Mr. Biden & Miss Harris marked the anniversary of Roe vs Wade by stating the decision of the Supreme Court in 1973 was “an advancement of women’s rights and health.” Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Pro-Life Activities responded to Biden and Harris with the following: “It is deeply disturbing and tragic that any President would praise and commit to codifying a Supreme Court ruling that denies unborn children their most basic human and civil right, the right to life, under the euphemistic disguise of a health service. I take this opportunity to remind all Catholics that the Catechism states, ‘Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable.’ Public officials are responsible for not only their personal beliefs, but also the effects of their public actions. Roe’s elevation of abortion to the status of a protected right and its elimination of state restrictions paved the way for the violent deaths of more than 62 million innocent unborn children and for countless women who experience the heartache of loss, abandonment, and violence. We strongly urge the President to reject abortion and promote life affirming aid to women and communities in need.”

COLLECTION FOR PRIESTS' RETIREMENT

Beginning this **Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17**, the parishes of our diocese will take up an annual collection to support the retirement costs of our diocesan priests. For many years the parishes of our diocese have generously supported a collection to assist religious communities with the retirement costs of their sisters, brothers and priests. These funds have gone to religious communities like the Venerini Sisters, the Sisters of Saint Joseph, the Assumptionists and the Trappists.. These funds have not gone to support the retirement costs of the priests of the Diocese of Worcester. We will continue to support the Retirement Fund for Religious in December but please join us in taking care of our priests this Ash Wednesday as we work to find new revenues to support them in their retirement. Thank you for your support.

2021 TRIP TO POLAND SIGNUP NOW

Our Parish trip to Poland has been rescheduled for September. The new dates for the trip will be September 20-30, 2021. The cost of the trip is \$3389, and single supplement \$700. We will visit cities and sites such as Warsaw and its historic monuments, Malbork Castle, Gdansk, Torun and the house where Nicolaus Copernicus was born, Czestochowa, a tour of Auschwitz-Birkenau, Krakow and a visit to the 16th century Wawel Royal Castle, as well as the Jewish Quarter, the birthplace of St. John Paul II and the Museum of Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, and other cultural experiences of Poland. Consider joining us on this wonderful trip of religion, history, and culture to beautiful Poland. We have 32 seats reserved for this trip with 16 of them presently filled. Signup sheets can be printed off from our Parish website at icworc.com and sent to Fr. Riley at the Church. The last day for signup is June 1. Any questions please call Fr. Riley at 508-754-8419, or Callie Foster at 508-397-5883. Thank you.

From the Pastor continued from the following page

success of our jobs and careers. But the fair question remains, “How much anxiety do these respective parts of life cause us?” How blessed is the person who can love the blessings of life that flow from above, like manna on the desert floor, but still maintain a faith in God that allows them to embrace the truth that they are not long for this world? Greatly blessed, I say.

Still, any anxiety I carry within as a priest is much more directed toward the people I serve and less and less about myself, at least at this stage of life. This wasn’t always the case. My anxiety is small when concerning what names I may be called, and what hated words may be spoken about my person when the Gospel is preached openly and honestly. There was a day when I would be overly concerned and anxious about such things, not wanting to “hurt feelings,” which I still do not want to do. Hurting someone’s feelings when teaching and preaching Jesus Christ as Savior, and all it encompasses, should never be the primary concern of any one in the faith, whether clergy or lay person. We should always expect any listeners to be mature enough to face the truth of what God has taught us through our faith in his Son. Especially in the area of morality. But we know at the same time this is not always the experience.

Part of what St. Paul addresses in terms of their faith with the people he loves in Corinth is seeing the world as passing away. As we walk through these days and nights in the desert of this world, we’re in need of this constant reminder. We remind ourselves that we have been made for God, and, to borrow the words of St. Augustine, our hearts are fashioned and made not for the here and now, for they are restless, but for Him who loved us and died for us. And, the only rest we will ever know is in God. We can capture some level of such rest (peace) in the here and now, but fully resting in this passing world is not possible. I would bet my Civil War book collection that even the calmest monk at the Spencer Abbey has some slight anxiety as to whether they will sell enough beer and chocolates to help pay the heating bill for the monastery. So, to say they have completely, fully rested in God in this passing world would be an errant statement.

Being free of anxiety in the way St. Paul stresses to the Corinthians is the best of advice. The Apostle knows this is a topic that directly touches on our faith in Christ. If a person is overly anxious about the things of this world, then it would not be far off to note such anxiety as unnecessary. Such levels of anxiety stemming from serious topics as our health, employment, and a few others, are understandable. Yet, even these tend to reveal a lack of trust in God caring for us, his children, and “giving us this day our daily bread.” May we place even the serious topics of health, employment, and a few others in the hands of God where they ultimately belong.

Is it even possible to live the words of St. Paul, and be “free of anxieties?” Honestly, this could be one of the hardest teachings he put forth in all his letters. Even Jesus worried about his flock at times, ultimately placing them into the care of Abba, petitioning his heavenly Father to watch over them, keeping them from the evil one. However, we do know, I pray, that the more of our lives we hand over to the Lord, saying, “Ok Lord, this deal is all yours, and let me know what I need to do,” the more peace we capture in a given situation. And the more divine peace we allow to settle within our hearts, the less anxiety there will be. And to this we can only say, “Amen.”

Peace, Fr. Riley

FROM THE PASTOR

Anxiety is one of those weird feelings. It sits alongside the emotions of fear, jealousy, anger, hatred, nervousness, worry, confusion, and the whole bag of bad, raw emotions. They are a bunch of first cousins that can't stand each other. Anxiety is such a bad emotion that Jesus wants us to avoid, that even he, the Lord of Hosts, says in the Gospel to not be anxious about what you are to wear, speak, eat, or over life itself. Don't fret about tomorrow, for today has enough to be concerned with.

Anxiety is like ice on a road in wintertime; it will cause us to lose control when we think we can be in control. It makes no difference what we drive on an icy road. The result will be the same; we'll steer into the curb, hit a light pole or telephone pole, a tree, a house, or some other standing object too close to the roads we travel.

I remember I used to get very anxious and nervous every time I stepped to the plate for an at-bat when playing baseball from Little League through college. Not once was I ever perfectly calm. The nerves, if they could be measured, would have reached to the moon. Apollo 11 could have used my anxiety to travel the quarter of a million miles each way without the use of fuel. It's probably why I swung so hard at the baseball; to relieve some of the anxiety that was racing through my internal organs at 300 mph. Also, the same with stepping up to the ambo to preach God's word, although over the years the waters of this part of priestly ministry have calmed somewhat. There are still times I feel the anxiety, acting like it's my first time preaching. There are certain situations that bring this about, such as a large Funeral Mass, or even a small one under tragic circumstances. Anxiety runs through my body prior to the start of a homily. But, once it begins, the Spirit truly takes over, settles the over-the-top anxiety, and returns my heart and mind to a stabler, yet still focused, place.

In the second reading this Sunday, Paul tells the Corinthians to be free of anxieties. Hmm, interesting. This comes from someone who was deeply anxious over the communities of Christians he established throughout the Empire, and whether they would go back to their pagan ways, turning away from Christ their Lord. Paul was anxious as to whether he wasted his time preaching to them Christ and him crucified, especially when their being persecuted was off the charts. But here he is, the great Apostle, telling the Corinthians to chill out over life, be as calm as a bear at rest in winter, be free of anxieties throughout the whole of their lives.

In fact, Paul even takes it to the incredible point of married men and women being at a distinct disadvantage in the world of anxiety because they, as married persons, must concern themselves with the lives of their spouse, thus, not primarily pleasing the Lord. The married man or woman who can please the Lord in their lives by way of attention and devotion ahead of, or alongside their family, is rare indeed. They tend to be much more anxious over pleasing their families. Understood.

As a priest, my anxieties are similar to those of St. Paul. In a raucous world with so much violence and spewed hatred, name-calling, labeling, extreme judging of others, and a pandemic, any anxiety I have within me centers in you, the sheep, losing your faith as this journey moves closer and closer to heaven, purgatory, or hell. What can cause this to happen is becoming too entrenched in a world that we are passing through. This is a tricky balance. We live in the world, a world we care about (at least most of us). We care about laws, relationships, politics that affect us for better or worse. We care about our sports teams, which are no more than a good distraction along the way. We care about the food we eat at home and when out (have you ever complained in thought or word about your meal at a restaurant? If so, you care about your food.) We obviously care about the

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THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Sat.	Jan 30	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Jan 31	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Feb 1	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Feb 2	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Feb 3	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Feb 4	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Feb 6	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Feb 7	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

RECONCILIATION AND PENANCE

“To evoke conversion and penance in man's heart and to offer him the gift of reconciliation is the specific mission of the church as she continues the redemptive work of her divine founder. It is not a mission which consists merely of a few theoretical statements and the putting forward of an ethical ideal unaccompanied by the energy with which to carry it out. Rather it seeks to express itself and precise ministerial functions directed toward a concrete practice of penance and reconciliation. We can call this ministry, which is founded on and illumined by the principles of faith which we have explained and which is directed toward precise objectives and sustained by adequate means, the pastoral activity of penance and reconciliation. Its point of departure is the church's conviction that man, to whom every form of pastoral activity is directed but principally that of penance and reconciliation, is the man marked by sin whose striking image is to be found in King David.”

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

**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!**