

# Immaculate Conception Parish



Please visit our website at  
[www.icworc.com](http://www.icworc.com) and Facebook  
Email: [icworc@live.com](mailto: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.	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
Mon.	Feb 8	9:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Tues.	Feb 9	9:00 AM	James Stukowski, Month Mind, from Parish Family
Wed.	Feb 10	9:00 AM	( <i>St. Scholastica, Virgin</i> )
Thurs.	Feb 11	8:00 AM	Nancy Davis, Month Mind, from Parish Family
Sat.	Feb 13	4:00 PM	
Sun.	Feb 14	7:30 AM	Mr. and Mrs. Hervey Gregoire, from Family
		10:00 AM	Robert Holloway, 1st Anniversary, from Family

**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 10. In preparation for this class please read chapters 10 & 11. Masks are required and social distance will be practiced.

**HOLY HOUR TO PRAY FOR PRIESTS**

A Holy Hour to pray for priests will be held this Friday, February 12 at 7:00 p.m. in the Church. All are invited to attend to pray for the ministry and spirituality of the priests of our Worcester Diocese.

**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 *the divine gift of God's healing and mercy to touch those in greatest need at this time.*

**40 DAYS FOR LIFE ASSISTANCE**

40 Days for Life begins this year on Sunday, February 14 and runs throughout much of the Lenten season. This dedicated Pro-life group is looking for assistance from any parishioners who would be interested in spending time in prayer in front of Planned Parenthood on Pleasant St. during the daytime hours over the course of the 40 days. If you're interested in assisting, please speak with Fr. Riley. Thank you.

**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.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 1/31/2021**

Sunday Ordinary (includes Online)	\$ 4194.50
Winter Fuel	\$ 205.00
Catholic Home Missions	\$ 218.00

**MASS SCHEDULE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17**

The holy season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17. With the pandemic remaining a grave concern at this time, and social distancing an absolute requirement, our normal schedule of three Masses will be expanded to four Masses in order offer our parishioners and others the opportunity to choose other options this year. The additional Mass will be held in the afternoon, the time of day when the largest number of people attend, based on past attendance practices. Thus, our schedule will be as follows: **Masses at 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 4:00 p.m., and 6:00 p.m.** In past years, we have held Mass at 5:30 in the afternoon, the highest attended Mass by far. This year, we hope that a 4:00 Mass will alleviate the potential numbers of attendees at a later Mass, this year being 6:00 p.m. *We will not be using the ticket system as we did for Christmas. Ash Wednesday does attract more people for Mass than what we would have attending on a normal Sunday, but not so much where a ticket system needs to be in place.* However, at the same time, we have less people in the Parish attending Ash Wednesday Mass this year precisely because of the pandemic. This lessens any concern for our reaching the 25% state mandate at this time. Thus, the four Masses (especially the 2 later Masses) are sufficient to allow for everyone to attend without concern for overcrowding, thus maintaining proper social distancing.

**APPLICATION OF ASHES ON ASH WEDNESDAY**

The traditional application of ashes for Ash Wednesday is, as we all know, done with the giver's thumb (priest/deacon) applying ashes directly on the receiver's forehead. During this year of pandemic, this will obviously *not be the application process.* The application process for the reception of ashes will be applied by the same persons (priest/deacon), but instead of using a thumb, we will use a separate Q-tip for each person, applying the Q-tip dipped in ashes on the forehead of those receiving ashes. **EVERY Q-TIP WILL BE USED ONE TIME ONLY, AND BE DISCARDED IMMEDIATELY AFTER USE!!!!** The words that accompany the application of ashes, "Repent and believe in the Gospel," will be said one time only for everyone in the Church. These words will be spoken by the priest from a distance immediately after the priest blesses the ashes in the sanctuary, which will apply to all in attendance. At the reception of ashes, nothing will be spoken by the priest or deacon. Only the application of ashes will take place as those present come forward up the two side aisles in like manner of receiving Communion on Sundays, being vigilant of social distance requirements as you approach. Thank you.

**READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME**

1st Reading: Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46
Psalm: 32
2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1
Gospel: Mark 1:40-45

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** - Religious Education classes have moved to remote learning for grades 1-10 through February 14th. We will return to in person classes on February 21st. Confirmation Class will take place in person as scheduled.

**ASH WEDNESDAY COLLECTION**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
 One of my great joys as your Bishop is to work with so many dedicated priests who have served you and our diocese faithfully throughout their lives. One of my weighty responsibilities is to care for them in their old age.  
 I write to ask your support for the new Ash Wednesday Collection that will assist the retired priests of the Diocese of Worcester. Unlike the December collection for Retired Religious which supports sisters, brothers and priests of religious orders throughout the country, the Ash Wednesday collection will be dedicated to those priests ordained for the Diocese of Worcester who do not benefit from the December collection.  
 We currently have 50 retired priests. In the next nine years an additional 42 priests will reach the retirement age of 75. Our annual costs for health insurance, housing and monthly stipends for retired priests have recently run between \$2.2 million - \$2.6 million. While Partners in Charity, Celebrate Priesthood and the endowments from Forward in Faith and Legacy of Hope have and will continue to support priest retirement, we have had annual shortfalls in funding to meet those obligations.  
 We recently made changes to retirement benefits for priests who have not yet retired. Those measures are expected to save up to \$12 million through 2050. However, in the short run, deficits up to \$374,000 per year are projected through 2031. The purpose of the Ash Wednesday collection is to help eliminate those deficits and strengthen the sustainability of decent care for our retired priests.  
 Our retired priests have cared for us and our families throughout the decades. Please consider beginning this Lent with a sacrificial gift to the Ash Wednesday Collection on February 17 to support our retired priests.  
 I am very grateful for your support of all of our Diocesan efforts and for your consideration of this request. Thank you and God bless you.

With every prayerful best wish I remain,  
 Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus  
 Bishop of Worcester

**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 \$250.00.

**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](mailto:icworc@live.com) and we will mail you a copy. Thank you.

*From the Pastor continued from the following page*

Praise and agreement are the two biggest drugs they consume. Thankfully though, there are one or two humble ones also, 500 miles south of Worcester, or even close by. If you know their names, pass them on to me so I can send them a letter of thanks for being a God-fearing person in a walk of life that requires a certain level of toughness.

“Everyone is looking for you.” “Why are they looking for me?” “Because you just had the entire town at the door of St. Peter’s home in Capernaum, all the sick, possessed, lunatics, and depressed, and...you healed all of them. They came to you in desperation, and they left your presence with a joy they hadn’t known since their first birthday with cake all over their face. You didn’t get tired of the lowly people, or the highly people too, who sought your assistance in the gravest matter, the matter of wanting good health as we all do. You touched them, and they were cured. You spoke words to them, and they were cured. You looked at them and they were cured. You thought the thought, and they were cured. You, Jesus, are a curing machine. Do you wear number 12? Everyone is looking for you. Everyone wants you on their team! Everyone wants you as their quarterback! They want you to lead their team, *our team!* They want more of what you have to offer. They like you. In fact, they’ve grown to love you. Are you sure you don’t wear the number on your robe that matches the number of Apostles you’ve chosen? It would make perfect sense to all of us TB fans if you did.”

What our Savior accomplished in this Gospel is a small, tiny, little example of what’s in store for us as believers, as people of faith in him. To think the whole town, probably hundreds, gathered at the door that day like he was passing out free ice cream, and he healed all of them by touch, word, look, and thought. Then, later on in the evening/early morning, after a few hours rest, he quietly awakes, tip toes around the house of Cephas, opens the front door, shuts it softly, and simply saunters off to find a deserted place to pray alone. Just him and Abba. Discussing their plan in silence. He didn’t even seek the praise of those he healed, even though it would have been *perfectly natural and normal to praise the Lord of Hosts, the God of heaven come down in human form, the Son of God, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person on the Trinity, our Judge and Savior.* What a humble-maniac! All I can say is, “There’s the One I want to worship. Forever.”

Well, hopefully all of us New England fans are glad that Mr. Tom is playing in the Super Bowl, searching for glittery ring number seven. Winning never gets old, and Mr. Brady would be the first one to enlighten us with that great truth. The “feel” after winning the Big Game is beyond description. It causes a high that players in the game would describe as indescribable. Just watch the post-game interviews and see how many times they say so. “Indescribable. I can’t describe the feeling.” Fans too. I well remember the Red Sox in 2004 after 800 years of losing. “Indescribable. They really won the World Series...in my lifetime.”

Final word for this free-flowing column: if you like glittery rings, one for each finger (and toe), and you like the idea of winning the Big Game, and being a player on the field, then worship Jesus Christ alone, and him crucified. The glittery ring from winning the Super Bowl is a mud ball when compared to the glittery universe that lit up the moment Jesus walked out of the tomb. Save your worship for whom it actually means something that is lasting. He’s the One who made the number 12 famous long before anyone else. To him be all the praise and glory for winning the Super Bowl that heals us forever. Amen.

*Peace, Fr. Riley*

## **FROM THE PASTOR**

Another Super Bowl Sunday. Another Tom Brady appearance. Another Patriots....Oh wait! He's not playing for them anymore. We got so used to Mr. Brady the quarterback, husband, father, and son (in this order of course), that we forgot he's not wearing the red, white, and Patriot blue anymore. Now he's wearing some ugly red and black uniform with a pirate on the front side of the shirt. A Buccaneer. Can you believe it? How and why did we ever let him go? What's wrong with those people down in Foxboro? Couldn't they figure out that Mr. Tom had at least one or two more Super Bowls left in him? *We all knew this, of course!* We knew he was going back to the Big Game on a day that has evolved into an unofficial national holiday. Where half the world is watching. And there he is, Mr. Buccaneer instead of Mr. Patriot. Our Tom. Gone forever, saying he will never come back this way because he loves the warm weather at this time of the year. So doesn't half our Parish! Do you blame them? I don't. I'm just straight out jealous. Now I need to go to confession because some of the people I love are presently living in the warmth of Florida, or even South Carolina! But Tom Brady? C'mon! I thought we owned him forever. But they had other thoughts in the stadium offices at Gillette.

The question now is, do we still root for Tom Brady in the Super Bowl, even though he decided to leave our beloved team and search for warmer climes? Do we cheer him when he completes a big pass in the big game, or do we feel disheartened he isn't doing the same for us here in New England? Which is it? It cannot be both. We can't have it both ways now. It's not a good thing to have a torn heart going every which way as we watch a familiar face in an unfamiliar uniform leading his team down the field to another Super Bowl victory. Same guy, same drive, same ring, *but a different team name on the shiny ring that glitters more than a full moon!* For Pete's sake, how many rings does one superstar need? He already has six of them! He's running out of fingers for wearing glittery, ridiculously expensive rings! Imagine if he had beaten the Giants in those two games they lost, and the Eagles in the other game they should have won? *He would have nine glittery, expensive rings!!!* This Super Bowl would be the opportunity for Mr. Quarterback of the century to fill every one of his fingers with a Super Bowl ring. Talk about incentive! Next year he would have to have surgery to add a finger to one of his hands, because we just know he's going back to the Big Game in 2022. He's a winner, and winner's hardly ever lose.

Okay, enough of this foolishness. Time to change the subject before we all start bowing down before this human being, worshipping him like he was a golden calf. Just because he can read a complicated defensive scheme in a few short seconds, and complete passes to 100 different receivers in one big game, all of a sudden we make him out to be some sort of deity. What are we, pagans? Do we worship human beings and false gods? Do we shape and form golden calves to look like TB with an oversized number 12 on it? When is this human worshipping going to end? Probably not until Jesus returns would be my logical, professional guess. I'm sure we all understand that there are so many people who love the idea of being worshipped, placed on a pedestal, and bowed down before. I know a few of them in the Church. Some of them wear black cloths for a living. And God knows how many worship-seekers there are in another walk of life, the ones who make rules and laws that you and I are supposed to abide by, even the ungodly rules and laws, residing 500 miles down the road in the District of Columbia, working in a large white structure with a large, impressive dome on the top. *They loooove being worshipped!* They love being worshipped so much that if you criticize or correct them, they will hate you. You will make their "unforgettable list," the one that never forgets in their own brains what you said to them. For some of them, we cannot feed them enough praise and agreement.

*Continued on Previous Page*

**THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

Sat.	Feb 6	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Feb 7	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Feb 8	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Feb 9	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Feb 10	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Feb 11	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Feb 13	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Feb 14	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

**RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

THE ROTTEN ODOR OF SIN BECOMES THE PERFUME OF REPENTENCE: Mk 1:30; "Can you imagine Jesus standing before your bed and you continue sleeping? It is absurd that you would remain in bed in his presence. Where is Jesus? He is already here offering himself to us. 'In the middle,' he says, 'among you he stands, whom you do not recognize.' 'The kingdom of God is in your midst.' Faith beholds Jesus among us. If we are unable to seize his hand, let us prostrate ourselves at his feet. If we are unable to reach his head, let us wash his feet with our tears. Our repentance is the perfume of the Savior. See how costly is the compassion of the Savior. Our sins give off a terrible odor; they are rottenness. Nevertheless, if we repent of our sins, they will be transformed into perfume by the Lord. Therefore, let us ask the Lord to grasp our hand. 'And at once,' he says, 'the fever left her.' Immediately as her hand is grasped, the fever flees."

*St. Jerome (342-420)*

**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!**