

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.	Feb 13	4:00 PM	Michael Lavin, 1st Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Feb 14	7:30 AM	Mr. and Mrs. Hervey Gregoire, from Family
		10:00 AM	Robert Holloway, 1st Anniversary, from Family
Mon.	Feb 15	9:00 AM	Michael Sweeney, Month Mind, from Family
Tues.	Feb 16	9:00 AM	Mark J. Buczek, 22nd Anniversary, from Family
Wed.	Feb 17	7:00 AM	Rita L. Letendre, from Family, (<i>Ash Wednesday</i>)
		9:00 AM	Mary Hunter, from Family
		4:00 PM	Rinaldo Corrieri, from Family
		6:00 PM	For the Faithful Departed, from the Lapid Family
Thurs.	Feb 18	8:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Sat.	Feb 20	4:00 PM	Dr. Harry J. Kelly and his parents, from Family
Sun.	Feb 21	7:30 AM	
		10:00 AM	Albert and Emelia Menard, 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. **THERE WILL BE NO CLASS ON ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17.** The next class will be held on Wednesday, February 24. In preparation for this class please read chapters 11 & 12. Masks are required and social distance will be practiced.

COLLECTION FOR PRIESTS' RETIREMENT

This Wednesday we begin Lent, a time of deepened prayer, penance and almsgiving. This year we ask you to consider supporting the Ash Wednesday Collection for the retirement costs of our diocesan priests as part of your Lenten Program. Our 50 retired priests have faithfully served us in our parishes across the diocese, often until the retirement age of 75 or older. Now, in their later years we can express our thanks and ease their concerns by supporting this Ash Wednesday Collection. On behalf of our retired priests we thank you for your support.

HOLY HOUR AND STATIONS OF THE CROSS ON FRIDAYS OF LENT

Because of the lesser amount of people who attend Holy Hour and Stations of the Cross in the Church during the Season of Lent as opposed to Sunday Mass, we will be able to hold in our Church these two wonderful devotions without concern for going over present gathering limits because of the pandemic. During each Friday of Lent, beginning this Friday, February 19, a Holy Hour will be held from 5:30-6:30 p.m., followed by Stations of the Cross from 6:30-7:00 p.m. We invite any parishioner who wishes to attend. As with all Masses in our Church, social distance is to be practiced throughout the 1-1/2 hours these two devotions are held, unless those in attendance live in the same household. We ask all attendees to be ever vigilant in this regard. Thank you.

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 *being devoted to the call of Lent in our lives, and all it encompasses.*

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

1st Reading: Genesis 9:8-15
 Psalm: 25
 2nd Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22
 Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

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.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 2/07/2021

Sunday Ordinary (includes Online)	\$ 3,506.00
Catholic Free Press	\$ 352.00
Catholic Home Missions	\$ 117.00
Winter Fuel	\$ 660.00

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - There are no Religious Education classes on February 14th due to the holiday weekend. Classes will resume on February 21st.

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.

LENT BIBLE STUDY FOR YOUNG ADULTS

All young adults are invited to join us for a virtual Lenten Bible Study **every Tuesday evening of Lent at 8pm beginning on February 23**. The Bible study will involve Lectio Divina along with a discussion. Each session will be unique to that Sunday's gospel reading so individuals are welcome to attend all gatherings, some, or even just one or two. **Feel free to attend as often as you are able!** To sign up to receive the Zoom link, go to neworchester.org/lent-lectio-divina

GUIDELINES FOR LENTEN FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

The Lenten fasting and abstinence guidelines for the Diocese of Worcester are as follows: abstinence from meat is to be observed by all Catholics fourteen (14) years of age and older on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and all Fridays of Lent. Fasting is to be observed by all Catholics who are eighteen (18) years of age but not yet fifty-nine (59) years of age on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Those who are bound to fast may take only one full meal, while two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to one's needs. Eating solid foods in between meals is not permitted. Catholics should not lightly excuse themselves from these prescribed Lenten penitential practices.

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.

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 \$350.00.

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 and we will mail you a copy. Thank you.

SPIRITUAL READING FOR LENT

At each entrance to the Church can be found various pamphlets for the good use of spiritual reading for the Season of Lent. These pamphlets provide with a holy thought/practice for each Lenten day, leading into Holy Week in late March/early April. Please avail yourself of taking one or two pieces, allowing each respective author to accompany us on our Lenten journey for 2021.

From the Pastor continued from the following page

When reading the life of a Saint such as Pio, the Lenten reader cannot help but want to take on a portion of his spirit. When reading of what drove such Saints in their Catholic faith, we are moved by the real-life circumstances and acts accomplished through the presence of the Spirit working in the lives of such ordinary people. If St. Pio stood next to a 7-foot tall NBA center, the Italian monk would come up to the center's waist. He was short in stature, like Zacchaeus in the Gospel. And like Zacchaeus, he chased after the Lord in ways that caught our Savior's attention to the point of St. Pio's stigmata. He may have come halfway up to any NBA center's neck, but St. Pio was always spiritually halfway to heaven in his short body, towering over the 7-footer.

This Lenten idea of reading on the life of a Saint, or reading one of their own writings, points toward the spiritual action of imitation. We see this playing out in the second reading this Sunday, with Paul instructing the Christian believers in Corinth to imitate him as he imitates Christ. By this, the Apostle means carrying one's cross of sufferings and living in peace with others. After Paul was knocked down by Jesus on the Road to Damascus while on his way to persecuting early followers of "The Way," he fully invested himself into the virtue of nonviolence. Christian imitation is always, always grounded in holiness of life, which Paul lived so beautifully after being called out personally by Jesus. Christian imitation always rejects violence. We reject the choice of Barabbas the revolutionary in the living out of our faith. We are to be searchers, wanters, and sharers of peace to the point of rejecting all violence. To support any level of human violence and destruction for whatever false reason we can concoct, from the unborn to the dying elderly, is to choose Barabbas. Rather, we imitate Paul in his life of peace after his Barabbas imitation was lovingly destroyed by Christ.

Thus, the importance of reading the life of a Saint in the Communion this Lent will serve our relationship with the Lord in ways that we presently may not do. Lent is centered in seeking God's mercy and repentance for our sins. It is also centered in the joy of spiritual reading to deepen our faith in Christ, and what better way than to read a combination of the Scriptures alongside the life of a Saint we may have always wanted to know more about. One whose personal virtues we can imitate in our own lives, especially in a time when anxiety and uncertainty is running high. Let go of more of the world, and allow those like St. Pio, St. Therese, St. Juan Diego, St. Monica, St. Augustine, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Joseph in this Year of St. Joseph, and the greatest created Saint of all, Mary of Nazareth, to be imitators of Christ for us, learning from the best of the best. To commit ourselves to this spiritual project beginning this Wednesday will result in lasting benefits for the good of our bodies and souls. May God bless everyone in our Parish this Lent of 2021.

Peace, Fr. Riley

FROM THE PASTOR

Goodbye to the green for some time after this Tuesday. The green of Ordinary Time gets placed in the closet of robes until June, when the sunshine will be warmer, the days much longer, the green grass and leaves in full bloom, golf courses wide open, and the Boston Red Sox, well, we'll see how that pans out this year. I want to say "playing mediocre," but this remains the number one uncertainty from the above list for June. It's anyone's guess.

But what's not a guess is the reality of Lent, and what this upcoming holy season in the Church invites us and calls us to. The Ordinary green is replaced by the Lenten purple (violet for the liturgical sticklers), and the mood shifts from whatever it happens to presently be in our lives, to the "dryness" of the spiritual desert of renewal and repentance. If you're ecstatic, go dry. If you're joyful, go dry. If you're anxious over the state of the country being in crazy, dictatorial hands, go dry. If you're spiritually dry, go dry in a different way by welcoming into your heart the "mood of the season" geared toward the joy of Easter. And, if you're on top of the world, unbelievably happy and over-the-top filled with laughter, go dry. Lent was created by God for our dryness.

This computes to performing a level of internal searching that brings us to the Sacrament of Reconciliation; brings forth a degree of fasting (even for us older folks) that we would not normally assume the rest of the year; a commitment to our prayer life that will lead us to making and spending time in reading and reflection; and almsgiving in ways that stretch our finances and giving until it hurts the purse strings of our hearts, be it monetary or otherwise. It seems there are many well-known "groups of three" over the centuries, but only the Holy Trinity surpasses the Big Three of Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving, and doing so while this long-lasting pandemic remains before us.

Regarding the above Big Three, one of our Lenten possibilities this year is that of becoming more familiar with a Saint in the Communion by reading one of their classic writings, or possibly a biography of their life. The choices are abundant to learn from one of these past men, women, youth or children the holiness that defined their lives, and what it was they practiced in their lives – be it prayer, fasting, works of mercy - to have the Church declare their Sainthood. Any Catholic worth their Catholic salt knows of numerous Saints we have working on our behalf in the midst of the Church. We all know many of their names, *but do we know them?*

In preparation for one of my trips to Italy a few years back, I remember reading a couple biographies on the life of St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina. Both books made a lasting impression on the practice of my faith in Jesus by way of prayer and fasting. St. Pio's life was one of profound holiness and centered in the Lord. Yet, like the Apostles, he was an average Joe who lived his calling in the monastery at San Giovanni Rotondo near the Adriatic Sea. He was a monk who spent hours on end in the Confessional, absolving sins in the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, leading people to both conversion and the intimacy of God's presence. His holy life reminds all people of all faiths and non-faiths that, because we are short for this world, the powerful virtue of sorrow in our lives is necessary for being in right relationship with God.

And, besides spending many hours in his monastic cell and the confessional, St. Pio was known to wander outside the walls of his monastery to assist in the building of a world-class hospital that sits a stone's throw away from the monastery he inhabited for decades. His great dream in life was to see this hospital built to serve the poor and ill, and allow the "lowliest" of God's people treatment for their illness that was as good as any hospital from a first world country. He lived long enough to witness its opening and grant the success of this massive hospital through his personal blessing.

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THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Sat.	Feb 13	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Feb 14	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Feb 15	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Feb 16	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Feb 17	7:00 AM 8:30 AM 9:00 AM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM	Mass Rosary Mass Mass Mass
Thurs.	Feb 18	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Feb 20	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Feb 21	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

THE SIGN OF TOUCHING: Mk 1:41; "He did not simply say, 'I will, be cleansed,' but he also 'extended his hand, and touched him' - an act we do well to analyze. If he cleansed him merely by willing it and by speaking it, why did he also add the touch of his hand? For no other reason, it seems to me, than that he might signify by this that he is not under the hand of the law, but the law is in his hands. Hence to the pure in heart, from now on, nothing is impure. ... He touched the leper to signify that he heals not as servant but as Lord. For the leprosy did not defile his hand, but his holy hand cleansed the leprous body."

St. John Chrysostom (c.347-407)

**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!**