

# 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.	Mar 6	4:00 PM	Robert Kelleher, 4th Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Mar 7	7:30 AM	Fr. Henry A. Donoghue, from the Geheran Family
		10:00 AM	Marlene Dooley-Wajda, 10th Anniversary, from Family
Mon.	Mar 8	9:00 AM	Georgina Lamoureux, Month Mind, from Parish Family
Tues.	Mar 9	9:00 AM	Patricia Corcoran
Wed.	Mar 10	9:00 AM	John Iaccarino, from Family
Thurs.	Mar 11	8:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Sat.	Mar 13	4:00 PM	Doris Herrmann, from the Lapid Family
Sun.	Mar 14	7:30 AM	James L. McDonald, from Tom Kelly
		10:00 AM	

**INVITATION TO LENTEN DAILY MASS**

We invite parishioners to consider attending daily Mass (there's plenty of room in the Church) during the season of Lent for those who are in situation to do so. The number one spiritual benefit that we can gain from this holy season, deepening our relationship with the Lord, is our presence at the liturgy. The spiritual mindset of attending Mass each day during Lent has been, like many beautiful traditions in our present time, lost to some degree. Consider recapturing this religious commitment for 2021 and in the years ahead.

**TUESDAY EVENING LENTEN CONFESSIONS**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered in the Church for the remaining Tuesdays of Lent from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Confessions will be heard in the cry room in the front of the Church. Please consider taking advantage of God's Sacrament of mercy during this time of repentance and prayer.

**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. 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](http://neworchester.org/lent-lectio-divina)

**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, March 10. In preparation for this class please read chapters 26 & 27. Masks are required and social distance will be practiced.

**HOPE FOR HOUSING FOOD CARDS**

Please consider supporting through our Parish the purchase of food cards for Hope for Housing, whose primary mission is to assist families from becoming homeless in our community. Available are cards for Shaw's, Stop & Shop, Big Y, CVS, Panera Bread, and Dunkin Donuts. This past week card sales amounted to \$300.00. Thank you.

**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 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 *those struggling to remain in their homes during the pandemic, especially any families or individuals threatened with losing their residence or apartment.*

**EASTER SUNDAY MASSES DIFFERENT SCHEDULE AND SIGN UP**

Because of the pandemic and the ongoing concern for social distancing in the Church, combined with Easter Sunday traditionally being a day when more attendees are in Church than we find on other Sundays, there arises the need for a change in the Mass schedule for Easter Sunday, as well as the need for our parishioners and all attendees to sign up for a certain Mass so that our numbers do not reach the danger point of infringing on the social distancing aspect of attending Mass. Therefore, our schedule will be the following: Easter Vigil Mass on Saturday, April 3 will begin at 7:30 p.m. Easter Sunday Masses, April 4, will be at 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Signup will be necessary for the 3 Masses on Easter Sunday morning only. *Signup will not be necessary for the Easter Vigil Mass on Saturday evening at 7:30, since fewer people normally attend that Mass.* Signing up for your respective Mass on Easter Sunday morning will begin on Monday, March 8. The place for signup will be our Parish Website; [icworc.com](http://icworc.com). Like Christmas Masses last year, tickets will be needed for entrance into the Church for each of the 3 Easter Sunday morning Masses. You will be able to print off your ticket at the time you sign up for the Mass you wish to attend. The number of attendees for each Mass will be capped at 120. For anyone who does not have a computer and plans on attending Mass on Easter Sunday morning, please speak with Fr. Riley and he will sign you up. We apologize for any inconvenience in this matter, but it is for the safety, well-being, and comfortability of all who attend Mass on Easter Sunday morning. Any questions, feel free to call the rectory or speak with Fr. Riley at any time.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 2/28/2021**

Sunday Ordinary (includes Online)	\$ 5,200.00
Ash Wednesday, Priests' Retirement Fund	\$ 460.00
Candles	\$ 167.00

**READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 14, THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT**

1st Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a  
 Psalm: 23  
 2nd Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14  
 Gospel: John 9:1-41

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** - Religious Education classes take place on Sunday, March 7th 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.

**PARTNERS IN CHARITY**

The Partners in Charity Campaign will begin in our Parish next weekend, March 13/14. Our Campaign Chairman, parishioner Bill Stanton, will speak briefly at each Mass after the homily, which will also be brief. I wish to thank Bill for stepping forward again this year to assist in this most important annual campaign that supports so many ministries essential to the life and works of our Diocese. From treating and serving basic needs of the poor in our communities, to seminarians studying for priesthood, retired priests who have dedicated their life's work to our Diocese, and many more ministries. Envelopes and information for the 2021 campaign will be placed at each entrance to the Church for Masses next week for anyone who has not received this information through a Diocesan mailing. Our Parish goal remains the same as past years; \$88,500, and I pray that each parishioner will consider this year donating on behalf of our Parish. Thank you, Fr. Riley.

**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.

**RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

**THE CHURCH BUILT OUT OF LIVING STONES:** Jn 4:21; "The Jews stand for those who think intelligently and salvation is from them. The Samaritans represent the heterodox. So they deify Gerizim, which means 'separation' or 'division.' ... The Jews, the other hand, revere Zion, which signifies 'watchtower.' ... Inasmuch, then, as the hour mentioned by the Lord has not yet come when they worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem, one must flee the mountain of the Samaritans and worship God on Zion, where Jerusalem lies. Christ calls this Jerusalem the city of the great king. And what else would the city of the great king, the true Jerusalem, be than the church that is built of living stones? This is the place of the holy priesthood, the place where spiritual sacrifices are offered to God by people who are spiritual and who have understood the spiritual law. But when the fullness of time is imminent, when one is no longer in the flesh but is in the spirit and everyone is no longer still in the type but is in truth, then one must no longer bring true worship and perfect piety to Jerusalem to be offered. Such a person has been prepared so that he is like those whom God seeks to worship him."

*Origen (c185-c254)*

**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.

*From the Pastor continued from the following page*

who said, "Let there be light," not "Let there be darkness." These are all human ideologies that worship the body in the worst possible ways. They are the Samaritan Woman before encountering Christ, who shows her how to love oneself and others in purity and truth. A love that has its foundation in God. Divine love that has spoken, "Male and female I created them." The Samaritan Woman's faith is such a joy to hear and watch from a distance of nearly 2000 years. It never gets old, hearing this story proclaimed at Mass. To allow this lived story of perfect soil producing the world's best faith and works speak to our faith lives, it produces the same healthy relationships for us. There may be days when it seems that our soil is not receiving enough rain, enough sunshine, or too cold at night to allow for healthy growth. There are days when our faith is certainly tested, like the Samaritan Woman. "Lord, where are the perfect conditions for the growth of my bank account?" She could have easily walked away from Jesus that day, head back to town *with her bucket in hand*, drink a gallon of water from Jacob's Well, and then return the next day performing the same old routine that temporarily satisfied the body, quenched one's thirst for a few moments, and still remain in the rottenness of her sinful lifestyle.

Instead, what does she do? The seemingly impossible...she talks to Jesus. She has a drawn-out conversation with her unknown Savior, unlike us, who know him for who he is. Like Mary Magdalene in the Garden on the first Easter morning who loiters and stays close to the tomb because she could sense something big was happening right before her, the Samaritan Woman stays put for an extended talk with the stranger who knows all there is to know about her life. *And none of it is good.* But, what was good, and what the Lord could see through his eyes only, was that her soil was ripe for the true goodness that reflected the pure love of God in her life. It was the Mother of all transformations for the Samaritan Woman, who, though seemingly childless with the focus being on her five husbands, grows from this moment on into the mother of what God has prepared for those who love him.

After the perfect soil of her faith brought forth through the loving honesty of her Jesus encounter, the Samaritan Woman's second best crop, her second best vegetable, was her perseverance. This too speaks to each of us, especially in these heightened times of pandemic and self-proclaimed devout Catholic leaders attacking their own faith's teachings on marriage, life, gender, and religious liberty. You know, the things that cut to our souls because of the profound, open-ended misrepresentation of Christianity. Perseverance is a virtue that trusts the great truth that God remains in control. And where God remains in control, there is true freedom, not any brand of false freedom that deceptively attacks God's most prized creation. All was good for the Samaritan Woman after her Jesus encounter. But we can be certain that some bad soil cropped up in her life, soil from down below if you know what I mean, causing her to stay the course, to persevere under trying circumstances.

Thank you to the *Red Sox Magazine* (I'm sorry, *Yankee Magazine*) for providing this week's Lenten image for us to carry forth for the next few weeks and longer. An image of the best soil anywhere in the world for asparagus (faith). Such soil is realized and known only in the human heart that loves Christ our Lord. It is found in the deepness of what we've been created for.

*Peace, Fr. Riley*

## **FROM THE PASTOR**

I recently read an article in *Yankee Magazine* (I wish they would change the name to *Red Sox Magazine*) about asparagus, and how some of the best asparagus in the world (yes, the world) is grown here in this state. They are grown by one farmer and his family in the western part of the state in towns you likely never heard of; Hadley, Hatfield, and Whately. I've heard of Hadley, but the other two were foreign to me until I read the article. What makes the asparagus grown in these towns on land owned and operated by the one family farmer is the combination of the soil (an ultra-rich ancient bed of glacial Lake Hitchcock formed eons ago), the temperate spring weather, and the Connecticut River. Anyone west of Springfield in this state deserves the best asparagus in the world. They are actually nice people out there, unlike the craziness east of Springfield reaching a crescendo in Boston.

The image I like here for the season of Lent is the perfect formation of the soil for any crop we may enjoy, the formation taking place over centuries and centuries, revealing how the hand of God the Creator remained at work after he spoke those famous words, "Let there be light." To think that up the road there is fertile land in this state that produces the best of any vegetable in the world is special. No need to brag, just be thankful.

This image plays perfectly into this week's Gospel of the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well who encounters the likes and presence of Jesus. Talk about perfect timing! Because of her moving encounter with Christ, she repents of her sins, chooses the life that God created for her, no longer living for the other one with the pitchfork, growing quickly into a Christian disciple who proclaims the goodness of God rather than wallowing in the life of a pagan who did anything and everything imaginable with her body that even God must have turned away from. The day she encountered our Lord at the famous well, her fertile land that had been ravaged by the rotten dust of the earth was now ripe for producing the world's best spiritual crop, a crop that grew forgiveness (including self-forgiveness), mercy, proper friendship with others, proper marriage with her husband, love of neighbor, the crop of self-respect, and most important, the crop of coming to know how to love God in humility and obedience. Her body, mind, heart, and soul instantly became the Christian soil of Hadley, Hatfield, and Whately, quickly growing into a disciple who produced fruit (and vegetables) for the One who calls us to him in every way.

The story of the Woman at the Well is without a doubt one of the great stories in all of the Bible. It has everything that produces good. The message is good. The characters are good actresses and actors. The supporting cast is the perfect supporting cast. The "Director" is the perfect Director, even rated higher than Stephen Spielberg. It has the perfect scenery of Jacob's Well. It has all the drama anyone could ever want in a biblical flick, with a former sinful woman running back to town to tell everyone that she had met someone who told her all the bad things about her life, and by doing so, *she actually came to love him because of his honesty*. Imagine that! It is the "perfect motion picture" that captures every award created for motion pictures. She would have needed a large, strong bag to carry off all the awards the Samaritan Woman would have won unanimously if an awards ceremony were part of the story.

And yet, there really is an awards ceremony as part of the story. What makes possible an awards ceremony beyond all award ceremonies, what grows in the perfect formation of her soil and what her soil produces that on the day of her meeting Jesus is her faith. She was ripe for faith. *Real faith, folks, real faith!* Not the false faith in worshipping human beings, or even her body and flesh. Today, the Samaritan Woman's former self would connect directly to present attacks on the sanctity of life, marriage, the self-destructive weirdness of transgender options, and whatever else we come up with that does not reflect the natural creation of God,

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**THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

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

**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.

**CRS RICE BOWL**

Boxes for the annual Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl collection may be found at each entrance to the Church. These boxes will be collected at the end of Lent and be forwarded to Catholic Relief Services through our Diocese. The central mission of CRS is to serve the poor and hungry in our country and throughout the world, addressing particularly any areas that involve natural disasters. Thank you.

**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!**