

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.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

March 21, 2021

MASS INTENTIONS

Sat.	Mar 20	4:00 PM	Quyen Nguyen, 3rd Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Mar 21	7:30 AM	Jeannette T. Burns, Brian B. Colonies, and Chuck Burns, from Family
		10:00 AM	George "Bucky" Sheehan, 1st Anniversary, from Family and Friends
Mon.	Mar 22	9:00 AM	Audrey Jean Stevens, from Family
Tues.	Mar 23	9:00 AM	Gerald P. Casey, from Mike Casey and Family
Wed.	Mar 24	9:00 AM	Franklin Daigneau, 1st Anniversary, from Family
Thurs.	Mar 25	8:00 AM	In Thanksgiving to God, from Young Shin
Sat.	Mar 27	4:00 PM	Vincenza Pultorak, 5th Anniversary, from Husband John
Sun.	Mar 28	7:30 AM	Eleanor Groden, from Family
		10:00 AM	

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.

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 24. In preparation for this class please read chapters 27 & 28. Masks are required and social distance will be practiced.

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/len-lectio-divina

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 sick in our Parish to be touched by God's healing and peace.*

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.

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 \$270.00. Thank you.

SCHEDULE FOR HOLY WEEK MASSES AND SERVICES

Our schedule for the upcoming Holy week celebrations are as follows: Mass on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. There is no Thursday morning Mass on Holy Thursday. Mass of the Lord's Supper, Holy Thursday, will be held at 7:00 p.m., with Adoration in our Church until 10:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross will be held at Noon on Good Friday. Our Good Friday Service will be held at 3:00 p.m. Our Easter Vigil Mass will begin at 7:30 p.m. And Easter Sunday Masses will be held at 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

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. 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.

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 28, PALM SUNDAY

Gospel Reading: Mark 11:1-10
1st Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm: 22
2nd Reading: Philippians 2:6-11
Reading of the Passion: Mark 14:1-15:47

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 3/14/2021

Sunday Ordinary (includes Online) \$ 3,171.00

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

WORCESTER, MA

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - Religious Education classes take place on Sunday, March 21st 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.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

Please join us on Easter Sunday at 10:00AM for the annual Easter Egg Hunt. The egg hunt will take place on the church grounds. Bring your own basket!

DEACON KEVIN & MICHELLE DEIGNAN MOTHER TERESA AWARD WINNERS

Congratulations to Deacon Kevin and Michelle Deignan for being named the winners of this year's Mother Teresa Pro-Life Award. The award will be presented to the Deignans by Bishop McManus at the Annual Pro-Life Mass at St. Paul's Cathedral in Worcester on Thursday, March 25 (Solemnity of the Annunciation) at the 12:10 p.m. Mass. Any parishioners who would like to be in attendance on behalf of Deacon Kevin and Michelle can do so by signing up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F054CAFAB2BA2F58-profile1> It would be nice to have a small contingent from our Parish be present for Deacon Kevin and Michelle's reception of this award that recognizes their commitment, work, and living out of the pro-life message that recognizes the dignity of all human life.

PARTNERS IN CHARITY

The Partners in Charity Campaign has begun in our Parish. Our Campaign Chairman, parishioner Bill Stanton, spoke briefly at each Mass last Sunday, and 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 have been placed at each entrance to the Church for anyone who has not received this information through a Diocesan mailing. With many parishioners now donating online, for those who do so, you can go to worcesterdiocese.org and scroll to the bottom of the page where can be found the Partners in Charity emblem. Click on the emblem and follow the directions for donating. Our Parish goal remains the same as in past years; \$88,500, and I pray that each parishioner will consider this year donating on behalf of our Parish. Thank you, Fr. Riley.

PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held last Sunday, March 14, can be found on the Parish Website under *Council Minutes*. Any parishioner with questions or comments from the minutes, please speak to or email 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 for this trip with only 10 seats available. 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.

POLAND TRIP INFORMATION NIGHT

Our Parish will hold an information night for the upcoming September trip to Poland. The information evening will take place on Tuesday, April 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the Church Basement. This is an excellent opportunity for anyone with an interest in joining us, as well as those who have signed up, to find out more information on this exciting trip and to ask questions. Some changes have been made to the original plans regarding price and flights that make the travel more accommodating for all. We hope to see you on April 6.

From the Pastor continued from the following page

However, one can only be obedient by way of trust. As mentioned above, we have to be able to trust "the higher power," be it God or a Bishop, or anyone else in that "higher" role (not your spouse who is equal), in order to ensure obedience as a virtue that will produce good. I think of the many religious Sisters and Brothers in their respective Religious Orders who can only remain obedient in ways of poverty, chastity, and all else if they trust the mission's cause and its leader(s). A bad leader will produce bad fruit, and a whole lot of disobedience that will tear at the foundation of their Order and the Church. Such Judas's will never succeed, because God Himself would have to lose in that scenario, but much harm can be done as we clearly see today.

So, instead of Judas, we zero in on the one he betrayed and his Mother as the perfection of obedience, producing good fruit in all they say and do. In today's second reading, we hear the words proclaimed, "he learned obedience from what he suffered," referring to Jesus. This is a very Christological human verse that dives deep into the fullness of Christ's humanity. We know that Jesus cannot suffer in his Divine nature, for God is unable to suffer. This is the condition we presently await in heaven. But to say that Jesus learned obedience through suffering addresses the wonder of the Incarnation. We know ourselves that suffering has a dramatic effect on our entire person. The greater our suffering, the greater capacity we hold to trust that God will make things right, either in this life or the next. For the obedience of Jesus to his Father to finish in a perfect state of human living over 33 years, he needed to be crucified for the sins of the world. His perfect obedience was consummated on Golgotha, the Place of the Skull, resulting in the gates of heaven opened three days later for all who have faith in Him. And, all who recognize the faith of *Christ* as the first action that wins life eternal for us.

For Jesus, obedience was a 9-letter word that led to a 6-letter word: Heaven. Our world today is overly consumed with a hopeless approach to the incredible beauty of obedience. Obedience is replaced with arrogance, obstinance, a lust for power, and cutthroat ways of living...all of which are the true 4-letter words. Obedience is a house built on rock, and not the sand of radical individualism. May we possess the wisdom to reflect on this greatest of virtues of our Lord, and how much it grounds and centers us in a godly life. If Judas was obedient, we all wouldn't be trying to figure out if he's in heaven or hell. We would know he's with the Lord. But that's not the case, because the truth is we don't know his eternal fate, unlike the other Apostles. What we do know is that healthy obedience, the virtue of obedience, is a pathway to the stairs of heaven. Let go of whatever needs to be let go of and seek to do God's will in this life. We get one shot at it, just like Jesus and Mary.

Peace, Fr. Riley

FROM THE PASTOR

Obedience is a four-letter word. Well, it has nine letters, but it's still a 4-letter word in this world of knocking heads. It seems many folks prefer clashing swords over and above obedience to God or authority. It's much more fun, right? Wrong.

In terms of our faith, I find obedience to be the freest virtue in the wide number of Christian virtues. Obviously, I made promises of obedience to my Bishop on the day of my ordination to the Diaconate, and then to Priesthood. Those promises of obedience do not subside or disappear over the length of years. If anything, a priest should work all the harder at being obedient to remain in a good place and good graces with the Lord Jesus, who was obedient even unto death. Priestly obedience to a Bishop is directly connected to a priest's obedience to God. Such obedience can be questioned if a Bishop has gone off the deep end and started proclaiming a Gospel that is not gospel at all. Or he instructs a priest to perform certain actions or teach certain beliefs that fly in the face of Jesus Christ, striking him like the servant of Caiaphas who slapped the Lord in the face. Fortunately for most priests, we don't have to deal with such spiritual horror. But there have been a few Bishops over the centuries that would fall into the "theologically wayward" category. And many priests also.

The models for obedience I see as being twofold: Christ Jesus, of course, who humbled himself all the way from the upper heavens to enter our lowly state for the primary purpose of dying for the world's condition of sin. In order for the Lord Jesus to accomplish this mission of death successfully in the fullness of his humanity that could die, and his divinity that could not die, it was absolutely essential for him to be obedient to the Father's will. A will that was written and drawn up by all the lawyers in heaven (I assume there are some there), approved by God the Father, and implemented by Jesus the Son. When it appeared that our Lord Jesus' humanity was about to get in the way of completing his mission successfully ("Father, if possible, take this cup from me, but not my will, but yours be done") our Savior drew himself back to the center of obedience and ploughed ahead to Golgotha, fulfilling to the glory of God the Father what began in Bethlehem. Actually, what began within Mary's womb on March 25 of that year in B.C. when Gabriel, who stands before God, stood before the Virgin from Nazareth asking her to be the Mother of the Most High, for human life begins at conception. Please inform your nearest politician of this holy truth of God.

And since Mary has entered the conversation this weekend, we move to the second model of obedience that says to our world, "You need not look any further, nor search any cervices or black astrological holes, for the number one created version of perfect human obedience. Her name is Mary, the most beautiful woman God ever created." Mary's perfect beauty is found in her perfect obedience to God's will. Interestingly, Mary is the only person who could have said no to God and actually disappoint the Lord. If we say no to God for whatever reason, he doesn't stop loving us, but he'll find someone else to close the deal, if you know what I mean. With Mary, either she was going to be the Mother of our Savior, or we were not going to have a Savior. But God knows all things in one, knowing beforehand that Our Lady's heart was in perfect sync with the Heart of God.

An interesting paradox concerning obedience in the relationship between this Mother and Son is the way in which Jesus was obedient to his parents while growing up in Nazareth. Yes, the Son of God was obedient to his Mother in his human nature. And why not? She was created as perfectly sinless. Mary's obedience to God's will of the Spirit creating life in her womb, of bringing her child to term, of raising him with St. Joseph in Nazareth in the ways of Judaism, and all the while being his foremost disciple, tells us that the virtue of obedience is a 9-letter word, and not the 4-letter word our world seems to make it.

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THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Sat.	Mar 20	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Mar 21	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Mar 22	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Mar 23	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Mar 24	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Mar 25	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Mar 27	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Mar 28	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

PARTNERS WITH CHRIST IN MINISTRY: Jn 12:26;
“Everyone who lives in this body knows that he must be committed to that special task or ministry to which he has given himself in this life as a participant and a laborer, and he ought not to doubt that in that everlasting age he will also be the partner of him whose servant and companion he now wishes to be, according to what the Lord says, ‘If anyone serves me, let him follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be.’ For just as the kingdom of the devil is gained by deceiving people with vices, so the kingdom of God is possessed in purity of heart and spiritual knowledge by practicing the virtues. And where the kingdom of God is, there without a doubt is eternal life, and where the kingdom of the devil is, there - it is not to be doubted - are death and hell. Whoever is there cannot praise the Lord.

**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!**