

Immaculate Conception Parish



Please visit our website at
www.icworc.com and Facebook

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-1:30pm, T: 9:30am-1:30pm

W: 9:30am-1:30pm, F: 9:30am-1:30pm

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**

ROBERT NOBERINI, **PARISH OFFICE MANAGER**

MATTHEW FOSTER, **PASTORAL COUNCIL CHAIRMAN**

LYNDA MONAHAN, **SAFE ENVIRONMENT COORDINATOR**

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)

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.

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).

MASS INTENTIONS

Sat.	Dec 01	4:00 PM	In Thanksgiving to God, from Kathye and Steven
Sun.	Dec 02	7:30 AM	Dorothy McIntire, 1st Anniversary, from Family
		10:00 AM	June Hastings, 1st Anniversary, from Family
Mon.	Dec 03	9:00 AM	(<i>St. Francis Xavier</i>)
Tues.	Dec 04	9:00 AM	Health and Intentions of Gail McCauliff, (<i>St. John Damascene</i>)
Wed.	Dec 05	9:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Thurs.	Dec 06	8:00 AM	(<i>St. Nicholas</i>)
Fri.	Dec 07	4:00 PM	Cynthia Pupelis, 7th Anniversary, from Family, (<i>St. Ambrose</i>)
Sat.	Dec 08	8:00 AM	John Davies, 7th Anniversary, from Family (<i>The Immaculate Conception</i>)
		4:00 PM	Jeannette Lindsay, 10th Anniversary, from the Herrmann and Ciccolini Families
Sun.	Dec 09	7:30 AM	Louis Jennette, 3rd Anniv
		10:00 AM	Francis, Lucille, and Thomas Dunn, from Family

THIS WEEK the text for The First Sunday of Advent, may be found at #880 in the *Journeysongs* hymnal.

FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS MASS AND ROSARY PROCESSION

All are welcome to Blessed Sacrament Church, 551 Pleasant Street, Worcester on Friday, Dec. 28, 8:30 a.m. for Mass followed at 9:15 by a Prayerful Rosary procession with the Blessed Sacrament to the abortion clinic. We will return to Blessed Sacrament Church praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, followed by Benediction. Join us as we pray for The Holy Innocents, for babies lost to abortion and for all unborn babies and for their moms and dads.

TRIP TO GETTYSBURG, EMMITSBURG, AND HARPERS FERRY

Consider joining Fr. Riley and others from our Parish on a 2019 spring trip from May 13-17 to southeastern Pennsylvania (Gettysburg), western Maryland (Emmitsburg), and Harper's Ferry, WV where three states (Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia) and two rivers (Potomac and Shenandoah) meet in one of the most beautiful areas of our country. The trip is a combination of history and our Catholic faith, exploring and learning the Battle of Gettysburg, where a number of Worcester soldiers were engaged, the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and Grotto at Mt. St. Mary's College, and historic Harper's Ferry, well known for Lewis and Clark, and John Brown. It will be a memorable trip for those who wish to join us at the affordable price of \$850.00, which includes motorcoach bus for 5 days and 4 nights, hotel, and other amenities including meals and tour guides. Flyers and a sign-up sheet can be found at each entrance to the Church, as well as online at www.icworc.com. The trip limited to 45 travelers. Currently there are 16 people who have signed up for this trip, and this number will be updated each week. Now is the time to sign up with much interest being shown in this trip.

RCIA CLASSES HAVE BEGUN

Classes for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) began. The next class is Monday, December 10, from 6:30-7:45 p.m. These classes will culminate with reception of the Sacraments at the Easter Vigil in April, 2019. All classes will be held at the rectory, unless there are numerous candidates. If so, and we will move classes to the Church Basement. The RCIA Program is for adults 17 and older who have not been baptized in the Catholic Church or were baptized in an ecclesial community where the Catholic Church does not recognize it as a valid baptism. The program is also for adults who have been validly baptized in the Catholic Church or another Christian community, but have not received their First Communion or Confirmation in the Catholic Church. For youth and children 16 and under who have not been baptized, have not received their 1st Communion (after the 2nd grade), or have not been Confirmed, such students will need to attend Religious Education classes. Any questions regarding the above possibilities can be directed to Fr. Riley before or after Mass, to Mary Sycks (Administrator of Religious Education), or call the rectory at 508-754-8419.

RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

OUR BODIES SHALL BE MADE GLORIOUS: Luke 21: "He says that they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Christ will not come secretly or obscurely but as God and Lord in glory suitable for deity. He will transform all things for the better, he will renew creation and refashion the nature of people to what it was at the beginning. He said, 'When these things come to pass, lift up your heads and look upward, for your redemption is near.' The dead will rise. This earthly and infirm body will put off corruption and will clothe itself with incorruption by Christ's gift. He grants those that believe in him to be conformed to the likeness of his glorious body."

St. Cyril of Alexandria (378-444)

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE FOR URBAN MISSIONARIES

Tags for our annual Christmas Giving Tree on behalf of Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope will be placed in the Church this Sunday, December 2. Tags may be taken from the tree and returned with the gift by December 16, the day all gifts will be picked up. This gives a window of 2 weeks to return each gift. Urban Missionaries has asked that gifts not be wrapped, but placed in a bag or box, reason being the environmental concern to save paper. Thank you to all our parishioners who assist in this wonderful Christmas ministry for needy children throughout our city and Worcester County.

EMMANUEL RADIO CHRISTMAS BROADCAST DEC. 6th

"Light a Candle & Light the World" on 1230AM, 970AM, & 101.1FM Emmanuel Catholic Radio's live Christmas broadcast, "Christ be Our Light" 7am-6pm on Thursday, December 6. Tune in to hear Bishop McManus and when you make your Christmas donation to Emmanuel Catholic Radio, we will light a candle for your special intention in honor or memory of someone you care about. Support Catholic radio with your tax-deductible donation and help us light 101 candles to make a brighter Christmas for all. Proceeds fund our Catholic Schools Essay Contest Visit: www.1230radio.com. Phone: 508-767-1020 Mail: Emmanuel Radio, P.O. Box 20027 Worcester, MA 01602.

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9th, THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

1st Reading: Baruch 5:1-9
 Psalm: 126
 2nd Reading: Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11
 Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 11/18/2018

Sunday Ordinary \$ 3,229.00
 Campaign for Human Development \$ 683.00
 Fall Fuel \$ 307.00

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 11/25/2018

Sunday Ordinary \$ 3,603.00
 Campaign for Human Development \$ 71.00
 Fall Fuel \$ 150.00
 Society of St. Vincent DePaul \$ 545.00

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Religious Education classes take place on Sunday, December 2nd at 8:45AM-9:45AM for children in grades Pre-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.

Student of the Week Our Student of the Week is Isabella Tassone! Isabella is a fourth grade student in our Religious Education Program. She is an active participant in the Children's Liturgy and class. Isabella is a new Altar Server. She loves participating in the Christmas Pageant and greets all the Sunday morning Religious Education students to hand out the Prayer of the Day. She is a wonderful example of living our faith. Congratulations Isabella!

Children's Christmas Pageant All children at Immaculate Conception are invited to join us for Christmas Pageant rehearsals on the following dates: December 2nd and 9th at 11:00am-11:45am in the church & Dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 15th at 11:30am in the church. We have many roles for all the children. If your child is interested in participating please contact Mary Sycks 508-868-8119. Any adults who would like to volunteer as costume coordinators or "herders" to guide our littlest angels and sheep the morning of the performance please contact Mary Sycks.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT Please join us on Sunday December 16th at 9:00am for the Children's Christmas Pageant. We hope that everyone will be able to join us for this very special event. The pageant will take place in the church. Please stay for the 10:00am Mass following the Christmas Pageant for the Children's Liturgy.

HOPE FOR HOUSING FOOD CARDS

Please consider purchasing food cards for the purpose of helping to stop homelessness here in Central Massachusetts. 5% of each card purchased will be donated by the participating grocery chain, while the purchase receives the full value of the card that is purchased. The money raised from this ministry has helped to prevent hundreds of families from being homeless, a situation that no one in our country should have to experience. Last week at Immaculate Conception our parishioners purchased \$200.00 in cards. **Thank you** to those who continue to participate in this very worthy program.

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 who have been away from the Sacrament of Reconciliation for years, that they return to God's merciful and healing grace.*

BIBLE STUDY ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

Fr. Riley will be holding a weekly evening Bible Study to be held in the Rectory from 6:30-7:30 p.m. The next Wednesday we will meet will be November 28. We will read, study, and comment on the Gospel of Luke for the duration of the Bible Study. Please bring your Bible, reading Chapter 4 of Luke's Gospel as preparation for the next class. All are invited to attend.

From the Pastor continued from the following page

The gathering has grown, however, into a Worcester December handshake, a Worcester December hug, and a Worcester December kiss of friendship. Although many who are present carry within their hearts some hard emotions caused by the crosses of life, there truly is a sense of unity that occurs each December 3 on Franklin St., undergirded by the unity shown by six firefighters almost two decades ago, and further undergirded by the everlasting sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Whatever one's faith in the crowd, whether strong or non-existent, the bond created each year is a bond of humble respect and love.

December is a month to remember in its unique ways. The same as November with Thanksgiving, July with the beach, or August at Gettysburg for yours truly, or May for mothers and June for fathers. Each month of the year brings its own unique joys and challenges. December is a month in our city, among other things, of remembrance for sacrifice. For us Christians, it's a new Advent that brings a time of hope and peace, a December anticipation of him who loves us with the greatest love.

Peace, Fr. Riley

FREE ADVENT CONCERT AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

On December 2, the first Sunday of Advent, our Parish will hold a free concert in the Church at 2:00 p.m. Tidings of Great Joy will be an afternoon of special music featuring sopranos Jane Shivick, Bridget Klofft, and pianist Olga Rogach. This concert is seasonal, sacred, classical, and Advent-themed. Consider joining us for this concert with these three outstanding, professional musicians who will give us a concert we will not soon forget. This concert is open to the public, so be sure to invite family, friends, and anyone who enjoys listening to some of the best music – live music – they will hear this Advent season.

PAMPERED CHEF EVENT, DECEMBER 6TH!

Please join us for a Pampered Chef Holiday-themed event! Pampered Chef consultant Bridget Klofft will teach some yummy holiday-themed appetizers, share some fun food tips and demo the latest cooking-tool innovations. The evening will also include prize drawings and a shopping opportunity, just in time to make cooking and gifting easier for Christmas! The event will take place in the Immaculate Conception Coffee Shop on Thursday 12/6 @6:30pm. (Best for ages 13 and older.) Your RSVP is appreciated and can be emailed to bridgetbakes@yahoo.com. Lets "cook up" some fun!

MARCH FOR LIFE REGISTRATION INFORMATION IS NOW AVAILABLE!

Please join us for the Diocese of Worcester's bus trip to the 46th annual March for Life in Washington, DC. Buses leave on Thurs. Jan. 17 after the 7:30 p.m. Mass at St. Paul's Cathedral, travel to Washington for the March for Life on Jan. 18, followed by the return trip to Worcester. Cost is \$80 per seat for registrations postmarked by December 31, and \$95 thereafter. For more information, and to download registration forms, visit www.worcesterdiocese.org/respect-life. Can't attend this year but want to help? Consider making a donation that will help defray expenses for our students who want to attend but might otherwise find it difficult to do so. Thank you!

PRAYER SHAWLS

We have a few prayer shawls in our possession that we would like to give out to anyone who feels the need of having one. Or, if you know of someone who may be dealing with cancer or any other disease and would benefit from the comfort and peace of a prayer shawl, please speak with Fr. Riley. We thank the Prayer Shawl Group at Our Lady of Good Counsel in West Boylston for making and donating the beautiful work of their shawls to us.

CHRISTMAS FLOWER ENVELOPES

Envelopes for Christmas Flowers will be left at each entrance to the Church beginning December 2, the first Sunday of Advent. Donations from these envelopes help to offset the cost of Christmas flowers that adorn our altar and other areas of the sanctuary throughout the Christmas season. Also, the envelopes will be placed on our altar throughout the Christmas season, being remembered at each Mass. Thank you.

FROM THE PASTOR

Now that it feels like winter is half over after a cold November, we move into the beautiful month of December when Christmas lights hang off houses, lit Christmas trees can be seen through windows, and what seems like the inevitability of a white Christmas this year with some early snow. The mood is in the air. Not the Black Friday or Cyber Monday mood, but rather the mood of preparing for a special time, a special moment, a most holy and special birth. The colors in the Church change from the green of Ordinary Time, to white last week for Christ the King, to the purple of Advent. It's a time of preparation, a time of adjustment, a time for seeking repentance, a time one again of joyful anticipation.

Many of us carry within our hearts memories that have occurred at this time of the year. Many couples were engaged during the month of December, just before or after Christmas, bringing, we pray, a lasting joy that leads to husband and wife, children, and eventually grandchildren. What really took place in the question, "Will you marry me?" was the start of a lifelong relationship that leads to many joys, some challenges for sure, and the eventual infinite joy of togetherness in God's Kingdom. Many of us carry within our December hearts also the memories of Church being a joyful place of community, fellowship, and a place where Christ has been encountered in profound ways, such as the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which our 2nd-grade students will be receiving come December 15. That day will be, we pray, a December remembrance for the children, knowing that God is merciful, filled with compassion, and always and forever calls us back to His loving embrace.

For many in the community of the city of Worcester, December is also a time to remember the loss of six firefighters on a cold December Friday night 19 years ago, a memory seared into the consciousness of this large town-small city community, as well as the loss of another firefighter seven years ago in 2011 on the cold morning of the feast of the Immaculate Conception. We know we hand all things over to God by way of judgment and mercy, trusting that he loves us unconditionally. What Jesus accomplished for all of us on the Cross does not ever go away, alternating days somehow where he loves us more one day and not so much another. His love is consistent, whatever the events that happen, from death to divorce, from anger to bad choices. One thing remains certain; His love is everlasting. He certainly does not love some of the choices we make as individuals and a culture, such as what we've done in the areas of abortion and marriage. But his love is a continuous call to conversion, which the Church very much needs to proclaim to the world, as opposed to simply trying to make people feel better.

Being present over the past decade for the events that take place regarding the loss of our city's firefighters in December, I've seen a solemn gathering come together in friendship and love, a gathering of people who appear in the early evening hours of December 3 in front of the now Franklin St. Fire Station. This gathering is truly a coming together of people now familiar with each other to commemorate sacrifices made on that very spot which fully reconciles with the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. The imitation of the events of that fateful night of Him who died for the world is so vivid and close, one could get away with thinking those guys carried their own cross inside the building in the early hours of that evening, made the ultimate sacrifice in their search to save life, and now have souls that have been raised on high by the hand of God who brought them home.

This gathering each year is now goes beyond recalling the sacrifice of those firefighters, although their sacrifice is where the gathering begins and ends. We enter the property with their memory in our hearts, and we leave the same way.

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THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Sat.	Dec 01	2:30 PM 2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Rosary Confession Mass
Sun.	Dec 02	7:30 AM 10:00 AM 2:00 PM	Mass Mass Advent Concert
Mon.	Dec 03	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Dec 04	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Dec 05	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Dec 06	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Fri.	Dec 07	4:00 PM	Mass
Sat.	Dec 08	8:00 AM 2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Mass Confession Mass
Sun.	Dec 09	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

PARISH APPRECIATION DINNER IN DECEMBER

Our Parish will hold its annual Appreciation Dinner on Saturday, December 15 at 5:30 p.m. in the Church Basement. This dinner is for everyone who assists in the entire scope of our Parish ministries along with their family members, from altar servers, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, those who collect at Sunday Mass, employees of the Parish, etc., etc., - any and all ministries, large and small. Please call the rectory between now and December 5 to place your names on a list so the appropriate amount of food can be purchased for this event.

**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!**