

# Immaculate Conception Parish



Please visit our website at  
[www.icworc.com](http://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 08	8:00 AM	John Davies, 7th Anniversary, from Family (The Immaculate Conception)
		4:00 PM	Jeannette Lindsay, 10th Anniversary, from the Herrmann and Ciccolini Families
Sun.	Dec 09	7:30 AM	Louis Jennette, 3rd Anniversary, from Family
		10:00 AM	Francis, Lucille, and Thomas Dunn, from Family
Mon.	Dec 10	9:00 AM	Health and Intentions of Gail McCauliff
Tues.	Dec 11	9:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception, ( <i>St. Damasus I</i> )
Wed.	Dec 12	9:00 AM	The Intentions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, ( <i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i> )
Thurs.	Dec 13	8:00 AM	The Souls in Purgatory, ( <i>St. Lucy</i> )
Sat.	Dec 15	4:00 PM	Esther Simone, from Family
Sun.	Dec 16	7:30 AM	Richard Gamache, 2nd Anniversary, from Family
		10:00 AM	John Buczek & Mark Buczek, from Friend; John W. White, 20th Anniversary, from Family

**THIS WEEK** the text for The Second Sunday of Advent, may be found at #883 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 signup sheet can be found at each entrance to the Church, as well as online at [www.icworc.com](http://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.

**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 December 12. 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.

**HOLY HOUR TO PRAY FOR PRIESTS, DECEMBER 14th**

On Friday, December 14 a holy hour to pray for priests will take place from 7pm to 8pm at Immaculate Conception. This holy hour will consist of adoration, a short reflection, the rosary, silent prayer and benediction. This holy hour will be held on the second Friday of each month.

**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.

**RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

**LUKE THE PHYSICIAN APPLIES REMEDIES THROUGH JOHN:** Lk 3:10-14; "St. Luke has introduced three groups of people that ask John questions – the multitudes, the tax collectors, and the soldiers. Just as a skillful physician applies to each sickness a suitable and fitting remedy, so also the Baptist gave to each group, representing a mode of life, useful and appropriate advice. He told the multitudes to practice mutual kindness as they strive for repentance. In the case of the tax collectors, he put an end to unrestrained taxation. Then, very wisely, he told the soldiers to oppress no one but be content with their wages."

*St. Cyril of Alexandria (378-444)*

**ANNUAL CHRISMAS GIVING TREE FOR URBAN MISSIONARIES**

Thank you to all parishioners who have taken a gift tag for our Christmas Giving Tree on behalf of Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope. All tags need to be 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.

**PARISH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE AND SANTA CLAUS FOR CHILDREN DECEMBER 16**

The Parish Activities Committee will be serving food, refreshments and camaraderie in the Coffee Shop for Dec.16. This will be a Christmas breakfast with free refreshments for all. Santa Claus and his Elf will also be there to greet all the Children after the 10am Mass.

Note: If anyone can volunteer for the Activities Committee, please call Jim Hester at 508-852-3473, or email at [bevhes-ter13@gmail.com](mailto:bevhes-ter13@gmail.com). Thank you.

**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.

**ST MICHAEL PRAYER AT ALL MASSES**

Bishop McManus has asked all Parishes in our Diocese to recite the St. Michael Prayer at all Masses. This centuries-old prayer is for the Archangel's protection of the Church against the wiles of the Devil. The prayer, at this time, will be recited after the Prayer after Communion, taking about 20 seconds to recite the entire prayer. I humbly ask that all parishioners join in the recitation of this holy prayer for the Church. For those who do not have the prayer memorized, cards have been inserted into the front flyleaf of all the JourneySong books throughout the Church. Thank you for your assistance regarding this holy, prayerful matter. Fr. Riley

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** Religious Education classes take place on Sunday, December 9th 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 Ben Dobson! Ben is a fourth grade student in our Religious Education Program. He contributes his knowledge of our faith with enthusiasm. Ben attends Mass weekly with his family. He is always willing to help people out with anything they need. Ben has raked leaves, shoveled snow and helped classmates with projects. Ben participates in the Christmas Pageant and attends many Parish Activities with his family. He is a wonderful example of living our faith. Congratulations Ben!

**Children's Christmas Pageant** All children at Immaculate Conception are invited to join us for Christmas Pageant rehearsals on the following dates: December 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.

**HOLY HOUR THIS COMING TUESDAY AND FRIDAY**

Our Parish will hold its monthly Holy Hour this Tuesday, December 11, at 6:00 p.m. in the Church. Come and spend an hour with the Lord in silence, ending with Benediction, the singing of Tantum Ergo, and recitation of the Divine Praises. Also this week, Fr. Richard Reidy, a native son of Immaculate Conception, will be holding a Holy Hour for Priests on Friday, December 14 from 7:00-8:00 p.m. in the Church. This Holy Hour will consist of a short reflection by Fr. Reidy, as well as adoration and benediction.

**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.

*From the Pastor continued from the following page*

He's not in the hearts of those who seek ill-will toward others in the crowd. But He's certainly present in those of simple hearts who cry out for something better than what they've known. To remove the plight of the poor from our Christian faith is equivalent to removing God from a big section of our hearts. Personally, I prefer not to take such a gamble, fearing my own salvation. December 9 is a glorious day in the Church this year as we celebrate the 2nd Sunday of Advent, drawing closer to the birth of our Savior. However, we don't allow the feast of St. Juan Diego to slip by unnoticed. As Christ is born in the simplicity of a manger a few miles from the holy city of Jerusalem, we also turn some attention to Tepeyac, aka Guadalupe, where simplicity and faith were cause for the Virgin Mary to appear to a Mexican man who perfected these holy virtues. May our lives grow in Christian simplicity as lived to perfection by St. Juan Diego, and who knows, maybe the Queen of Heaven will appear at your front door one morning as you go out to buy your coffee at Dunkin Donuts. If so, I'd love to hear all about it.

*Peace, Fr. Riley*

**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](http://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!

**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 \$210.00 in cards. **Thank you** to those who continue to participate in this very worthy program.

**YOUNG ADULT THEOLOGY ON TAP**

Join us for the next Theology on Tap on Tuesday, Dec. 11 at Compass Tavern in Worcester! Our speaker will be Fr. Nick Desimone and his topic will be "*The Last Things*." Join us as we dive deeper into the Church's teachings on the four last things - Death, Judgement, Heaven, and Hell. Compass Tavern is located at 90 Harding St. in Worcester. Doors open for food and drinks at 6:30. The speaker will begin around 7:15. Open to all young adults ages 18-39.

**PRAYER AND CALL TO ACTION REGARDING ADDICTION**

An interfaith prayer service for hope and recovery will be hosted by Blessed Sacrament Parish on Tuesday, Dec. 11 at 7 pm. Come pray with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim friends for guidance in this matter that affects us all. This is an intergenerational service - family focused. Bring your friends.

**READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16th, THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

1st Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-18a  
Isaiah 12:2-6  
2nd Reading: Philippians 4:4-7  
Gospel: Luke 3:10-18

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 12/02/2018**

Sunday Ordinary	\$ 3,665.00
Retired Religious	\$ 60.00
Fall Fuel	\$ 175.00
Online Donations for November 2018	\$ 1,095.00

## **FROM THE PASTOR**

As we celebrate the 2nd Sunday of Advent this year, falling on December 9, the Church bypasses the feast day that would normally fall on this date, the feast of St. Juan Diego. Lest we miss out on this joyful Church happening from December 9-12 in the nation of Mexico in the year 1531, it's good for us to give the apparition and St. Juan Diego the attention it deserves. The beautiful stain-glassed window of Our Lady and St. Juan can be seen in the second window down in our Church on the Chadwick Street side. We thank Fr. Connors and whoever else for placing the stain-glassed version of this apparition in our Church for as long as the building stands.

There are a few faithful thoughts we can draw from this heavenly, holy event almost five centuries ago that took place in the Mexican hills of Tepayac (in Spanish it means Guadalupe). The first is quite obvious; that Mary really did appear to St. Juan. As we prepare for the birth of our Savior for another year, the love of Mary that shown forth in her carrying the Son of God in her womb continues to be shown down through the centuries in the most profound ways by her appearances that are seen by chosen people living in certain places. The ones who have witnessed these apparitions, be it St. Juan, St. Bernadette, the children at Fatima, or the holy folks in Knoch, Ireland, are chosen people. It's not by happenstance or luck, shall we say, that they saw the Blessed Mother in all of her indescribable beauty. God can choose whoever He wants for an experience of such incredible joy, and He will and He has. God bless them, I say, for being the ones chosen by the Most High for the Mother of His Son to appear to in their earthly lives. How blessed they are!

But Mary's appearance to St. Juan Diego is the first of the more popular "modern day" apparitions the Church has approved as sacred, holy, and real. Our Lady wasn't sleeping in heaven for almost 1500 years after her Assumption before being drawn to the hills of Mexico to a Catholic guy filled with faith. All is accomplished in God's time, as we like to say, and, for God's purpose. Blessed Mary's appearance was the real deal at Guadalupe, and we give thanks to Jesus for sending His Mother to draw ever so close to us in her appearance to St. Juan.

Second, Mary's appearance to a peasant with deep faith tells us much about God's design, and to whom he includes in His design in ways we have no control over, which is a good thing. From the time of Christ and well before, the poor have been God's people, as well as the simple-hearted and the many who cry out to Him. God defends the poor who have no one else protect them.

In the time of Christ, he first called the fishermen, then others, including a tax collector. Most of those Jesus personally called were simple people, simple in the sense that there was no grab for power in their lives, no heavy search for wealth, no burdening others for a living, no drive for fame, and men and women who represented the goodness that God created in the human person. Remember, our Lord called the Apostles for a most special purpose; to be witnesses to his resurrection and to build up his Church after he ascended. But he also called many women along the way, the first being the Holiest of all Women that appeared to St. Juan Diego in Mexico, as well as the likes of Mary Magdalene and the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well. All were his Disciples.

However, God favors the poor and those who depend upon Him. St. Juan Diego certainly classifies as a poor peasant with faith that moved mountains. It's not difficult by any means to understand why Blessed Mary appeared to this 16th century disciple who was truly clean of heart. It is well for us to remember in our time that God favors immigrants who search for acceptance, freedom, and a better chance at life. If someone were to ask me if God is in the caravan, I wouldn't hesitate to answer, "You bet He is!"

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**THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

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
Mon.	Dec 10	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Dec 11	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Dec 12	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Dec 13	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Dec 15	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Dec 16	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

**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 homeless who suffer from the cold at this time of year, that they will find needed temporary shelter and eventual permanent shelter.*

**FOOD PANTRY NEEDS**

Thank you to all parishioners who donate to our food pantry throughout the year. Such donations greatly assist in feeding the hungry who come to our door each Monday. At this time, the food pantry is in need of peanut butter, jelly, and pasta, as well as soups, tuna, and canned vegetables. 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!**