

# 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.	Jan 05	4:00 PM	John White, from Family
Sun.	Jan 06	7:30 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
		10:00 AM	Thomas Dube, 5th Anniversary, from His Mother
Mon.	Jan 07	9:00 AM	In Thanks Giving for a Special Intention, ( <i>St. Raymond of Penafort</i> )
Tues.	Jan 08	9:00 AM	Christopher Roy, Month Mind, from Parish Family
Wed.	Jan 09	9:00 AM	Bea Hickey & Mary Zereski, from Family
Thurs.	Jan 10	8:00 AM	Norman Lovely, 5th Anniversary, from His Wife
Sat.	Jan 12	4:00 PM	Virginia H. Murphy, 5th Anniversary, from Family
Sun.	Jan 13	7:30 AM	
		10:00 AM	Therese Cronican, 25th Anniversary, from Daughter

**THIS WEEK** the text for The Feast of the Holy Family may be found at #896 in the *Journeysongs* hymnal.

**PARTNERS IN CHARITY FOR 2019**

For any parishioners who may have received a letter/donation envelope for Partners in Charity for 2019, it is because our Parish will be conducting this year's campaign in the months of January and February, to be finished on February 28. This 2-month span of time for the annual campaign that normally lasts 4-5 months is shortened because of the Diocesan Capital Campaign that will follow immediately after the close of Partners in Charity. The Diocesan Capital Campaign, in which every Parish in the Diocese will participate, will occur from March through the end of June, a span of 4 months. More information concerning both campaigns for our Parish will be forthcoming soon. Thank you, Fr. Riley

**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 all who struggle in the cold weather, especially the elderly and disabled, for their protection and well-being.*

**FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS**

The Sacred Music Series at St. John Guardian of Our Lady Parish in Clinton continues with a special Festival of Lessons and Carols on Saturday, Jan. 5 at 7:30 p.m. Based on the Office of Matins for the Feast of the Epiphany, this festive ceremony will feature Scripture readings, the singing of beloved Christmas and Epiphany carols, and sacred choral music led by the Upper School Chorus of the Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Still River, under the direction of Michael Olbash. As always, admission is free and families are welcome. Freewill donations will be accepted at the door for the benefit of the First Concern Pregnancy Resource Center of Clinton. St. John is located at 80 Union St. (Routes 62 and 70) and is ramp accessible. We hope to see you for what promises to be a beautiful evening!

**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!

**RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

**THEY FOUND WHAT THEY SOUGHT:** Matthew 2:10; "In this way marvel was linked to marvel: the magi were worshipping, the star was going before them. All this is enough to captivate a heart made of stone. If it had been only the wise men or only the prophets or only the angels who had said these things, they might have been disbelieved. But now with all this confluence of varied evidence, even the most skeptical mouths are stopped. Moreover, the star, when it stood over the child, held still. This itself demonstrates a power greater than any star: first to hide itself, then to appear, then to stand still. From this all who beheld were encouraged to believe. This is why the magi rejoiced. They found what they were seeking. They had proved to be messengers of truth. Their long journey was not without fruit. Their longing for the Anointed One was fulfilled. He who was born was divine. They recognized this in their worship."

**TRIP TO GETTYSBURG, EMMITSBURG, & 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 22 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 hold 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 January 9. We will read, study, and comment on the Gospel of Luke for the duration of the Bible Study. Please bring your Bible, reading Chapter 8 of Luke's Gospel as preparation for the next class. All are invited to attend.

**CHURCH DECORATION THANK YOU!**

***Thank you*** to all the holy women in our Parish who helped to decorate the Church for the Christmas season. The Church has looked beautiful from Christmas Eve forward thanks to the imagination, hard work, and dedication of this group of ladies who placed the Christmas Tree, all flowers and decorations in the sanctuary and throughout the Church, leaving a mark of beauty for all to enjoy. We are blessed, and we extend sincere thanks to all who participated in making our Church so beautiful for this joy-filled season.

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

WORCESTER, MA

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** Religious Education classes take place on Sunday, January 6th 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

### THE WORD OF THE LORD

“Fidelity to God’s word leads us to point out that nowadays this institution (Church) is in many ways under attack from the current mentality. In the face of widespread confusion in the sphere of affectivity, and the rise of ways of thinking which trivialize the human body and sexual differentiation, the word of God reaffirms the original goodness of the human being, created as man and woman and called to a love which is faithful, reciprocal, and fruitful.”

*The Word of the Lord, Verbum Domini, Pope Benedict XVI, 2010*

### PARISH ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Our Parish Activities Committee will be serving delicious food and refreshments in the Connors Coffee Shop after the 7:30 and 10:00 Masses this Sunday. Come and enjoy a hot drink and delicious sandwich after Mass. The Parish Activities Committee is always looking for new members to assist with planning and implementation of numerous events throughout the year for our Parish. Please consider joining and performing an easy ministry that benefits the Parish in many ways.

### 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 \$360.00 in cards. **Thank you** to those who continue to participate in this very worthy program.

### READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 13th, THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

1st Reading: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7  
Psalm 29  
2nd Reading: Acts 10:34-38  
Gospel: Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 12/23/2018

Sunday Ordinary	\$ 5,678.00
Retired Religious	\$ 127.00
Fall Fuel	\$ 300.00
Christmas Flowers	\$ 75.00
Total 2018 Christmas Donations	\$ 7,267.00
Total Online Donations for December 2018	\$ 1,102.50

*From the Pastor continued from the following page*

And second, the Star is like the Holy Spirit, the 3rd Person on the Trinity leading us to the 2nd Person on the Trinity. Love leading us to Love. The Spirit truly led the Magi across the desert, not just for safety’s sake, but because in their hearts they sought to encounter the Newborn King of the Universe. They wanted to be close to Christ, which applies to us also. By staying true to our mission of seeking Christ each day, the Spirit, the Star, will lead us to where we need to be without the awful emotion of feeling spiritually lost.

My prayer for all our parishioners this New Year is that God will lead us in our ways, stay close to us, and show us what direction to take, especially after prayer and preparation on our part. Like the Magi, we all seek the presence of Christ. May the Star lead us to the place we seek.

*Peace, Fr. Riley*

### TAIZE IN WORCESTER

The Worcester Taize group gathers at Blessed Sacrament Church, 551 Pleasant St., Worcester. The next service is Jan. 13 at 7 pm. The Taize tradition is a style of sacred music and prayer developed in France after World War II by Catholics and Protestants to come together in song and prayer for peace in the world and unity in the Christian faith. Songbooks available to sing along. To sing with the choir, please contact Will Raymond at 508-775-3847 or will@rbusinessservices.com.

**Conversation with Bishop McManus**, will air as follows: (available on your eCatholic parish website if you use the Featured Program drag and drop icon)

<b>Charter Communications</b> WCTR TV3 on Ch. 193	<b>Saturday, Jan. 5 at 6 p.m.</b> Rebroadcast on the following: <b>Sunday at 6 a.m. &amp; Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.</b>
<b>WCCA TV13</b> (Worcester Ch. 194)	<b>Tuesday, Jan. 8 at 8 p.m.</b>
<b>ALL LOCATIONS – via the internet</b>	Watch online anytime at worcesterdiocese.org

### 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.

### DIVINE MERCY RETREAT IN WEBSTER

“Divine Mercy in the Second Greatest Story Ever Told” is a dramatic 10-session journey featuring best-selling author and popular speaker Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC. Join us at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church Rectory, 18 E. Main St., Webster, beginning Wednesday, Jan.23: TWO SESSIONS offered, 10:00-11:30 am or 7:45-9:00 pm and continuing every Wednesday (no class, Ash Wednesday, March 6) For more information or to register for the study, contact the Parish Office @ 508 943 3140 or via email: alkotkin@aol.com. Registration deadline Jan 6, 2019.

### THE FACE OF MERCY

“Mercy is the very foundation of the Church’s life. All of her pastoral activity should be caught up in the tenderness she makes present to believers; nothing in her preaching and in her witness to the world can be lacking in mercy. The Church’s very credibility is seen in how she shows merciful and compassionate love. The Church ‘has an endless desire to show mercy.’ Perhaps we have long since forgotten how to show and live the way of mercy. The temptation, on the one hand, to focus exclusively on justice made us forget that this is only the first, albeit necessary and indispensable step. But the Church needs to go beyond and strive for a higher and more important goal. On the other hand, sad to say, we must admit that the practice of mercy is waning in the wider culture. In some cases the word seems to have dropped out of use.”

*Pope Francis, from Misericordiae Vultus, The Face of Mercy*

### 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.

## **FROM THE PASTOR**

**D**irection is an important part of life. We're always trying to figure out which direction we should take. For example, on my annual trips to Gettysburg, because traffic comes into play regarding which direction may be the easier ride with less traffic, before I arrive in Hartford CT on Interstate 84, I try to figure out which way is easiest that day to the historic town in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Should I continue on Interstate 84 West, risking all sorts of traffic around Danbury on the western border of Connecticut and eastern border of New York, hoping that when I finally make it to Interstate 81 in Pennsylvania, that busy road will not be congested with long waits and numerous stop and go's? Or, when I arrive at the fork in Hartford, should I take a left turn onto Interstate 91, connect to Interstate 95 in New Haven, risk the possibility of real traffic jams – some of the best the Northeast can offer a joyful traveler – continue over the Tappan Zee Bridge (newly built), to the Garden State Parkway in the grubby section of New Jersey, and onto Interstate 78 west, arriving just above Harrisburg, PA, not far from Gettysburg? Sometimes it depends too on which direction provides the best food. If I feel like a few hot dogs at Yocco's Hot Dog King outside Allentown, PA, I'll take the chance at driving the Interstate 95 direction and over the Tappan Zee Bridge. If I travel the other direction, I would miss out on the Yocco's hot dogs.

As you can see, direction is an important part of our decision making, and not making direction decisions at the last minute, like ½ mile before you arrive at the fork, unless you fully believe and trust that the Holy Spirit is the Lead Pilot leading you on the fastest possible route. Don't forget, sometimes the Holy Spirit has the joy of testing our patience, so for those who don't plan routes ahead of time, you may end up in the traffic jam of your life asking, "Why did I go this way?" when you know the Spirit is testing your patience.

The Feast of the Epiphany is grounded in direction, with 3 Wise Men, a few camels, some backpacks, a lot of food supplies, and as much water as can be had before entering the trek across the desert. Minus all the sustenance, the importance of this feast is centered in direction. They leave one place, far from Bethlehem where the child awaits them, but they must travel in the correct direction to arrive safely at their destination. If you haven't noticed previously, there are no forks in the desert. There are no twists and turns (but there are ups and downs), no idea which direction to take to stop at a delicious hot dog place to satiate one's hunger, no red lights or signs that mark how far it is to Jerusalem. I suppose a compass would help. But what helps them much more is the Star. Without the Star, even with a compass, the 3 Wise Men would have a very difficult time finding the easiest and safest direction to the manger. What if a sandstorm came up after riding 20 miles into the desert on a camel with no GPS? If I encountered the equivalent of a sandstorm on my way to Gettysburg, I would probably end up in Idaho visiting Mt. Rushmore instead of the famous Civil War town. Sandstorms can easily throw us for a loop direction-wise.

With that in mind, there are two spiritual points I share. First, direction is so, so important for our spiritual lives. There are many distractions, as we know, along the way. Distractions trying to tug us away from the manger and its occupants. Our culture is filled with distractions, enough to influence even the most faithful person if one does not buckle down at times against influences that can separate us from the love of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Church is our surest way to the direction of Christ, where personal encounters are abundant, and the food we taste is heavenly. Our lifelong direction to Christ is through what St. Paul names the Body of Christ, his Church. For anyone who says the Church is not needed for salvation and not the surest way to Jesus Christ, I outright reject that false belief. You should also.

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**THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

Sat.	Jan 05	2:30 PM 2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Rosary Confession Mass
Sun.	Jan 06	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Jan 07	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Jan 08	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Jan 09	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Jan 10	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Jan 12	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Jan 13	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

**WOMEN'S GROUP IN WORCESTER**

A new Endow group is convening in Worcester starting on Jan. 11, 2019 at 8 pm. This is a small group for women of all ages interested in growing in faith, community, and knowledge of the Church's teachings on women. The group will meet weekly on Friday evenings at 8 pm in the home of Sarah Berry (a parishioner at St. John's, Worcester). Our first study will be Pope John Paul II's Letter to Women. For more information, or to sign up, visit <https://endowgroups.org/groups/worcester-group-2>, or you may contact Sarah at 214-632-3399 or [sarahlizberry@gmail.com](mailto:sarahlizberry@gmail.com).

**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!**