

# 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**

## WEEKDAY MASSES

**MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY 9:00 AM**

**THURSDAY 8:00 AM**

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday 2:45 - 3:45 PM

(or by appointment)

## 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 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
Mon.	Jan 14	9:00 AM	The Souls in Purgatory
Tues.	Jan 15	9:00 AM	The Intentions of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Wed.	Jan 16	9:00 AM	George Provost, Jr., from Family
Thurs.	Jan 17	8:00 AM	Parishioners of Immaculate Conception
Sat.	Jan 19	4:00 PM	Nicholas Agurkis, from Family
Sun.	Jan 20	7:30 AM	Elizabeth R. Metcalf, 1st Anniversary, from Family
		10:00 AM	Edward F. Kennedy, 2nd Anniversary, from Wife



**THIS WEEK** the text for The Baptism of The Lord may be found at #899 in the *Journeysongs* hymnal.

**PARTNERS IN CHARITY BEGINS THIS SUNDAY**

The annual Partners in Charity campaign will begin this Sunday, January 13, for our Parish. Please note that the campaign will finish on February 28, leaving a window of six weeks from this time forward with the opportunity for parishioners to make a donation. The reason for a shorter Partners in Charity for 2019 results from our Parish being in the first phase of the Diocesan-wide Capital Campaign, Legacy of Hope, that will follow on the heels of Partners in Charity from March-June of this year. As a reminder, Partners in Charity is essential for the numerous services provided by our Diocese, services such as the many corporal works of mercy performed by Catholic Charities, for the cost of priestly vocations, for the ministries that serve Hispanics and Fr. Enoch's African Ministry, the daily TV Mass, just to name a few of the ministries, as well as the necessary day-to-day operations of our Diocesan network. Envelopes for Partners in Charity will be placed at the end of each Church pew from this time until the end of February. Please take one home and prayerfully consider making a donation on behalf of our Parish. For the many folks in our Parish who now donate securely online, you can go to [www.worcesterdiocese.org](http://www.worcesterdiocese.org), click the heading "Helpful Links," and click on Partners in Charity. A reminder that this campaign will finish on February 28 and will not carry over into March. I sincerely thank parishioner Bill Stanton, who will speak at each Mass this Sunday, for assisting me with this shortened version of Partners in Charity, as I pray this year will be just as successful as in past years. Fr. Riley

**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 16. 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.

**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 young children who are not yet baptized, that the Spirit will lead them and their parents to the holy font where they become one with Christ.*

**OPEN HOUSE**

St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary School, 865 Main Street in Worcester will host an Open House on Sunday, January 27, 2019 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. St. Peter's has openings in Grades Pre-K-7. Visit them on January 27, or call 508-791-6496 for information, or visit their website at [www.stpetercentralcatholic.com](http://www.stpetercentralcatholic.com).

**ST VINCENT DE PAUL THANK YOU**

A special thank you is in order for all the members of our Parish St. Vincent de Paul Society for their dedication and hard work in feeding needy families this past Thanksgiving and Christmas. Many food baskets were prepared for homes in need of such assistance, allowing for hearty meals to be enjoyed by many adults and children. May God's blessing be upon all who volunteer their time and talent in this ministry, and may God's graces shower our Parish because of such works of mercy on behalf of our parishioners.

**NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER**

Did you know that in Dioceses throughout the United States, Jan. 22 is designated as a Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Human Life? As individuals, we are called to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting and/or giving alms, in a way similar to our Lenten practices. Learn more about how you can participate at <https://www.worcesterdiocese.org/jan-22-day-of-prayer>.

**RELIGIOUS QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

**JESUS BAPTIZES CHRISTIANS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE:** Lk 3:16; "What happened in the case of our Master's body also happens in the case of your own. Although John appeared to be holding his body by the head, it was the divine Word that led his body down into the streams of the Jordan and baptized him. The Master's body was baptized by the Word, by the voice of his Father from heaven which said, 'This is my beloved Son,' and by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit which descended upon him. This also happens in the case of your body. The baptism is given in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, John the Baptist told us, for our instruction, that man does not baptize us but God: 'There comes after me one who is mightier than I, and I am not worthy to loose the strap of his sandal. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.'"

**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 24 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.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** Religious Education classes take place Sunday, January 13th 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.

**Star Student of The Week** ~ Our Student of the Week is Kayden Booker! Kayden is a fourth grade student in our Religious Education Program. He was nominated by his teacher, Ms. Megan Dickie. Kayden attends Mass weekly with his family and participates in the Children's Liturgy. Kayden creates many Christian Moments. He is active in his community helping out the homeless by donating clothes and food. We are proud of Kayden and his family for living our faith and practicing the Corporal Works of Mercy. Congratulations Kayden!

**SIGN OF PEACE**

Its that time of year again when some of us are feeling a bit under the weather because of the weather. So, if you are not feeling up to par and you're in the pews, or, if you go to shake someone's hand at the Sign of Peace during Mass and they refuse to shake your hand, instead of feeling insulted, you may want to thank them since the chances are good they don't want to give you their cold. Thank you for not sharing any germs or minor illnesses this winter season. God bless you.

**MASS FOR LIFE**

All are invited to attend the annual Mass for Life on Thursday, Jan. 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. Paul, 19 Chatham St., Worcester. Please join us as we remember the 46th tragic anniversary of Roe v. Wade and pray for an end to abortion and the conversion of our nation. We will also pray in a special way for all those who will be travelling to Washington, DC for the March for Life. All are welcome!

**JOIN THE NATIONAL NOVENA FOR LIFE**

9 Days for Life is a focused period of prayer, penance, and pilgrimage set aside to mark the tragic anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision which legalized abortion during all nine months of pregnancy. The novena will take place nationwide from Jan. 14 - 22. During this time, all are invited to participate by joining together with thousands of Catholics across the country in prayer for a new intention each of the nine days. Visit [www.9daysforlife.com](http://www.9daysforlife.com) to learn more and to download a free app for your smartphone or to sign up for daily emails or text messages with each day's prayer intention. Your prayers matter! Your sacrifices make a difference!

**READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 20th, THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

1st Reading: Isaiah 62:1-5  
Psalm 96  
2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11  
Gospel: John 2:1-11

*From the Pastor continued from the following page*

Please remind yourself that you have been baptized into the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Remind yourself what this means for you in both a personal way and in the ways of family too, how victory is now assured. Jesus didn't need to do what he chose to do at the Jordan River before John the Baptist. Christ the Lord is sinless, from before time began until time closes on the stage of humanity. Baptism is for the purpose of uniting us forever to the One who gave us the perfect example of how to be a servant. Washington, D.C. would do well to learn from the Lord, learning how not to abuse each other through open and hostile arrogance, but how to be servants to each other as well as servants to our nation. No one needs to tell me that's a pipedream.

But what isn't a pipedream is God's love for us. A form of love that never gives up on us, with no further proof needed than Jesus being baptized by John. Our Lord performed that day, not an act that was necessary, but a holy action that says, "See how much I love you. I want you for myself. I want you to enjoy all the good things of God that have been prepared for you. And, if I have to suffer and die to accomplish this deed, then so be it." "I love you, O Lord, my strength." (Psalm 18:2)

*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 \$80.00 in cards. **Thank you** to those who continue to participate in this very worthy program.

**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.

**THE FACE OF MERCY**

"Without a witness to mercy, life becomes fruitless and sterile, as if sequestered in a barren desert. The time has come for the Church to take up the joyful call to mercy once more. It is time to return to the basics and to bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters. Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope." *Pope Francis, from Misericordiae Vultus, The Face of Mercy*

<b>Come Follow Me</b> , featuring interviews with local priests about their discernment of a vocation to the priesthood, will air as follows:	
<b>Charter Communications, WCTR TV3 Ch. 193</b>	<b>Saturday, Jan. 12</b> at 6 p.m., Rebroadcast: <b>Sunday, Jan 13</b> at 6 p.m. & <b>Wednesday</b> at 9:30 a.m.
<b>WCCA TV13 (Worcester Ch. 194)</b>	<b>Tuesday, Jan. 15</b> at 8 p.m.
<b>ALL LOCATIONS - via the internet</b>	Watch online anytime at <a href="http://worcesterdiocese.org">worcesterdiocese.org</a>

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT 12/30/2018 & 1/6/2019**

Sunday Ordinary <b>12/30/2018</b>	\$ 4,432.00
Sunday Ordinary <b>1/6/2018</b>	\$12,763.00
Retired Religious	\$ 600.00
Fall Fuel	\$ 40.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$ 1,244.00
Donation	\$ 500.00
Food Pantry	\$ 300.00

## **FROM THE PASTOR**

**I**t's a beautiful thing, when a child gets baptized. It's also a beautiful thing when adults get baptized too. Whatever the age, God's Spirit descending upon the soul of a human being is a beautiful thing.

We're reminded of our own baptism on this Feast of our Lord entering the Jordan River in the presence of holy John the Baptist, going under and rising back up as the Spirit descends upon him. The descending of Jesus into the waters of the Jordan in the presence of John was cause for heaven's movement of the Spirit descending from above. As Jesus went down into the water, the Spirit came down from heaven; as Jesus rose from the water, the Spirit continued down into his Sacred Heart in a most intimate way that we humans cannot comprehend. Like upon Like. God upon God. Love upon Love. God touching God. All for our benefit.

Our Father in heaven had a big smile on his face the day of Jesus' Baptism. He knew- as he knows all things - that his Son wasn't in need of being baptized. But what the Father witnessed that day at the Jordan River in the presence of his servant John was his Son taking on the role of the Suffering Servant, the type of servant who was needed to bring God's people home at the end of this "creation trial," better known as time, space, and the world; the type of servant who justifies our lives before God the Father who loves us unconditionally. A little water from the holy banks of the Jordan turned sin on its head, carried forth by the Sinless One who breaks opens the scroll and presents the Father to us, us who were lost but now found. His Son, with whom he is one, is the Way to the Father through the obedience the Son revealed to the Father at the Jordan River. Not bad at all, I say.

As Washington tries to figure how to reopen and run a government, as they try to figure out whether a structure is going to be built at our border, with one side saying yes and the other saying no, we look east to the Jordan River on this day, reflecting on why God has reopened the government or our souls, and has knocked down all structures that can possibly keep us away from the treasure of God's love.

So, why has God reopened the government of our souls in the Baptism of his Son? First, because our souls were, for all intents and purposes, shut down and closed. We were closed in such ways where we had no capacity on our own, nor power within, to open the door that leads to eternal life after this world's passage, as well as the door that commands us and pleads with us to love neighbor and bring peace to our world in the present. Violence ruled the day in Jesus' time, both in the secular world and the world of the Hebrew Nation. The Jewish people were searching and hoping for a Messiah who would "throw out the Romans" forever. In other words, they yearned for a messiah with a sword. One who carried a sidepiece like Clint Eastwood in a Dirty Harry movie. Instead, God sent a "Lamb of God" who gracefully and silently went under the waters of a famous river, rising up with his ears all wet, his heart full of love and peace, touched and penetrated by the one Spirit Who is Perfectly Good and Holy. God fooled all the violence seekers.

And second, God has reopened our souls because we are, in his Divine eyes, are seen as being worthy to die for. The Lord's Baptism by John in the Jordan is, as I mentioned above, the beginning of Jesus' role as the Suffering Servant found in Isaiah, chapter 53 (when you have a moment, please read this chapter that points to Christ). The Lord looks good on this day, even when drenched with water he makes holy by simply touching it. But from this day forward, all the way to the Cross, Jesus will, pardon the expression, be "crushed in infirmity." The world, in its way of doing it, will crush this type of Messiah. The crushing of Christ, ironically, is a beautiful crushing for humanity. Because of it, we are saved for better living after Jesus walks out of the tomb.

*Continued on Previous Page*

**THIS WEEK AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

Sat.	Jan 12	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Jan 13	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass
Mon.	Jan 14	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Tues.	Jan 15	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Wed.	Jan 16	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Thurs.	Jan 17	7:30 AM 8:00 AM	Rosary Mass
Sat.	Jan 19	2:45 PM 4:00 PM	Confession Mass
Sun.	Jan 20	7:30 AM 10:00 AM	Mass Mass

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS NIGHT AT THE RAILERS**

Please join us on Saturday, January 26 for Catholic Schools Night at the Worcester Railers as Bishop McManus and Superintendent Dr. Perda drop the puck at 7 PM and the following schools will be singing the pre-game songs for that night: Holy Name C.C. Jr. Sr. H.S. Chorus will sing the National Anthem; Holy Family Academy in Gardner will sing America the Beautiful; and Assumption School in Millbury will sing God Bless America. To purchase tickets: [www.railershc.com/catholicschools](http://www.railershc.com/catholicschools). Lower level tickets are \$20 and the first 1,000 tickets will receive a Catholic Schools Night/Worcester Railers T-shirt. Upper level tickets are \$15 including a t-shirt while available. After the Tshirts are gone, \$5 will be donated back to the schools. The top selling schools from each size category (small 100-150 Students), (medium 151-250 students), (large 251+ students), will get a Railers player appearance at their school and will also have each student invited down to the high five line before puck drop. If you have any questions regarding ticket information, please contact Connor Haynes at the Railers at 508-365-1752.

**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!**