

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

353 GROVE STREET, WORCESTER , MA 01605

FEBRUARY 18, 2024 | FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

WELCOME!

No matter what your present status in the Catholic Church, no matter what your current family and marital situation, no matter what your personal history, age, background, race, etc., no matter what your own self-image, you are invited, welcomed, accepted, loved and respected here.

CONTACT US

Phone: 508-754-8419

Fax: 508-459-9815

Website: www.icworc.com

Email: icworc@live.com

OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

8:30am - 2:30pm

MASS SCHEDULE

LORD'S DAY MASSES

Saturday Vigil: 4:00pm

Sunday: 7:30am, 10:00am

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday - Thursday: 9:00am

CONFESSION

Saturday: 2:45pm - 3:30pm

Or By Appointment

ADORATION

Holy Hour for Priests

Second Friday: 7:00pm

PARISH STAFF

PASTOR

Rev. Edwin Montana

fatheredwin31@gmail.com

PERMANENT DEACONS

Kevin Deignan | kdeignan@charter.net

Frank Myska | Retired

SECRETARY

Jennefer Noberini

icworc@live.com



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION & SAFE ENVIRONMENT COORDINATOR

Mary Sycks | mks723@msn.com | 508-868-8119

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Robert G. Carson

CANTOR

Bridget Klofft

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Mark Cutler



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Vigil of 1st Sunday of Lent

4:00pm † Walter P. Antul III (35th Anniversary), from Family

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

1st Sunday of Lent

7:30am † Anita Gregoire (12th Anniversary), from Family

10:00am † Albert and Emilia Menard, from Family

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19

9:00am

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

9:00am

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

9:00am

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle

9:00am

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Vigil of 2nd Sunday of Lent

4:00pm † Dr. Harry J. Kelly (50th Anniversary) and his parents,
from Family

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

2nd Sunday of Lent

7:30am † Gerald Duclos (4th Anniversary), from Family

10:00am

*Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth
to those who keep your covenant.
(Ps 25)*

CATHOLIC SACRAMENTS

INFANT BAPTISM

Celebrated on Saturdays at 2:00pm or Sundays at 11:30am. Please contact the church office.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

From grades Pre-K to 11. Contact our Religious Education Administrator, Mary Sycks at 508-868-8119.

OCIA

For adults seeking full admission into the church through baptism, confirmation & eucharist. Please call the church office for registration which takes place during September.

ADULT CONFIRMATION

For Catholics who received first communion but have not yet been confirmed a diocesan-wide adult (18+) Confirmation celebration is offered every year in February at the Cathedral of St. Paul in Worcester. If interested, please contact the church office.

HOLY ORDERS

To learn more about the Permanent Diaconate, contact Diaconate Director Deacon Donald Pegg (617) 794-7702. To learn more about the Priesthood, contact Rev. Donato Infante at 508-630-4473.

HOLY MATRIMONY

Contact the Pastor at least six months in advance.

ANointing OF THE SICK & COMMUNION CALLS

Please call the office when a parishioner is confined at home, in the hospital, or placed in a nursing home. If there is an urgent need, dial the emergency extension.

A SUMMARY OF POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE FOR THIS LENT

Dear brothers and sisters,

During my visit to Lampedusa, as a way of countering the globalization of indifference, I asked two questions, which have become more and more pressing: "Where are you?" (Gen 3:9) and "Where is your brother?" (Gen 4:9). Our Lenten journey will be concrete if, by listening once more to those two questions, we realize that even today we remain under the rule of Pharaoh. A rule that makes us weary and indifferent. A model of growth that divides and robs us of a future. Earth, air and water are polluted, but so are our souls. True, Baptism has begun our process of liberation, yet there remains in us an inexplicable longing for slavery. A kind of attraction to the security of familiar things, to the detriment of our freedom.

In the Exodus account, there is a significant detail: it is God who sees, is moved and brings freedom; Israel does not ask for this. Pharaoh stifles dreams, blocks the view of heaven, makes it appear that this world, in which human dignity is trampled upon and authentic bonds are denied, can never change. He put everything in bondage to himself. Let us ask: Do I want a new world? Am I ready to leave behind my compromises with the old?

Let us welcome Lent as the great season in which he reminds us: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (Ex 20:2). Lent is a season of conversion, a time of freedom. Jesus himself, as we recall each year on the first Sunday of Lent, was driven into the desert by the Spirit in order to be tempted in freedom. For forty days, he will stand before us and with us: the incarnate Son. Unlike Pharaoh, God does not want subjects, but sons and daughters. The desert is the place where our freedom can mature in a personal decision not to fall back into slavery. In Lent, we find new criteria of justice and a community with which we can press forward on a road not yet taken.

It is time to act, and in Lent, to act also means to pause. To pause in prayer, in order to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan in the presence of a wounded brother or sister. Love of God and love of neighbor are one love. Not to have other gods is to pause in the presence of God beside the flesh of our neighbor. For this reason, prayer, almsgiving and fasting are not three unrelated acts, but a single movement of openness and self-emptying, in which we cast out the idols that weigh us down, the attachments that imprison us. Then the atrophied and isolated heart will revive. Slow down, then, and pause! The contemplative dimension of life that Lent helps us to rediscover will release new energies. In the presence of God, we become brothers and sisters, more sensitive to one another: in place of threats and enemies, we discover companions and fellow travelers. This is God's dream, the promised land to which we journey once we have left our slavery behind.

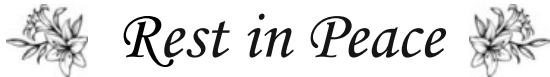
I bless all of you and your Lenten journey.

FRANCIS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

There are no Religious Education classes on Sunday, February 18th. Classes will resume on Sunday, February 25th.

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.



Please pray for the repose of the souls of **Fr. Walter Riley, Ella Houlihan, and Kathleen Gallagher**, and keep their families in your prayers during this time of loss. May God grant them hope and strength in the days ahead.



LENT 2023

FRIDAYS DURING LENT

• Eucharistic Adoration & Confessions

This is a great opportunity to spend some quiet time with the Lord truly present in the most Blessed Sacrament from **5:00 to 6:00 PM**. Also, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available during this time.

• Stations Of the Cross

The Stations are a very important devotion which allow us through prayer and reflection to follow Jesus Christ on his way to Calvary. They will be held at **6:00 PM**, immediately after Benediction.

FAST AND ABSTINENCE

Lenten fast and abstinence regulations are as follows:

- Abstinence from meat is to be observed by all Catholics fourteen (14) years of age and older on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all the Fridays of Lent.
- Fasting is to be observed by all Catholics who are eighteen (18) years of age but not yet fifty-nine (59) years of age on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
- Those who are bound to fast may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to one's needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.
- Catholics should not lightly excuse themselves from these prescribed Lenten penitential practices.

OPERATION RICE BOWL

Cartons for **Operation Rice Bowl** can be found at each entrance to the Church. For those who participate in this Lenten program, we invite you to place coins in the carton and we will collect them at the end of Lent and forward the total to Catholic Relief Services. The money collected is used to serve the needs of the poor in America and throughout the world, and those who struggle through natural disasters.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

In today's Gospel, Jesus overcomes the temptations to wealth, power and esteem. As we begin Lent, may we open our hearts to the grace of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Through your gifts, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Immaculate Conception volunteers work to assist neighboring families, providing them with food, help with utility, rent and other bills. God Bless You!

HYMNAL READINGS #884

Sunday: Gn 9:8-15/Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9/1 Pt 3:18-22/
Mk 1:12-15

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday: Lv 19:1-2, 11-18/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15/Mt 25:31-46
Tuesday: Is 55:10-11/Ps 34:4-5, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19/
Mt 6:7-15

Wednesday: Jon 3:1-10/Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19/Lk 11:29-32

Thursday: 1 Pt 5:1-4/Ps 23:1-3a, 4, 5, 6/Mt 16:13-19

Friday: Ez 18:21-28/Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8/
Mt 5:20-26

Saturday: Dt 26:16-19/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8/Mt 5:43-48

Next Sunday: Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18/Ps 116:10, 15, 16-17,
18-19 (116:9)/Rom 8:31b-34/Mk 9:2-10

DIOCESAN MEN'S CONFERENCE

Men (of all ages, including teens and college students) are invited to this important in-person conference, which will be held at the DCU center on **Saturday, March 16, 2024**. Come meet and hear:

Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, James Wahlberg, Monsignor Thomas Sullivan, Michael Nicholson, and our Bishop Robert McManus. Mass and Confessions will also be offered.

Our Parish Fellowship Committee has donated 10 tickets to this conference; tickets are on first come, first served basis. Each ticket includes a lunch. If you have any interest in attending, please speak with or contact **Deacon Kevin (kdeignan@charter.net)** before **March 4**. Visit the conference website at catholicmenworc.com to purchase tickets or for more information.



WINTER MASS CANCELLATION POLICY (UPDATED: 1/5/2024)

Weekday Masses: If Worcester Public Schools are CLOSED because of inclement weather, daily Mass WILL NOT be celebrated and the Parish Office will be closed on that day. If school opening is DELAYED, daily Mass WILL BE celebrated and the office will open as usual. When school is not in session, please look at our website or Facebook page for updated cancellation information.

Weekend Masses: In severe situations, it may also be necessary for safety reasons to cancel some of the weekend Masses. Again, please consult our website or Facebook page for cancellation information.

Take care of yourself and those around you during the winter months, especially by using common sense. Thank you.

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS FOR 2023

Any parishioner who would like to receive a statement for your contributions for 2023 for tax purposes, please call the rectory during office hours or email icworc@live.com and we will mail you a copy. Thank you.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT (amounts include Electronic Giving)

2/11/2024

Sunday Ordinary	\$ 5,781.00
Diocesan Collections	\$ 40.00

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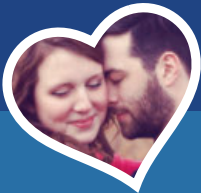
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