

June 7, 2020

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH, MILLHOUSEN, IN

Immaculate Conception Parish Community strives to live the Gospel by worshipping God, deepening our understanding of the Catholic Faith, and serving the needs of others.

Bulletin information is due by Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. sisterdonna@millhousechurch.com

Trinity Sunday – Father, Son & Holy Spirit
Creator, Redeemer, God with us

On Tuesday evening, June 2, of this week, **Velma Ortman** passed away very peacefully, just three months short of her 100th birthday. She survived a hard winter, and multiple hospitalizations, striving to make it to the big day! Her big day came sooner than she anticipated. We will miss her warm and gracious hospitality, and remember always her smile and love for all! Please remember Velma and her family in your prayers on Monday as she is laid to rest. All are welcome to a last visitation at 10:30 am in Immaculate Conception Cemetery, with prayers at 11:00, and a rosary following the service, at the shrine of Our Lady. Memorials may be made to the Immaculate Conception Cemetery fund for the upkeep of the Lester Picker Memorial, or to the Religious Education fund for our children.

Call the office anytime to add or remove names, or to give any information you may want posted to the parish.

Remember in Prayer: Pat Schwering, John Kuzman, Nell Ann Pfeifer, Larry Smith, & Judy Zapfe

We are most grateful for your continued financial support. Thanks to those who mail or drop off checks. We are grateful! **On-line Giving:** For those who may have misplaced the link, the on-line giving site is: www.archindy.org/Giving. Choose Immaculate Conception, Millhousen, from the drop-down menu.

Stewardship of Treasure: Our Sunday Collections: May 31, 2020

Needed each weekend to meet budget:	\$2,800.00
Sunday Envelopes (and loose):	\$275.00
Cemetery Fund:	\$185.00
Maintenance Fund	\$80.00

Total Collections: \$540.00

Reminder: Special Collection today, Sunday, June 7th for the education of future priests.

Concerning all meetings or gatherings: if you are 65 or beyond, or in compromised health, please observe the stay-at-home orders. Nothing on our agenda is more important than each one's health and safety. We encourage the use of **face coverings** for all gatherings to protect the other. And we will stay six feet apart.

Dates to Remember: It is a new day, and all ministries are changing. All participants need to be updated. Please come to one or more of the following meetings to get acquainted with the new roles.

June 11 - Thursday, 7:00 pm, School Hall, **Ushers Meeting** – new role and responsibilities. Those ages 21-65 who have been, or would like to be, ushers going forward, are asked to meet to discover the new role to facilitate a safe experience for all of us. Those over 65 who would like to continue in this role, will not be scheduled at this time, but may be oriented to the new role at a later date. A new schedule will be created only after orientation.

June 16 – Tuesday, 7:00 pm, School Hall, **Lectors Meeting** – for anyone 21-65, new or experienced, who would like to “Proclaim the Word” on Sundays. This very important ministry requires slow, and clear enunciation, expressive delivery, so that all may hear the Word of God without books to follow along. Again, only those completing this orientation will be scheduled.

June 24 – Wednesday, 7:00 pm, School Hall, **Eucharistic Ministers Meeting** – this meeting is for all commissioned Eucharistic Ministers, and all those who have asked to be commissioned, to be able to take the Eucharist to family members living near or in the same household who are continuing to “safe distance” as requested. Those commissioned by the Archbishop are serving a three-year term. Those asking to be commissioned, during this time, are approved by each pastor, to serve the needs of those homebound assigned. All are requested to attend for updates and assignments.

July 14 – Tuesday, 7:00 pm, School Hall, Chairperson of each **Church Cleaning** committee meet to discuss on-going needs, volunteers needed, and changes to routine. Please call LaDonna to let her know of your willingness to continue in this capacity or your need to decline. But in the meantime, please reserve the date. Even if you are unable to continue due to age or health reasons, we need your insight.

August 30 – First Communion at the Sunday morning Mass. These children are prepared and waiting!
Witness their excitement, their reverence, their spirit of prayer.

Steeple Notes: More pictures have come in and more validation of how badly needed the project really was. This week we learned of loose bricks, cracked or missing mortar, and more need of repair. Once again, progress has been delayed by wind and weather. Please continue to pray for the safety of all of our workers. And please remember the request issued before the work began, to stay far away from the construction site. The velocity, the potential for damage, or risk of injury or death from falling debris is very great! We are finding, not only nails, but pieces of old shingle, which are quite heavy, at far distances from the steeple itself. The wind has been strong down below, and only magnified up that high. When we get together for the first time, you might take a look at the sample of old shingles Ken has collected. There is no doubt the project was badly needed. In the meantime, please respect the workers, and the precautions they have requested for all of us.

In addition to the steeple project we have had other construction these past two weeks, dump trucks of gravel and stone have helped to create a new driveway on either end of the West Cemetery. Thank you, Jessie, for many long hours of hard labor for our benefit, for the earth moving, for the shoveling and spreading of stone and the operation of heavy equipment. In addition, the large mowers and increased traffic to the work sites are more reasons to keep a distance at present. We are not quite finished. The campus is undergoing a transformation.

Relative to this distancing, but for other reasons, is a reminder that **our Church property remains closed** for all but essential meetings or activities. We actually “jumped the gun” on some of our meetings in May, though all were essential. Permission was only granted one week ago for non-liturgical gatherings, which include only those which cannot be postponed, or accomplished virtually, and only those which have been given priority. All gatherings, inside or outside of our buildings, all on church property, are subject to following all possible health and safety protocols, which include face coverings, sanitation procedures, essential and frequent hand washing, in addition to continued social distancing. Social gatherings will eventually follow, but please wait and respect the guidelines.

As announced last week, we are still aiming for **June 14th, the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)** to host our first Public Parish Liturgy. Please remember that the dispensation from attending Sunday liturgy has been extended for all of us until August 15th. And, a gentle reminder that everyone over 65 years of age is strongly encouraged to stay home until that time. That includes all those, of any age, who are ill or in doubt about their own good health. When in doubt, please stay home. If everyone who **should** stay home **does** stay home, it will be easier to accommodate the six-foot distancing and allow for at least 65 people to enter

our church. I suspect we will be able to accommodate everyone who comes during this time, so we are not requiring online registration. But, because we need to be able to track an outbreak, we will ask each person who enters, to sign in, checking off your name and phone number from an alphabetized list. Each person is also asked to wear a mask at all times within the building, and each person, young and old is asked to sanitize hands as they enter the church (or any of our buildings.) Those are givens for all of us, regardless of how each one feels about it. Once we have entered the church with all those steps, the newly trained ushers assigned, will assist you to your seat, observing safe distancing for all. Please make their job as easy as possible and follow their directions. Please don't look for the old ministry lists. Only those who are willing to take on new responsibilities will serve us at this time. But we **NEED** volunteers. Meeting dates are posted under "**Dates to Remember.**"

Cleaning –The deep cleaning is now complete, except for carpet cleaning which will take place this week on Tuesday and Wednesday. Following the deep clean, we will need to sanitize all touched surfaces each week, sometime in the days following each Mass. Two women from our parish have graciously stepped forward to do that weekly sanitizing. A big thank you to Donna and Sarah Schwering for taking on that huge responsibility to keep all of us safe! Thank them when you can! We need a couple of subs, people who are trained and able to step in, in the event Donna or Sarah are away or become ill. If you are able to become an "occasional sub" please let us know. Routine church cleaning will resume in July, in addition to the weekly sanitizing.

The **July Church cleaning committee:** Cindy Hermes (chair), Paula Fry, Melea Gault, Aaron Gault, Stephanie Hoeing, Timothy Hoeing.

We need to ensure that every single person who enters our church has, and wears a mask. According to the Gov.'s plan, masks become "optional" on June 14th. But they **will not be optional** in our churches for quite some time. In the meantime, we need to wear them, not to protect ourselves, but to protect those vulnerable around us. **Everyone** will wear masks. Even Father as he comes and goes. The only **exceptions** will be the priest and lector **after** they are in the sanctuary. In order for us to hear and understand the readings, masks will be removed for those with speaking parts. And while these participants are in the sanctuary, they too will need to stay six feet apart, and practice social distancing. As participants leave the sanctuary, masks will go back on.

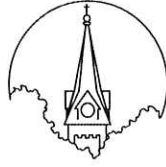
We know that a lot of information has been presented in recent bulletins, and many questions remain. To assist, a full-length **letter** has been created and will be arriving by US postal Service. Look for it to arrive early in the week. The letter should serve to summarize all of that change and new information. Please read it before coming to church and post it in your home in a place where all family members have access.

The most frequently asked question continues to be concerning the precious blood. No, we will **not** be receiving, or offered a sip, from the cup. We won't look for that to be resumed for a very long time. And along with that, it is highly recommended, to not distribute communion, at this time, on the tongue. The mouth offers a much greater risk of contamination. Thank you for understanding this directive and for assisting us to keep each other safe.

Yes, all Eucharistic Ministers will hand sanitize just prior to distributing as usual, and again when they finish. In addition, if there is any accidental touching during the distribution, they will need to pause and hand sanitize again, as often as is necessary to keep everyone safe.

One of our goals in all of this is to protect our aging members including our retired priests. For that purpose, there will be no scheduled private confessions until further notice. We are asking that no one (except the lectors) will enter the sanctuary. Please remain an appropriate social distance from Fr. Bill. Though he too would like to, he will not be able to socialize at this time. We ask your assistance in this important process.

Attached to the bulletin today is a **brief article** concerning our call to **Christian responsibility** in the wake of the rioting and unrest within our nation. Please spend a few minutes contemplating your personal bias/prejudice.



Immaculate Conception Church

Millhousen, IN

2081 E County Road 820 S, Greensburg, IN 47240
(812) 591-2362 - plc@millhousenchurch.com

Dear Parishioners of Immaculate Conception,

The time has finally come! We are planning to reopen for Sunday Mass on the Feast of Corpus Christi, the most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, on June 14th. Of course, there will be restrictions with acceptable ways for us to celebrate the Eucharist together, yet still distanced for some time.

What I want to communicate with you is what to expect when you are ready to return. First of all, is a reminder that the “obligation” to attend Mass, as designated by the Archbishop and shared by the bishops of Indiana, does not resume until August 15th. And, those of 65 years of age and older, and those with underlying health issues at any age, are highly encouraged **not** to attend Mass or any church related gathering until further notice. I beg you to follow this directive!

Continuing to participate in Mass *remotely* is the recommended and healthiest practice for all. We at Immaculate Conception parish can help slow the spread of the coronavirus and live out the Gospel of loving our neighbor by praying at home. It is risky for us to gather in large numbers, and we wish to be a model for everyone of what a healthy environment can be to pray again in public. Remember, that anyone can carry the coronavirus, not show symptoms, and pass it on to others, especially to seniors and vulnerable persons. If our practices do not contribute to a safe environment, and the virus spreads, we will do the responsible and Christian thing, and close again.

If you are able to safely return to Immaculate Conception on Corpus Christi, June 14, here is what you should expect:

Masks

Our new practice will involve wearing our *masks at all times*, except as we receive Communion. (Lectors may remove them to read.) If you forget to bring your face covering, disposable masks will be readily available for you, and handmade ones will also be available, that you can take home, wash, and wear the following week.

Social Distancing

You will find the church pews marked in a way that will enable the recommended physical distancing standards, 6' apart, except for “same household” members. Consequently, there will be room in church for

approximately 65 persons (or more with household groupings) for each of our liturgical gatherings. If the church is “crowded” when you enter, it will be in your best interest to return home and pray in private.

Arriving at Church

The church building will be open beginning at 7:30am. If at all possible, it is best to enter through the main center doorway. The ramp will be open for those who need it. The East door will be locked.

The church space will be set up and utilized in such a way as to encourage physical distancing as well as allowing for entering and exiting *safely and quickly*. Doors will be opened for you or propped. You will be asked to sign in to the building for the purpose of tracking, should a parishioner later be identified as COVID-19 positive. Hand sanitizer dispensers are available at each entryway for everyone to use as you enter.

The ushers will assist with seating and guide you to available open spaces. Please respect them and follow their direction. There will be *no gathering* or standing in the entryway or aisles of the church.

Changes to the Mass

To reduce the spread of germs, there will be *no singing* during Mass, though when possible, music may be played at appropriate times. All hymnals have been placed in storage. In addition, there will be *no exchange of peace* nor *personal contact during the “Our Father”*.

A collection basket will take the place of the main holy water font. In order to continue operating our parish, we need for you to continue to make your offertory gift, either by Sunday collection, the U.S. Postal Service, or online giving, using our parish website. *Thanks to all who have been able to make your sacrificial gift!* Many are finding it easiest to write monthly checks, or to use automatic withdrawal. Ushers will not be passing the basket during Mass, but you are reminded to drop in your envelope as you enter or exit.

Receiving Communion

You are highly encouraged to receive Holy Communion in the hand. Please extend arms fully and cup hands when receiving. Communion Ministers will, of course, sanitize their hands before and after distributing, and will be wearing face covering. Father, and those over 65 will be protected from this interaction. There will be no Holy Blood distributed nor blessings for non-communicants at this time. But children and those not intending to receive are encouraged to continue crossing arms over chest to signify your intent.

After Communion, you will exit the church immediately through the closest doors, rather than returning to your pews. Again, a reminder to not gather or congregate in aisles or entrances, nor in the area outside of church. Social gatherings will resume at a later date. You are asked to go directly to your cars.

Bulletins

You may pick up bulletins as you *exit* or leave the building. You may also access the bulletin on our parish website, available through a link on our Facebook page, or pick up a copy anytime during the week in the

white mailbox outside of church. *The Sunday Bulletin will continue to be our main method of communication, so please, pick one up or read online for the latest information.*

Other important information

Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed at each entryway, for everyone's use as you enter, however, you are encouraged to bring your own as well to hand sanitize again before receiving Holy Communion. We are looking for extra little bottles to make available for your use, but have so far not found them.

The pews and all touchable surfaces will be sanitized after each Mass.

All Liturgical Ministers will be under the age of 65, or over the age of 21, until a later date.

Our restroom will be open for use, but you are strongly encouraged not to use it. If you choose to use it, please turn on the exhaust fan, and use the spray bottle of disinfectant spray before you exit the bathroom to sanitize the air for the next occupant.

While temperature checks were originally recommended, the instruments ordered have never arrived. We recommend that anyone not feeling 100% please stay at home, and check temp at home before coming.

Only *essential* Parish meetings are possible at this time, no fundraising, no games, congregating or social gatherings are yet permitted on parish grounds.

Sacraments

Confessions: No formally scheduled confessions until a later date. For an emergency need, please call the parish office for assistance.

Funerals:

- Funeral Masses will resume after the steeple is completed and crane removed.
- We offer the possibility of a special communal memorial Mass to honor all those who have been buried in recent months without the full celebration of their lives, for those families who would like to do so. Again, this option is offered at a time after the steeple is completed, and all work crews are finished. Fr. John Meyer is offering such an opportunity in November, near All Souls Day and extends an invitation for us to join if anyone so chooses. We continue to make the effort to minimize the stress on our retired priests.
- Funeral Meals will not resume for some time, and may have a new set of guidelines when they are resumed.

Baptisms:

- Will be scheduled through the parish office and only celebrated outside of Mass, until further notice.

First Communion:

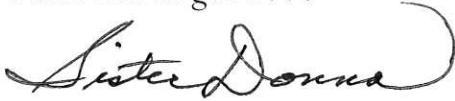
- Has been tentatively scheduled for August 30. More details will be coming to those families from the parish office.

Confirmation:

- A date has yet to be determined by Archbishop Thompson. It is not likely to be soon. But when we hear of it you will be notified.

Only time will tell when we might get back a little closer to normal. This is a painfully difficult time for all of us, from our young to old and in between! One day all of us will gather with celebrations of joy, in which we won't be able to contain ourselves! I can't wait! But we must wait! Please wait and pray with me as we carry out our sacramental and spiritual lives as safely as we can.

Peace and all good . . .

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sister Donna". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Peace and all good . . .".

Sister Donna M. Prickel, OSF
Parish Life Coordinator

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

Jun 4, 2020

El Paso's Bishop Mark Seitz: Black lives matter

by Bishop Mark J. Seitz

I think that sometimes we can fall into the trap of thinking that Christianity is a dead letter religion. That it's about things that happened a long time ago or about words on a page.

But every day at Mass, when I kneel before Jesus in the Eucharist, I'm reminded that he is alive and present. That Christianity is an event happening right now. The drama of salvation is something playing out every day. And we all have a role to play.

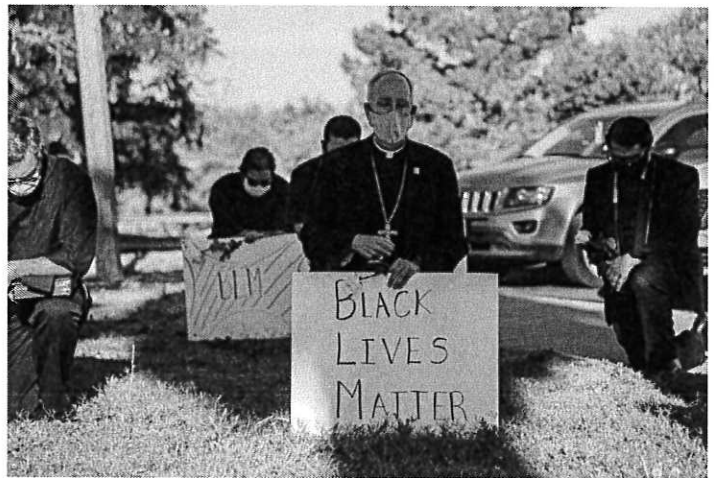
I taught liturgy in seminary. In good liturgy, our faith is brought to life. I think what we've seen play out over the last couple days is maybe a little bit like liturgy.

The other day I saw a video of a young white woman at a protest near the White House who put her body in front of a young kneeling black teenager as police officers in riot gear approached. As Jesus said, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."

It's a scene of solidarity and self-giving that has played out across the country so many times in the last week. In El Paso, Texas, there were two young police officers who knelt down with protesters during a demonstration here and it helped defuse some tension.

There is something profoundly eucharistic about these moments and I'm so inspired by our young people. They are teaching us something.

When religion becomes stagnant, we can forget that the Word always comes to us crucified and powerless. As James Cone put it, in America, the Word comes tortured, black and lynched. Today, we meet Jesus in those tear-gassed, tased, strangled and snuffed out. That's the reason why the church teaches a preferential option for the poor. And why the church stands up for life wherever and whenever it is devalued and threatened.



Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso, Texas, kneels at El Paso's Memorial Park holding a Black Lives Matter sign June 1. Seitz and other clergy from the diocese prayed and knelt for eight minutes, the time George Floyd, an unarmed black man, spent under a police officer's knee before dying May 25. (CNS/Courtesy of El Paso Diocese/Fernie Cenicerros)

To say, as all who eat from the table of the Eucharist should be able to say, that black lives matter is just another way of repeating something we in the United States seem to so often forget, that God has a special love for the forgotten and oppressed.

Many are understandably upset by the destruction and looting. It's true, none of us should crave the thrill of violence or revenge. That's wrong. We also need to recognize that we are seeing the effects of centuries of sin and violence and rights denied playing themselves out. And frankly, civil rights are not enough. That's the minimum and clearly, we're not there yet. We also need to be building a society with housing, and education and health care and just wages for all as well as the right to migrate. And then we can begin to heal.

My brother bishop in Chicago, Cardinal Blase Cupich, suggested we should be less quick to judge the proportionality of "their" response and start talking about the proportionality of "ours." We also need to remember what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, that "a riot is the language of the unheard."

I think leaders in the church today, and leaders everywhere really, should perhaps say a little less right now. Instead, we should stand with and give the microphone and listen to those who have been unheard for too long. To those who have suffered our shameful history of discrimination and racial profiling and police brutality. To those who are putting their bodies on the line in protest and in defense of others.

Let's look at the grace in all of this. Look at the witness of those who are bravely taking up their parts in the drama of salvation unfolding in front of us. If we look past the static, they're pointing the way to redemptive transformation. They are showing us what the reign of God looks like and what our country can look like when we all have a place at the table. Let's encourage them. And pray with them. And thank them.

With grace, they are joining the living ranks of a long faith tradition of laborers for greater justice, like Moses, Jesus of Nazareth, Joan of Arc, Harriet Beecher Stowe, James Earl Chaney, Oscar Romero, Thea Bowman and so many others. Thank God. Thank God.

[Mark J. Seitz is the bishop of El Paso, a diocese in West Texas on the U.S.-Mexico border.]

Source URL (modified on 06/04/2020 - 8:46am): <https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/el-pasos-bishop-mark-seitz-black-lives-matter>

Links

[1] <https://www.ncronline.org/join-conversation>