

July 26, 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

Mass Intentions:

July 26 - 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Barbara Sandhage

August 2 - 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Carolyn Schoettmer

August 9 - 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Cathy Wittkamper

August 14 - (Vigil) The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Albert Naderman Friday evening, 7:00 pm

August 16 - 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Barbara Sandhage

August 23 - 21st Sunday In Ordinary Time - Kathryn Schoettmer

August 30 - 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time - Albert Naderman (First Communion Sunday)

An update from the Archdiocese concerning the use of our worship space arrived on Monday this week, and on Wednesday we received the update from the Governor. While there is nothing drastically new, both messages emphasize the importance of continuing the safety measures we already have in place. Both are encouraging us not to become lax. But to emphasize even more the necessity for face coverings, and safe distancing. We have been asked once again to not make physical contact during the "Our Father" and to NOT exchange a sign of peace. As the numbers continue to climb, the inherent risk involved in gathering into a common space is amply apparent. At the same time, we are beginning to welcome our older members back into our group, if they are well and able. Our challenge then is to model a safe environment. As we add additional people, please remember to follow the direction of our ushers in seating. They are aware of what is available and how to accommodate the group.

Reminder: our Church property remains closed for all but essential meetings or activities. Mass is an essential activity. Please remember to go directly to your car after receiving communion each Sunday morning. And be advised that masks are to stay on until you reach your car. On church grounds these are not optional guidelines. We strive to provide and maintain a healthy and safe environment for all.

Please remember that the dispensation from attending Sunday liturgy is extended for **all** of us until **August 15th**. At this time there are no further extensions given, but we will keep you posted should any new orders come. Our older parishioners will be gradually rejoining us. Those of us attending weekly and getting acclimated to the changes, need to continue the new habits and create the safest environment possible, so that re-entry is possible for others. If there is a change to any of this, a Remind message will go out to keep you informed.

Father Bill is resuming confession time prior to each Mass, in the confessional room in church. Please be aware that the room has no ventilation, no exhaust fan as is required for use. Each individual will need to sanitize hands, wear a face mask, and use the disinfectant spray provided before exiting the room. Chairs are placed six feet apart. Please observe all precautions to protect one another.

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.) Please also remember to sign-in, for a dual purpose: we need to track in case of an outbreak. In addition, we need to count out the number of hosts

needed each Mass. Once we have entered the church with those three 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. As our crowd increases, this becomes all the more important. And our elders are returning. Please welcome them and assist them with our new practices.

A reminder: we are **not using or touching the kneelers** in church. For the present time, we will only stand, genuflect and sit. Frequent attendees have mastered this new habit! New comers may find it difficult.

Call the office anytime to add or remove names, to this prayer list, or to give any information you may want posted to the parish. Also, please call to have your name added to the list of those wishing to receive communion in your own home. Our Eucharistic Ministers will gladly serve that need.

Remember in Prayer: Nell Ann Pfeifer, Judy Zapfe, & Jim Cobb.

We are most grateful for your continued financial support. Thanks to those who mail or drop off checks. The new drop box has replaced the ushers collecting our envelopes at Mass and provides a safe and private way to donate as you enter or leave the church. For those who wish to give on-line, the site is: www.archindy.org/Giving. Choose Immaculate Conception, Millhousen, from the drop-down menu. You have the option for one time giving, or may set up a weekly, monthly or quarterly option for automatic deductions.

Please find the **Fiscal Year Summary** as a bulletin insert this morning. While we still have some “catching up” to do. It is beginning to come together. We are sufficiently confident, to continue the maintenance projects as planned. In addition to the projects you already see happening, you may also note a new row of cemetery footers being poured in upcoming months.

Stewardship of Treasure: Our Sunday Collections: July 19, 2020

Needed each weekend to meet budget:	\$2,800.00
Sunday Envelopes (and loose):	\$2,214.00
Peter's Pence	\$25.00
Total Collections:	\$2,239.00

Dates to Remember: Meetings continue in an effort to get everyone updated to the new responsibilities of ministry in this time of change. Thanks to all of you who have come forward to learn and to volunteer! Many opportunities have been provided for learning, but if you are interested in beginning or continuing in a church ministry, and have missed the opportunities presented, please call the parish office. Only those folks who have been updated will be placed on the new ministry list. We need your help! Please come and be retrained.

Upcoming meetings include:

July 26 - **Parish Council** - immediately following Mass, in the school

July 29 - **Confirmation Candidates**, 7:00 pm, in the school

First Communion - August 30 at the Sunday morning Mass.

Confirmation: Confirmation for our youth will take place at St. Mary's Greensburg on Saturday morning **August 8th**. Seating will be limited due to social distancing. Only the candidate, the sponsor, and the parents of each candidate may attend this year. Masks will be required. Please remember to support our candidates with your prayer, and by notes and texts and calls. Congratulations to: **Emily Ann Georgi, Colton William Johannigman, Anthony Thomas Schwering, Benjamin Lawrence Stier, and Brian Patrick Wittkamper.**

Steeple: If the weather cooperates, and all goes as expected, we are looking at July 31 as the possible completion date for our steeple repair. The clock faces will be stenciled on as a last touch, this week or next.

You may have noticed a lift in front of the school. The much-needed **tuck pointing** has begun! The gentleman working with us is the brother of parishioner Tim Scheidler. We thank Tim for helping to get this project initiated!

We continue to be vigilant about activity at any time on our church property. Please call the parish office number before gathering, parking, or using the parish property for anything but essential meetings. Any and all unexplained activity will be carefully monitored for the safety of all. Thank you for assisting to keep everyone safe.

Religious Education of Youth 2020 - 2021: We are currently gearing up for the start of the 2020-21 Rel. Ed. program at Immaculate Conception. The new year will consist of new safety protocols and may look and feel different from what it has been in the past. We are currently reviewing recommendations from the Archdiocese to adapt to our program. Changes could include adjusted schedules, entrance protocols, staggered dismissal, and weekly disinfecting and cleaning of classrooms. More details will be coming regarding these changes in the next few weeks.

At this time, we would like to find out how many students we will have returning this year so that we can determine the number of books and materials needed, class day/time, and the number of catechists and aides required to safely function. If you are uncomfortable with your student returning or would like to consider a home-schooling option for other reasons, please indicate that on the enrollment form. Forms were mailed to all 2019-2020 program families. If for some reason you didn't receive an enrollment form and would like one, some are available in the back of church, or we would be happy to mail a copy at your request. It is **IMPORTANT** that you fill out and return the form to the Parish Office by July 31st. It is our goal to start classes soon after Labor Day.

Fees associated with the program are listed on the enrollment form. They have not changed. If these fees provide a hardship for your family, please reach out to the parish office. We would be happy to facilitate scholarships for those families in need.

CATECHIST & AIDES NEEDED! If you are interested in being a catechist or aide this year, please reach out to Melea Gault at 812-614-8874. As an added perk, the fees are **waived** for the children of our catechists and aides! That is a nice incentive! We are confident that we will need help! In addition, we are still without an **ARE**. This is a part-time paid position. If you are interested in learning more or know someone who might be interested, please contact Sister Donna.

The education of youth is primarily the responsibility of the parents. And they are the first and most important teachers, the models of living our faith that the young folks will indeed see and follow. However, it is the Christian duty and responsibility of each one of us to contribute to the awesome task! Some may volunteer time in the classroom. Some may want to donate to the Religious Education funding. But in addition, we will need folks to sanitize the space each week, similar to the church sanitizing already in place. If you don't feel called to teaching but would like to help in another way, please let us know. "We are Called, we are chosen, we are Christ for one another. We are promise for tomorrow!"

There will be no bulletin next weekend, as Sister Donna will be away for the wedding of a niece and Godchild. All other responsibilities have been delegated. Thank you to each person taking on additional work or ministry.

Immaculate Conception Parish

Financial Report

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

A summary of our annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2019-20 is on the reverse side of this paper. This report begins with July 1, 2019 and ends with June 30, 2020. Despite the great challenges of this Covid-19 year, including a three-month closure of our worship space, greatly decreased income over the three months, major expenses related to planned renovation of our church steeple, and some unforeseen deaths and loss of membership, we have somehow managed to close out the fiscal year on a positive note. We were blessed to end the year with a positive net surplus of \$17,131. This was due in large part to our very careful adherence to the projected budget, even though we had trimmed it to the bare bones already, and even though we fell \$10,000 short on our annual Collections budgeted this time last year. You might be asking, how is that even possible? How can we take in \$10,000 less than budgeted, yet still come out with a positive margin? One of the major contributing factors is that we have paid no salary out for a Religious Ed coordinator since the end of December. In addition to that role not being filled, we also saved on paying no stipends or fees for a Sacramental Minister for three months. Reduced as well were our heat and water bills. In addition, we applied for a Small Business loan which covered the PLC salary for two months. Chances are we will not need to repay that loan to the government. Even though we had savings in all of these areas, our usual Sunday collection as a normal resource, was pretty dried up. However, we were saved, last minute, by our annual endowment distribution in the amount of \$10,913. Thank heavens for the generosity, and “risk taking spirit” of our donors in past generations, who were willing to invest in the endowments. We are now reaping the benefits of their wisdom and insight. We would do well in future years to reinvest that distribution amount back into the endowment when possible, to help to provide for future generations. In recent years we have needed it to annually balance our budget. Auction net proceeds for 2019 were up a bit, which was very helpful to us! That \$15,000 for our **new** fiscal year will not be realized due to cancelling the Auction during this Covid-19 season.

Note that the Steeple fund is a designated fund, and does not figure into our annual budget at all. It will continue to be used for needed church related repairs, namely church tuck pointing, and then interior painting. Some of it rests in our savings account until needed. And some of it rests in our checking account until the steeple is completed.

Thank you to all those who continue to donate so generously! The Steeple project alone was a tremendous outpouring of support. We target a balance of three months of operating costs in our checking account at all times, and this year is a perfect example of why that is necessary. Even when our income was low to nothing, we were able to continue to pay our bills. We currently have exactly three months in checking.

We are grateful to all of you for your generosity!

Immaculate Conception Parish
Annual Financial Report July 2019-June 2020
Fiscal Year 2019-2020

INCOME				EXPENSES	
<i>Sunday and Holy Day Collection</i>	\$	128,223		Administration	\$ 13,060
Special Envelopes (ie Maintenance, Fuel, Faith Formation)		13,287		Cemetery	11,603
Endowment		10,913		Archdiocesan Assessment	22,355
Cemetery Bequest & Donations		10,250		Property Insurance	26,978
Archdiocesan Collections		5,455		Archdiocesan Collections	5,455
Donations		1,501		Faith Formation	961
Faith Formation		851		Auction	39,098
Auction		54,807		Personnel Expenses	64,672
Other Income		9,714		Utilities	16,421
Interest Income		1,444		Grounds/Maintenance	11,540
				Mowing Grounds	4,229
				Spiritual Life	3,043
TOTAL Income	\$	236,445		TOTAL Expense	\$ 219,415
				Net Surplus	\$ 17,030

As of June 30th:				Note
Checking Account Balance	\$	129,124		Contains \$88,328 of Steeple Fund
ADLF's (saving's Account)				
ADLF- Parish Savings			104,592	Contains \$25,000 of Steeple Fund
ADLF- Building/Maintenance Savings			59,197	Contains \$25,000 of Steeple Fund
ADLF- Cemetery Savings			60,048	
ADLF- Technology Savings			1,826	
Total ADLF (Savings):	\$		225,663	

Designated Fund for Steeple	\$		138,328	
-----------------------------	----	--	----------------	--

A frequently asked question relates to singing, choirs etc. When will we be able to resume? Is it safe to sing in a choir? In a congregation? With a cantor? The following arrived this week from the Office of Worship and the Archdiocesan Music Director:

SHORT ANSWER:

Cantors are allowed, with precautions. Congregational singing is up to the discretion of the pastor/PLC, with **heavy** precautions. Choral singing should be avoided entirely for the time being.

LONG ANSWER:

Like many questions surrounding COVID-19, the answer is not as clear cut as we would like. We are still learning about this virus and new information is coming out literally every day. Projections are being made and revised, and we try to keep our best practices up to date to protect ourselves and each other. What we should be able to agree on are a few principles:

1. The celebration of the Mass is the source and summit of our Christian faith.
2. Music is inextricably tied up in the liturgy. It is not just an add-on.
3. The safety of our parishioners and clergy must be prioritized, even if this means a deviation from our normal practices (those that are not non-negotiable).

Because we are directors of music, it is important for us to be able to explain the situation to others, as well. Here are some facts and resources to equip you. Please note that I am not a doctor. I am learning as much about this as you are and am trusting those with expertise in their fields for their study and analysis.

1. COVID-19 is spread via droplets emitted from sneezing, coughing, yelling, and even speaking and breathing. Sneezing and coughing tends to spread these droplets the farthest, somewhere around 6 feet or so. This is why our normal social distancing practice is to stay at least 6 feet away from others. Droplets almost immediately fall to the ground or other surfaces, and do not remain there for very long. Masks can help mitigate droplet transmission as well, catching droplets before they can travel that far. Remember that, even though the virus is small enough to get through the weave of a typical mask, it is the droplets in this case that are dangerous. The virus doesn't just float on its own; it needs a medium. Unfortunately, droplets are not the only vehicle for viral transmission.
2. Aerosols are fine liquids dispersed in the air. You emit aerosols whenever you breathe, but they usually do not travel very far when normally breathing or speaking. When singing or yelling, when you engage your diaphragm, you spread aerosols for much longer, in a much greater volume, and over a much greater distance. These aerosols can hang in the air for HOURS and can travel much farther than 6 feet. Unlike droplets, aerosols do not travel in a merely linear trajectory from your face, either. They fill up a space, especially one without adequate circulation. Consider that you can smell incense from all the way across the building. It is not limited by line-of-sight. Aerosols can and do transmit COVID-19, and this is the biggest risk

factor for singing. Masks are not nearly as effective at preventing the spread of aerosols as they are at stopping droplets.

3. The general formula for one's risk of becoming infected is (Exposure level x time). This means that both the level of exposure (how much of a viral load you are exposed to) and the length of time for which you are exposed are both factors in your risk to catch an illness. Again, choir rehearsal presents the perfect storm for this risk. We are in an enclosed space, with potentially dozens of singers emitting aerosols (already an increased spread of any contagion) for an extended period of time, especially at rehearsals. **There's no way to sing in a choir without practicing.**

4. Precautions like plexiglass and other barriers, for small ensembles, can help a little bit. They are certainly effective at preventing the spread of droplets, in some ways even more so than masks. However, unless each singer is completely enclosed, aerosols will still spread around a physical barrier. It's better than nothing, but it's not a perfect solution.

To sum up, I cannot in good conscience recommend a return to choral singing this fall. There are small ways to mitigate risk in singing, but not enough to make it safe for singers, especially since most of our choirs have a decent number of older people who are particularly at risk. If a smaller ensemble (like a quartet or so) could distance to 12 or 13 feet between singers and erect barriers like plexiglass and wear masks while singing (which is hard), it might be possible to do so safely. Even then, I would only risk it in a larger room with plenty of outside air circulation. The singing of a cantor to lead music is probably fine for now, if they are physically distanced from the instrumentalists and the congregation. Wind instruments pose a similar risk as singers do. Hopefully the infection rate will decrease enough to make choral singing possible again, or we will have an effective treatment or vaccine as soon as possible.

This is painful for me, as I'm sure it is for many of you. Choir directing and singing is what I love the most about our job (other than Jesus, of course). It takes quite a bit of risk for me to decide to have to put it away for now. Please pray for victims of COVID-19, please pray for doctors and other medical professionals who are searching for effective treatments and vaccines, and please pray for each other, that we prioritize the well-being of each other, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Thank you for your patience with my long-winded email!

Yours in Christ,

Andrew R. Motyka

Director of Archdiocesan and Cathedral Liturgical Music

Archdiocese of Indianapolis