

September 20, 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:

September 20 - 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Barbara Sandhage
September 27 - 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Kathryn Schoettmer
October 4 - 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Carolyn Schoettmer
October 11 - 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Cathy Wittkamper
October 18 - 29th Sunday in Ordinary time - Barbara Sandhage
October 25 - 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Albert Naderman
November 1 – All Saints Day – Carolyn Schoettmer

Today, September 20th is **Catechetical Sunday!** We will acknowledge and bless our Catechists and Aides. These ladies are blazing new trails with all classes on Sunday morning, and all new COVID precautions. We are most grateful for their time, their talent, their bravery, their dedication, and their team work, in providing for a safe environment to pass on our FAITH to our youth! May each one be blessed!

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

We are most grateful for your continued financial support. This was a very good week! 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.

Stewardship of Treasure: Our Sunday Collections: September 13, 2020

*Needed each weekend to meet budget:	\$2,800.00
Sunday Envelopes (and loose):	\$3,463.00
Catholic University of America	\$142.00
Religious Education	\$120.00
Energy (Fuel)	\$100.00
Total Collections:	\$3,825.00

Today we have a **Special Collection** envelope, and we really need your support. The collection is for our own **Religious Education** program. Due to all of the COVID-19 precautions our expenditures are over budget. We have ordered all one-time use pamphlets to replace the text books. And in addition, have had to deep clean and will be doing weekly sanitizing. We purchased hand sanitizer and wipes for each classroom in addition to other cleaning supplies. There is nothing more important to our parish than passing on our faith to our children! Please be generous if you can.

Dates to Remember:

September 20 - Catechetical Sunday
September 23 - Parish Council 6 pm in Office Building

Steeple: As one approaches the parish from either direction, the East or the West, the shining white steeple is a beacon of faith and hope! The project is finally complete. And the finished effect is one we can all be proud of. It is a beautiful sight to behold as one approaches from the East at sunrise. And at sunset, the same glory is visible as one approaches from the opposite direction. Hopefully it will be welcoming folks long after all of us are gone to our rest. Let it be a source of pride! But more importantly, let it lift our thoughts and voices in prayer of praise and thanksgiving!

I can't speak to the **Fall Work Day** yet, because as this is written it has not yet happened. But already before the actual day there are thanks in order! We are most grateful to Norb Bedel for mowing the lot around the pond and between the school yard and the corn field. Likewise, we are grateful to Tim Scheidler for mowing the cemetery lot and beyond. Thanks to Steve Stone and Jessie Hamilton for earth moving back at the cemetery drive way. And thanks to Mike Bedel for scraping, repairing, even replacing glass, and then painting the two sacristy doorways. There is still plenty to do, but with this nice weather, a lot is getting finished! God bless those who repeatedly say "yes"!

Liturgical Ministries

September 20

Ushers: Mark Stier, Aaron Gault, Tim Hoeing

Lector: Niki Johannigman

Eucharistic Minister: Melea Gault

September 27

Jerry Fry, Don Fry, Tim Scheidler, Mark Hermes

Ben Stier

Jeanne Fry

Veterans Day – Who are our Veterans? We are aware of Ralph Hermes, and this week we added Carl Moorman, and Alfred Diekhoff to our list. But there must be more. With Veterans Day approaching we are reaching out to all of you to tell us who in our parish has served their country? We will try to honor, respect, and acknowledge each one. If you are a veteran or know someone who is, please share your secret!

You may be aware that September is **National Suicide prevention month**, a time to share resources and stories in an effort to shed light on this highly taboo and stigmatized topic. Suicide is the **tenth** leading cause of death in the United States. With effective care, suicidal thoughts are treatable, and suicide is preventable. Less than half of the adults in the United States get the help they need. In 2017, over 47,000 Americans took their own lives. The national suicide rate has been rising steadily since the mid-2000's. However, the increase is not distributed evenly among regions or demographic groups. Nationally, men are significantly more likely to commit suicide than women. Racial disparities in suicide rates are clear from the national data: the rate for **whites** and Native Americans is much higher than for African Americans or Asians. Over-all, middle-aged adults have the highest suicide rate nationally. But rates are rising for the elderly, and the youth of our nation. Every year thousands of individuals die by suicide, leaving behind their friends and family members to navigate the tragedy of loss. In many cases, friends and families affected by a suicide loss, are left in the dark. They don't see it coming. They wonder, and try to go back and see what they may have missed along the way. Too often the feelings of shame and stigma prevent them from talking openly as they need to do. We all grieve in different ways, but most need the support of other people to help them process the loss, and make sense of the tragedy. Many more families have been touched by this tragedy than we can imagine. Many suicides are never publicly acknowledged. And many families keep their secret for a lifetime, thus unable to truly heal.

If you or someone you love is struggling with depression and/or thinking about suicide, get help now. The national **Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-8255**, is a free resource that is available, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for anyone who is in emotional distress. You can also **text "Talk" to 741741** to confidentially text with a trained counselor for free, 24/7. Please use this month to reach out to those affected by suicide, raise awareness, and connect individuals to assistance, or treatment services.

Please don't think it won't happen here. It has. And it will again. When in doubt, contact your family physician.

COVID RELATED PRECAUTIONS:

A word from the Archdiocese concerning **The Sunday Mass Dispensation:**

“While commending our pastors and parish life coordinators who have gone to great lengths to assure safe worship spaces in our churches, due to the increase in the COVID-19 cases in our state, the Indiana Bishops have decided to extend the dispensation from the obligation of Sunday Mass attendance until November 1, 2020, unless further developments determine otherwise.”

The update goes on to say that all people 65 or older and those who are sick or have medical conditions that make them especially vulnerable to the coronavirus are encouraged to remain at home. While this is a relief to some, it comes as a blow to many of our elders. Many of them are longing to rejoin us on Sundays. We at Immaculate Conception will welcome all, and encourage each person to make individual and appropriate decisions, based on their condition and personal judgement. We will continue to create and maintain a safe environment for all who choose to attend. Putting all judgements aside, we will support the individual’s freedom of choice. All who attend, however, will need to continue safe practices, by masking, hand sanitizing, and safe distancing. We are grateful to our ushers and will continue to follow their direction. They are attentive and aware of how to accommodate the group. We cannot afford to become lax. Thanks again to Donna and Sarah Schwering who are now doing weekly sanitizing to all touch areas in both the Church and the School buildings.

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.

I draw your attention to an article in the **Criterion** last week, appearing on page 2, related to the obligation, or dispensation from the obligation, to attend Sunday Mass. The article clearly educates us on all related questions from Canon Law to “**inconvenience.**” Many have questions. Many are concerned that those currently not attending will never come back. Some no longer feel the obligation at all. And our elders, who are completely vulnerable, are the ones who struggle with guilt and long to return. Hope this article clears up some of the misconceptions. Please remember that there are no obligations at this time. We will resume normal attendance Nov. 1st, unless informed otherwise.

As we struggle with the dangers of the coronavirus perhaps it’s time once again to “**Whistle a Happy Tune.**” As the song says, to convince ourselves that we are not afraid. Facing our fears, against a common foe may be an evolutionary step in learning how to live together into the future.

Prayer During a Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced

Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors

Remember those who are most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home

Remember those who must choose between preserving their health or paying their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close

Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips

Remember those that have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market

Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home

Remember those who have no home.

As fear continues to grip our country,

Let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,

Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.

Amen.

SEASON OF CREATION – Week 3:

Ponder: Reading

Creation – be it planets, plants, or pandas – was not just a warm up act for the human story or the Bible. The natural world is its own good and sufficient story, if only we can learn to see it with humility and love. That takes contemplative practice, stopping our busy and superficial minds long enough to see the beauty, allow the truth, and protect the inherent goodness of what is – whether it profits me, pleases me or not.

Every gift of food and water, every act of simple kindness, every ray of sunshine, every mammal caring for her young, all of it emerged from this original and intrinsically good creation. Humans were meant to know and enjoy this ever-present reality – a reality we often fail to praise, or maybe worse, ignore and take for granted.

Richard Rohr: *The Universal Christ*, P. 58

Pray: Response

May God bless us not with clean air alone,
But the will to keep our air clean.

May God bless us not with a vision of a healthy planet alone,
But with the will to do all in our power to restore and maintain our planet's health.

May God bless us not with a change of heart in the great world leaders alone to save our planet.
But with a change in our own heart to use our own power to save the planet.

May the blessing of God not bring to us saints alone,
But make of us saints greater than any we imagine.

Daniel J. Mc Gill: *Life Prayers from Around the World*, P. 120

Practice:

Each day choose one creature (plant, animal, mineral, element) to contemplate and to thank for its being and teaching about the goodness of God.