

September 27, 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 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

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

We are most grateful for your continued financial support. 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 20, 2020

*Needed each weekend to meet budget: **\$2,800.00**

Sunday Envelopes (and loose): \$1189.00

Catholic University of America \$10.00

Religious Education \$388.00

Energy (Fuel) \$500.00

Total Collections: \$2,087.00

A **Special Collection** next Sunday for the Energy needs of our parish. The envelope is in your box. On October 18, we celebrate **World Mission Sunday** and the Special Collection will be sent to the missions. Do you remember the days of our youth when we saved money for the “pagan babies?” This is the same collection. This year we are inviting our children to offer envelopes as well for this special cause. The **challenge** is on to see which class can raise the most to feed these starving children.

Dates to Remember:

- The next two Sundays, Oct. 4 and Oct. 11, there will be **no Religious Ed. classes**, as the schools are scheduled for Fall break. Enjoy your time off! But please remember that every Sunday belongs to God.
- October is when we usually celebrate our **Parish Harvest Party**. There is no safe way to do that this year, but we will resume this celebration next Fall.
- October is the month of the **Rosary**. Just like last year, we are invited to join in the Patriotic Rosary for the United States of America, for the consecration of our nation. We would like to add the intentions of a safe election season, the end of the Covid-19 pandemic, and for Peace in our land. Please join us in the parking lot of St. Mary’s Church on October 10th at 12:00 noon, for the outdoor prayer and blessing. More details next week. We are hoping for a delegation to represent us.
- The Deanery is sponsoring a **Rosary Campaign** as well, offering eight days of outdoor rosaries at eight different locations throughout the Deanery. Beginning Oct. 6 at St. Joseph, Shelbyville, and running through October 13th. A flyer with more details and locations is promised for next week.

- October 26, Monday, we will begin our Archdiocesan Audit, which happens every three years. Our financial records, meeting minutes and parish processes will be reviewed and assessed. Pray that we have everything in order and clearly recorded.

Parish Statistics: We have some monthly reports and some quarterly reports. But one set of numbers that we are required to submit annually concerns our membership and numbers. Because this information was just submitted, it seems like a good time to update all of you as well. Our numbers over-all, are declining. That is no surprise. Judging from our data base, the estimated number of registered individuals (including all children) is **344**, down from 360. The number of households registered is **141** down from 156 of a year ago. We all know that the virus is impacting attendance, but these numbers include all people who remain registered even though they are social distancing or homebound. Our average weekend attendance before the virus was 160 to 180. Post virus we are enjoying 130 on a good weekend, but an average of 86. We know that attendance has increased as of late, partly because our children have returned. We also know that the elders are still waiting for Nov. 1 for their official return. So, numbers will continue to climb. Statistically we are seeing **75%** of our pre-virus attendance. Relative to all other parishes that is extremely good! Most are averaging 50 -60 % and some even 40%. Our envelopes, and giving, is stable. With the Capital Campaign for our steeple in December, we anticipated a drop in our income early in the season. Pre-virus we were averaging \$2,200 – \$2,500 per weekend. Beginning in March we saw a drastic decline with the closure. People began new patterns of giving, some weekly drop offs, some mailed in checks, and some have gone to monthly rather than weekly offerings. We have stabilized, and though there are weekly fluctuations, we are meeting budget. We are able to pay our bills. March and April hurt us, but we are regaining our momentum. If you recall, in March we submitted our annual budget with a deficit, due to not having the Auction income this year. Because some of our expenses are down as well, we are in a fairly good place.

We did finish paying all bills related to the steeple repair, and that will all be presented as a separate report very soon. Some money remains in that account. We used money from our savings account to accomplish the tuckpointing on the school and office building. And we used money from our cemetery fund to pay for the new row of headers and to begin the cemetery drive. Thanks to these two savings accounts, we were able to continue needed repairs even during a time when income was low. Some parishes are struggling, some are not, but we are fairly comfortable (and grateful!). If income continues and we are able to meet or exceed our needs by the end of the fiscal year, even without the Auction income, we would like to replenish those two saving accounts. That may happen over a couple of years.

Continuing with statistics, we recorded only **1** baptism this year, down from an average of 5-6 the past few years. We had **4** First Communions, and **5** Confirmations. Burials have been averaging 11-12 per year for the past few years, and this year number **19**. That will help to explain our declining numbers. We indeed are an aging community. Through no fault of our own, our numbers will continue to decline. There has been 1 wedding recorded in the past six years, so we are not building our family base, but we are losing our elders to natural causes.

In spite of our age and decline, our Buildings and Grounds team is accomplishing great things! The Fall Work Day was a great success! Ruts left by the tuckpointing lift were filled and seeded; lots of trimming was completed around our tress and clumps of trees; the cemetery headers were framed and cement was poured on Wednesday evening; and the new steps for the West Sacristy entrance were framed. We were blessed by a nice cool and sunny day! And by the hard work and generous giving of our men: Ken Stone, Steve Stone, Dave Stone, Mike Bedel, Jerry Fry, Don Fry, Mike Johannigman, Tom Johannigman, Mike Ortman, Mark Hermesch, and Alvin Hoeng. We are extremely grateful for each one and for the long day of hard labor. Our parish grounds are looking good! Throughout the week other tasks have continued, including painting of trim around the back side of the church building, thanks to Mike Bedel; and much work around the pond by Steve Stone.

During our house arrest time in March and April, one of our parishioners, Mark Hermesch, spent time creating very nice **wooden crosses** to adore our homes and office spaces. They disappeared quickly when we are returned. In the meantime, he has continued creating. Additional crosses have been donated, and will be blessed, before being placed in the entry way for you to pick up and enjoy. Thanks, Mark!

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!

Confessions: Some have been asking about confessions and when the sacrament might become available. Because Fr. Santhosh has a 6:30 am Mass at Batesville before coming here, and because he sometimes has a later Mass after leaving here, Confessions will be limited to **every other Sunday**, after Mass. Beginning with October, the sacrament of Penance, or Confession will immediately follow Mass on the 4th and the 18th. In November the dates are the 1st, the 15th and the 29th. I will post a note on the Confessional noting those dates.

For the season of Advent, the Deanery has decided to cancel all **Penance Services** usually scheduled throughout the Deanery. However, a flyer will be posted noting when individual Confessions are available throughout the Deanery so that all may avail those times and places.

Liturgical Ministries

September 27

Ushers: Jerry Fry, Don Fry, Tim Scheidler,
Mark Hermesch

Lector: Ben Stier

Eucharistic Minister: Jeanne Fry

Musicians:

October 4

Arron Gault, Mitch & Lori Nobbe

Mary Jo Wenning

Cindy Johannigman

Men's Choir

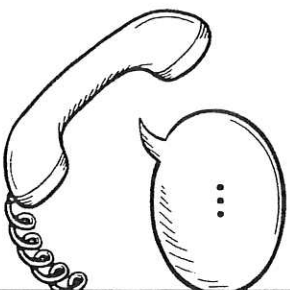
Veterans Day – Who are our Veterans? We are aware of Ralph Hermesch, and this week we added Carl Moorman, and Alfred Diekhoff to our list. But there must be more. With Veterans Day approaching we are reaching out to all of you to tell us who in our parish has served their country? We will try to honor,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

COVID RELATED PRECAUTIONS:

Many of our elders 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 for all of their faithful leadership during these past few months, and will continue to follow their direction. However, beginning next weekend, Oct. 4th, we will begin to relax our social distancing precautions a bit to allow for additional seating. We will add chairs to the aisles, and a few in the back of the church as space allows. Because our cloth covered chairs are not suitable for sanitizing, we will be using only metal folding chairs. However, we will begin allowing each family to seat themselves, giving due respect to each other and maintaining the safe distance as prescribed. After this weekend, and with the Governor's new guidelines, we will remove the tape barriers from the pews, allowing greater flexibility. Please be attentive to each other and continue to allow at least three feet of space or more as able. The ushers will assist as needed, but we are shifting responsibility to the individual. If assistance is needed please ask an usher. If this causes undue chaos we will return to our current practice. Please be safe.

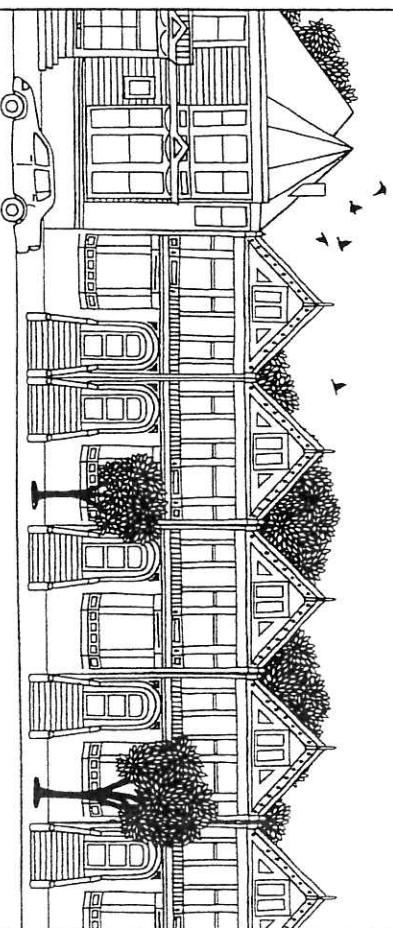
A reminder too, to please arrive on time. The ushers need to report a final count so that hosts may be counted out. The later you are, the later their count, the later Mass may begin. Again, please be respectful.

31. Say a simple, short prayer like "Thank you, God, for all the fun that Robbie had today and for all his new friends" when you pick up your child from a place where he had a wonderful time.
32. Say a short prayer of hope such as "God help me to use the gift of this day to its fullest" when you wake your child to a brand-new day.
33. Offer a prayer when you're facing an unpleasant task.
34. Say a prayer of acceptance when your child exhibits a trait that gets under your skin.
35. Pray for your child when she is facing a difficult challenge (a test, a party where she doesn't know anyone, a first visit to a new park or playground).
36. Bless your child's forehead as he leaves the house. Bless his forehead when he returns home.
37. Say a prayer for the caller who drones on and on. Pray for patience too.
38. Say a prayer that God will be with you and that you will be with God when you feel the need to stand up for what you believe in.
39. Say a prayer when you feel tempted to do something you know is not right or in the best interest of your soul.
40. Say a prayer for guidance when you are at your wit's end and don't know what to do next.



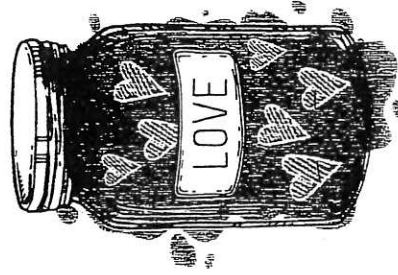
40 Ways to Foster Prayer in Your Home

From *Raising Faith-Filled Kids* by Tom McGrath



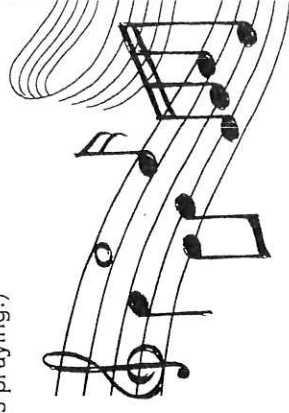
What did St. Paul mean when he said we should "pray unceasingly"? Should we all join a monastery? Or maybe he was talking to people who are perennially in need of prayer, like Chicago Cubs fans. If we look carefully, our daily lives offer infinite opportunities to pray nonstop. Here are forty that came to my mind. Add your own to the list.

1. Teach your children one of the classic prayers.
2. Pray before meals together, whether a standard prayer or a spontaneous one.
3. Substitute a short prayer for any "expletive deleted's" you might use. Better your children hear "God bless it" than a close alternative.
4. Pray spontaneously with your children at bedtime.
5. Say an Our Father whenever you start a long car trip.
6. Create a May altar in your home with a statue of Mary surrounded by flowers.
7. Buy or make a beautifully scripted prayer or Bible verse and hang it on a wall in your home.
8. Commemorate the anniversary of a loved one's death by praying for him or her.
9. Keep a prayer jar for special prayer intentions or requests.
10. Start your day with a time of quiet prayer or meditation; encourage your children to do so also.
11. Visit the cemetery and pray for your dearly departed.
12. Have everyone in the family take turns praying for one of the other family members during the day for a whole week. Switch prayer partners every week.
13. Pray for the president, your congressional representatives, your mayor, and other civic officials.
14. Pray for church leaders and your parish clergy and ministers.
15. Imitate the great saint Dorothy Day, who spent time praying for



those who were so forlorn that they were about to commit suicide at that moment.

16. Find out when a family member's important meeting or test is and remember to pray at that time.
17. Turn every worry that drifts into your thoughts into a prayer.
18. Pray for every person who is a source of resentment for you.
19. Pray for the person who cuts you off in traffic.
20. Pray for the person who is the subject of a juicy rumor (instead of passing the gossip on).
21. Pray for people who are homeless or down on their luck. (Slipping them a buck or two also constitutes praying.)
22. Sing your favorite hymn from church while driving in the car, showering, or doing housework.
23. Pray while you're reading the newspaper.
24. Pray for the person in need when you hear an ambulance's siren.
25. Pray for a teacher you are grateful you had when you were in school.
26. Pray for a teacher you are grateful your child has now.
27. Give thanks at mealtimes for the farmer who grew the food, the workers (often grossly underpaid) who picked the crops, and the people who processed, handled, delivered, and sold the food. Thank God for the sun and soil and water that made it possible.
28. Pray at bedtime for someone who did a kindness to you today.
29. Visit family members in a nursing home and pray with them.
30. Send a letter to a distant relative, saying you remember him or her in your prayers.



Prayer for the Elections

God of our nation,

We ask for your guidance as we approach our election season.

Send your Spirit of wisdom to enlighten our choices as we select men and women for key government roles.

Give us hearts that promote the welfare of every person, regardless of race, religion, or age; make us seekers of the common good and champions of unity and peace.

Through our discernment, may we look beyond political loyalties to stand with each person as brother and sister, promoting basic human rights and dignity for all.

Help us to seek truth and Christian values in our candidates and in ourselves. May our vote be a testimony to the strength of our faith in Jesus Christ, who chose to identify with all humanity, especially the poor and marginalized.

Recreate us, gracious God; may our country humbly assume its leadership role in this world, promoting the values of your kingdom and the reign of justice for all people everywhere, as you intended. Amen.

SEASON OF CREATION—WEEK 4:

PRAY: Praise for all Creation

In the beginning, Lord my God, you alone existed:
eternally one yet pregnant to the fullness of unity.

Full to overflowing, you Father/Mother of All Life
exploded outward in a billion bits and pieces.

Your Word became flesh, whirling in shining stars,
shimmering suns, and in genesis glimmering galaxies.

You, my God, spoke and your words became flesh: in sun, moon, earth and seas,
mountains and gentle hills, rolling rivers and silent streams.

You, my God, spoke and your words became flesh: in winged bird, in deer and elephant,
in grazing cow, racing horse, and fish of the deep.

And all your words were beautiful, and all were good.

From each of these holy words arose a prayer of praise and adoration to you,
their Creator and wondrous womb.

PETITION:

O Sacred Spirit, O Divine Breath of Life:

--unseal my ears that they may ever listen to your continuous canticle of creation

--open my heart and my whole self to sing in harmony with all Creation's many voices

--teach me how to commune with your first Word made flesh—your creation, that I may be able to unravel the wondrous words of your second Word made flesh, Jesus.

--teach me to see myself as another word of yours made flesh to your glory and honor.

Adapted from Edward Hays, Pray all Ways, pp. 26-28

PONDER AND PRACTICE:

Spend a few minutes outside each day (or more) to allow any one of God's first spoken words to reveal the mystery of the Divine presence in all Creation and lift your voice with it to give God praise and thanksgiving.