

October 4, 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:

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

Our prayers are with the following families who have lost loved ones: on Thursday we buried **Clara Marie (Hardebeck) Wagner**, next to her husband Paul. Clara Marie was a parishioner of St. John Osgood, having attended grade school here at Immaculate Conception.

On Friday, **Erika Jo Maples**, daughter of former parishioners, Jason and Tricia Maples was laid to rest at St. Ann's, North Vernon, following a long struggle with Pulmonary Fibrosis. She was only 27 years old, recently living in Indianapolis.

And on Saturday, the cremated remains of **John Wolfe** were buried here at Immaculate Conception beside his wife, Ruth. May they all rest in Peace!

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

Special prayers are requested for **Nell Ann Pfeifer**, who is nearing the end of her journey with cancer. Nell Ann was hospitalized this week, and on Friday brought back to her home. Her family has gathered. Visits and calls are discouraged, but please keep them all in prayer.

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): \$1,437.00

Assumption \$15.00

Religious Education \$245.00

Total Collections: \$1,697.00

A **Special Collection** today 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:

- Today Oct. 4, and next Sunday, 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. This week we completed the 24 page questionnaire.

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. This information will be repeated for the next couple of weeks until all have seen it.

During our house arrest time in March and April, one of our parishioners, Mark Hermes, spent time creating very nice **wooden crosses** to adorn our homes and office spaces. They disappeared quickly when we all

returned to church. In the meantime, he has continued creating. Additional crosses have been donated, and have been blessed. They are available for pick up in the entry way. Enjoy! Thanks, Mark!

Thanks too to Mark Stier for spending two entire evenings getting our Church and School **heating systems** ready for the season. Both buildings are set to timers to ensure our comfort.

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.

Ten of our young parishioners will celebrate their **First reconciliation**, (or Penance, or Confession) on Sunday morning **December 6th**. We will publish names as we get nearer to the event. But all Religious Ed. students will need to add this date to their class schedule. Classes will meet as usual immediately after Mass, and then reassemble in Church as ALL are provided with the opportunity for individual Reconciliation.

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 themselves of those times and places.

Liturgical Ministries

October 4

Ushers: Arron Gault, Mitch & Lori Nobbe
Lector: Mary Jo Wenning
Eucharistic Minister: Cindy Johannigman
Musicians: Men's Choir

October 11

Mark Stier, Aaron Gault, Tim Hoeing
Jerry Fry
LaDonna Hoeing

Veterans Day – Who are our Veterans? We are still hoping for more names. There are six on 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.

SEASON OF CREATION – Week 5:

Pray:

ARAMAIC VERSION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos

Focus your light within is – make it useful.

Create your reign of unity now—

through our fiery heart and willing hands

help us love beyond our ideals

and sprout acts of compassion for all creatures.

Animate the earth within us: we then

feel the Wisdom underneath supporting all.

Untangle the knots within

so that we can mend our hearts' simple ties

to each other.

Don't let surface things delude us,

but free us from what holds us back

from our true purpose.

Out of you, the astonishing fire,

returning light and sound to the cosmos. Amen.

by Neil Douglas-Klotz from website, www.spiritheart.org

Ponder: ANOTHER FORM OF EUCHARIST

Eucharist comes in many forms.

Yesterday at dawn I stepped onto the round, white stones

Of Lake Michigan's vast shore;

I felt the deepest communion with all that exists, especially

With the One who woos my heart.

Today as the retreat house bell calls the women to come and receive,

I stand before the full-bodied, incandescent, maple tree, sunshine

Illuminating its golden leaves like a host held high in the blue sky.

I stand in creation's communion line,

I bow my head, open my heart, and receive Eucharist once again.

by Joyce Rupp from *Prayer Seeds* page 156

Practice:

Each day ask yourself, "What knots within do I ask to be untangled?" and/or

"Where do I stand in creation's communion line today?"