

March 21, 2021

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:

March 21 – 5th Sunday of Lent – Carolyn Schoettmer

March 28 – Palm Sunday – Barbara Sandhage

April 1 - Holy Thursday – For Members of our Parish (6:00 pm)

April 2 – Good Friday – (6:00 pm)

April 4 – Easter Sunday - Ambrose & Elizabeth Volk

Hot off the press: In the fall of 2018, Archbishop Charles Thompson launched a major strategic and pastoral planning process for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He appointed a 25-member planning committee composed of Chancery Staff, priests, deacons, laity, and agency representatives. They based their planning and research on Pope Francis’ 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium – The Joy of the Gospel*. On Friday we received the fruits of their labor, an Archdiocesan Strategic and Pastoral Plan for 2021-2024, reminding us of our ultimate goal to make Christ present in our world and to bring the world to Christ. This strategic plan sets goals and objectives for the Archdiocese, and challenges all of us to see the future church in terms of **Mission**. A limited number of copies are available in the entry way. It will serve as a framework for our local parish planning. Implementation will follow. A letter from our Chancellor is on the bulletin board.

The annual “**Budget Guidelines**” (25 pages) have also arrived, and will keep us busy for the next few weeks.

We continue to pray for peace in our country, in our parish, and in our own hearts. In addition, we recognize our own responsibility to be people of peace in all of our endeavors. As a Community, we join in prayer for the transformation of our hearts, our families, our parish, our political systems, and our country.

“God of all, IGNITE us with the fire of your love. INFLAME our hearts with courage to embrace dialogue that transforms and truth that frees. KINDLE our love with kindness to heal divisions and reconcile relationships. LIGHT our imaginations with insight to envision and create a world where all are one. STIR our actions with justice and peace to engage critical concerns and cherish all of life. FIRE our lives with audacity and hope to risk all for God’s mission.”

LENT – is meant to be a “time out” of time – a piece of life dedicated to rethinking all of it. It’s time to ask where we were last year at this time and where we are now. Or, most of all, where we want to be? And, what do we need to get there?

Lent leads us to the resurrection of our souls from the emptiness of purpose, to the model of the self-giving, Jesus, whose cross calls us to spend our own lives for the good of others.

Lent calls us to take the space and time we need to make the changes of life we need. It’s about plotting our own renewal into a more peaceful, a more regular, a less hectic self. It’s about sinking into the kind of personal reflection that brings us to confront the self for which we seek. Lent is the time to renew the best in us.

Concerning COVID vaccinations: ALL people 45 years of age and older are now eligible for the free vaccine. We are no longer working with a deficit. Indiana is rolling out a well-organized and safe execution of the vaccine distribution. We are hopeful that as many parishioners as possible will take the road to safety. It is ours to remain cautious, to follow all previous guidelines, and to continue distancing, masking, and sanitizing. As more people are vaccinated, more will be able to **safely** return to church attendance. Let's do it for one another.

Remember in Prayer: Benji Ortman, Gary Chandler, Jim Price, Ruth Atchley, Rylie Bennett, Denis DiGiusto, and all those newly infected with the COVID 19 virus and their families.

Confession times: Confession time is offered each Sunday morning following Mass. Just take a seat on the St. Denis bench and Father will notice you. If there is another time that you prefer, let me know and we will try to arrange it.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will also be available at our neighboring parishes, note St. Louis, Batesville, Friday, **March 26** - 9am - 1pm; 2:30pm - 6:30pm. Please see the Bulletin insert for additional opportunities within the Deanery. In addition, the **Outdoor "Way of the Cross"** is being offered as a safer option than indoor services. Also, on the bulletin insert, are locations offering outdoor stations. There will be station booklets available in the entryway. Pick them up for use at home. But do NOT bring them back.

Stewardship of Treasure: Our Sunday Collections: March 14, 2021

*Needed each weekend to meet budget:	\$2,800.00
Sunday Envelopes (and loose):	\$1,897.00
Catholic Home Missions:	\$20.00
Catholic Relief Services:	\$131.00
Energy:	\$100.00
Criterion:	\$50.00
Total Collections:	\$2,198.00

Dates to Remember:

March 28 – First Communion Parents Meeting, following Mass, in gym

April 18 – Sunday, Confirmation Practice, for candidates and sponsors, St. Mary's 12:30pm

April 24 – Confirmation with Archbishop Thompson, St. Mary's, (Candidates, sponsors and parents only)

April 25 – Sunday, First Communion Practice, parents and children, immediately following Mass

May 2 – Sunday, First Communion during regular Parish Mass

Liturgical Ministries

March 21

Ushers: Mark Stier, Aaron Gault, Don Fry

Lector: Melea Gault

Musicians: Men's Choir

March 28

Jerry Fry, Don Fry, Tim Scheidler

Ben Stier

the Schwerings with Abby

Passion Narrator: Jerry Fry

Passion Voice & Crowd: LaDonna Hoeing

The Knights of St. John: All-You-Can-Eat Fish Fry, 5-7:30, Apr. 2nd. **\$10.00, Carry Out** with limited seating based on State of Indiana Guidelines the day of the event.

Cemetery prepares for annual clean up: before mowers can begin, and that day is quickly approaching, the winter decorations, worn and tattered flowers and wreaths, and all types of flying debris need to be collected and removed. This is a reminder that all grave adornments need to be placed only on the monument itself, or on a shepherd's crook. Families members are asked to assist in the clean up of the graves of loved ones. The Cemetery Committee will finish the process in the very near future, perhaps as soon as this week.

Annually we receive **Lenten Guidelines from the Office of Worship**, reviewing rituals for this season, suggestions, and updated regulation. We received those guidelines and were informed that they were waiting to include the very latest state mandates on COVID and to include updated protocols for this year, Lent 2021. The very first words on the page were this:

The dispensation from the obligation to participate at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation is extended in the Archdiocese and throughout the whole State of Indiana until further notice.

Some were hoping the dispensation would be lifted. It was not. Please see a summary of the document on the bulletin insert of last week.

One of the precautions that we **WILL** let go of, is that of not using the kneelers. Thank you so much for being patient with this process. As you recall, the kneelers were not sanitized weekly, because of the cloth surface, and risk of mildew. So not using them was a far better choice than the risk of contamination. However, we are hoping the greatest risk is behind us there. We will still **not** be sanitizing them, but are hopeful that this is a good time to resume kneeling once again. Beginning immediately, we will resume our prior posture of kneeling for prayer as we enter the church, during the consecration and immediately after communion. Falling back into the old habit won't be hard. We are accustomed to respecting the Eucharist. Breaking the old habit was very difficult. The rest of our "frequently touched surfaces" will continue to be sanitized after each use, to keep any virus carried in under good control.

On March 17th we received an updated Executive Order from Gov. Eric Holcomb, with continuing guidelines. It places Decatur County clearly in the blue metric at present, which is the lowest rate of disease transfer since September. If you remember, when we reached that plateau in Fall, we felt able to remove the tape on the pews and allow open seating in our Church. We are **NOT** relieved of the need for safe distancing, and are encouraged to continue the six-foot space at all times inside or out. However, if we are able to maintain that blue status for two consecutive weeks, we might be able to place the responsibility for spacing ourselves up to each individual, or up to each family. We are hoping that enough people are vaccinated now to prevent the spikes that we saw in December. We are also hoping that our Easter crowd will be able to fill in comfortably also maintaining the six-foot distancing that you model. If the tape is gone next week, it means we are moving forward, safely. The tape on the floor will remain to guide our steps. If there are new spikes related to "spring break" aftermath, then the tape will remain or be replaced. As always, if you need help finding a safe space, our ushers are there to help.

Yes, we will have **palms** next Sunday! However, we will not process in with them. They will be up front. They will be blessed, and then they will be distributed. There is an ample supply ordered so feel free to pick up more after Mass.