

April 11, 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@millhousenchurch.com

Easter, just like Lent, is a season, a “growing into new life” season. And new life is springing up all around us! Hopefully it is growing within us as well! Each week, for the next two months or so, is a celebration of one kind of life after another. Stay tuned as we celebrate, Confirmations, First Communion, graduations, Mothers, Anniversaries, and much more. Let the Alleluias ring out!!

Today, we welcome, and celebrate the life of Fr. Jey among us. We know everyone wants to meet and greet him. We were waiting for Lent to end. And we were waiting for a nice warm day so that we could socialize a bit outside. Every Sunday for the next several months has something already scheduled, meetings, rehearsals, practices, sacraments, brunches, etc. so this may be our best opportunity to welcome and meet him. Immediately following Mass, doughnuts and juice will be served out on the driveway. Please grab a bite, and introduce yourselves to Fr. Jey. Yes, COVID numbers continue to rise in our state and county, so please, safe distance, and mask when not eating. But take a moment to warmly welcome him without hugs or handshakes.

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

Mass Intentions:

April 11 – Second Sunday of Easter - Carolyn Schoettmer

April 18 – Third Sunday of Easter – Barbara Sandhage

April 25 – Fourth Sunday of Easter – Cheryl Johannigman

May 2 – Fifth Sunday of Easter – Joseph & Lenora Diekhoff

May 9 – Sixth Sunday of Easter – Mother’s Day – Martha Fry

May 16 – The Ascension – Carolyn Schoettmer

May 23 – Pentecost Sunday – Barbara Sandhage

May 30 – Trinity Sunday – Cheryl Johannigman

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.

Stewardship of Treasure: Our Sunday Collections: April 4, 2021

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

Sunday Envelopes (and loose): \$2,919.00

Maintenance Fund: \$613.00

Total Collections: \$3,532.00

Easter Memorials: We are grateful for the contributions that have arrived to help defray the cost of Easter Flowers. They were received in honor of, or in memory of the following people:

Martha Fry, Bob & Velma Fry, Wayne Fry, Everett & Mary Ann Wenning, Fr. Bob Singelyn

Dates to Remember:

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, during Mass, honor our Confirmation Candidates, outdoor reception to follow.
April 25 – Sunday, First Communion Practice, parents and children, immediately following Mass
May 2 – Sunday, First Communion during regular Parish Mass, pictures follow, in front of school.
May 9 – Mother’s Day, May Crowning
May 16 – honor our graduates during Mass

Liturgical Ministries

April 11

Ushers: Mark Hermes, Mitch & Lori Nobbe

Lector: Melea Gault

Musicians: The Schwerings with Abby

April 18

Mark Stier, Aaron Gault, Tim Hoeing

Nikki Johannigman

Men’s Choir

Decatur County Board of Health: You are all aware that the Governor, though still strongly encouraging continuation of the precautions that he put into place, until the time when we reach herd immunity, has now shifted the responsibility for COVID mandates and safety precautions, to the local County Health Department and City government. Marion County, and Indianapolis, the most highly populated area of our state, has already stated that it will continue the current precautions, at least until the end of May. This week we received a statement from Decatur County, telling us that we would follow the color matrix as posted each week, on the SDH site. We were blue for a couple of weeks, but now seem to be hovering in the yellow zone. This should be no surprise, as we know the numbers continue to climb. We will monitor that closely, but yellow allows for 50% capacity and on an average Sunday, that is where we are. While taking our lead from the Archdiocese, we are within County and state requirements. Masks are required at all businesses, and Masks are required here at Church.

We also received a **letter from the Archdiocese** this week. No, they have not lifted the dispensation. And no, they did not write to address precautions. Their communication instead, was in response to questions received from parishes, schools, and agency leaders, regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. ALL are strongly encouraged to receive the vaccine “to promote the common good and protect the health of the most vulnerable among us.” But, note there is **no policy requiring** employees, or volunteers, to get vaccinated. From the letter, I quote “Receiving the vaccine is a personal choice that should be made in consultation with one’s physician, and after reviewing ethical guidance from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).” They go on to quote from a recent USCCB document which states: “Being vaccinated safely against COVID-19 should be considered an act of love of our neighbor and part of our moral responsibility for the common good.”

For some individuals, prior diagnosis, or prior reactions, may make the vaccine more of a risk than of a prevention. The goal is not to put any individual at increased risk. And the reminder then for all of us, is this: since the decision whether or not to receive a vaccine is personal, privacy should be respected. No one should be pressured one way or another. No one should be judged, or questioned. And, we should safe distance from all, not just from those who have not yet been vaccinated. Preventative measures, such as wearing masks, maintaining appropriate social distance, and sanitizing, remain important for all of us. And, quarantine rules remain the same, 14 days if one has symptoms, or if one has close contact with one who has symptoms.

Concerning COVID vaccinations: ALL people 16 years of age and older are eligible for the **free** vaccine, in our state. Indiana is rolling out a well-organized and safe execution of the vaccine distribution making it available to all **but children** at this time. Research for pediatric dosage and safety is still in process.

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.

Reflecting on the Resurrection: We often hear that Jesus, becoming human, identified with us, but how often do we identify with him? For a moment, place yourself in the experience of Jesus. He had just experienced his most human moment of all – the moment he cried out, “My God, why have you abandoned me?” He too felt powerless against forces of death and unjust authority. He too felt so earthly, so breakable. And he too died. And then came the moment more confusing than all the others – he got up again. He rose from the tomb.

His resurrection is more than a symbol of faith; it’s a **model of rebirth** for all of us. It shows the resilience of God – and of God in humanity (in us) – during a time of violence and turmoil. Jesus is a wounded man, who carries his scars, to live beyond them.

What does it mean to be deeply wounded and scorned, and then to die? And what does it mean to stand up in the face of death, to know death, and to walk away?

At the end of Lent and the beginning of this Easter season – and at the end of this pandemic and the beginning of the vaccination season – what does it mean to live beyond the scars? We’ve seen and felt so many wounds this past year. We’ve seen death and racial injustice, staggering inequality, high unemployment, loneliness, depression and fatigue. In the midst of the chaos and tragedy, we may have at times, been like the disciples, fretting and pacing, visiting the tomb of grief under the cover of night, needing the reassurance of seeing Jesus again, struggling to comprehend that news might be GOOD sometimes. Rather than looking outward for hope, for resurrection, it might be time to look inward. Resurrection need not be sought, need not be believed – it need only be lived.

Living like Jesus on the first Easter day means showing mercy toward others. It means finding the strength of life in our hearts, to get up in the midst of global tragedy, dust ourselves off, and rebuild; it means we lean on the strength of God, in a way that is brave and defiant of death. That is the lesson of the empty tomb – nothing can stop the work of God. Nothing can change God’s presence and vitality within us and around us. It compels acts of service and connection. It asks us to hope, to do, even amidst the uncertainties, even when death seems all-encompassing. It calls us now to awaken as agents of love and hope, to embody new life!