



# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Catholic Church

A Stewardship Community served by the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales



*A People Not a Place*  
*Learning to Live Jesus*

## OUR VISION

Our parish is the vibrant expression of the presence of the Risen Christ through sacred worship and loving service.

## OUR MISSION

We live Jesus Christ by proclaiming the Gospel, by celebrating the Eucharist, by nourishing our Faith and by loving and serving all God's people.

6650 Carolina Beach Road, Wilmington, NC 28412

De Sales Faith  
Formation Center  
910-791-9857

Church Office  
910-791-1003  
Fax: 910-791-0081  
[www.iccwilm.org](http://www.iccwilm.org)

Office Hours  
Monday – Friday  
9:00am – 4:00pm

## Parish Staff, Councils & Commission Chairs

<u>Title</u>	<u>Staff Member</u>	<u>Phone Number &amp; Ext.</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
Business Manager	Michele Bean	910-791-1003, Ext. 105	mbean@iccwilm.org
Director of Faith Formation	Gina Drost	910-791-1003, Ext. 112	gdrost@iccwilm.org
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Pastor & Dean, Cape Fear Deanery	Rev. John McGee, OSFS, VF	910-791-1003, Ext. 106	jmcgee@iccwilm.org
Director of Music	Andrea Reynolds	910-791-1003, Ext. 114	areynolds@iccwilm.org
Office Manager	Claudia Sing	910-791-1003, Ext. 100	csing@iccwilm.org
Treasury Assistants	Johanna Hug & Chris Puritis	910-791-1003, Ext. 107	

### Commission Chairs

Fr. John McGee, OSFS (Liturgy)  
Michele Bean (Facilities)  
Gina Drost (Faith Formation)  
Bob Smith (Inreach)  
Janice Jordan (Outreach)

### Parish Pastoral Council

Aaron Bean, Chair      Matthew Simms, Vice Chair  
  
Julie Bowling      Judy Chmielenski  
  
Angela Zombek

### Parish Finance Council

Mike Bollinger, Chair  
Pete Bartel, Vice Chair  
Stephen Conroy  
Paul Dries  
Bob Smith  
Andrew Tomlin

### Liturgies and Devotions

**Weekend** - Saturday: 5:00 pm  
Sunday: 8:30 & 10:30 am  
**Weekday** - See "This Week at Immaculate Conception" - Page 3  
**Devotions** - Rosary for World Peace/  
Novena to Our Lady, Monday - 9:30 am  
Chaplet of Divine Mercy to end human trafficking, Thursday - 9:30 am  
Rosary, Devotion to the Sacred Heart,  
First Friday  
Fatima Rosary Devotion,  
First Saturday - 3:30 pm  
**Eucharistic Adoration** -  
First Friday, 9:45 am - 11:00 am *and*  
Tuesdays, 9:30 am - 10:30 am

### Bulletin Deadline

Bulletin requests must be emailed to the Bulletin Editor: tkruger@iccwilm.org, by 12:00 noon on Wednesdays, ten days in advance of the weekend of publication. All articles will run for three weeks, space allowing, and must have name, phone # of contact person, and dates requested to be in the bulletin. Articles must be limited to 100-150 words and include the *who, what, why, where and when*. A summary/result article with facts and figures should be submitted within a week of the event's completion.

### New Parishioners

If you are new to Wilmington or to Immaculate Conception, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you. We are an active and vibrant parish and ask, if you have decided to join us, that you will seriously consider giving of your time, talent, and treasure for the Lord's work. Completion of an Interest Card, Parish Registration Form and

attendance to a Welcome/Orientation/Registration Event is part of active membership and provides you with parish mailings. Please find an Interest Card located in the pamphlet rack in the Gathering Area of the church.

### Sacramental Life

**Infant Baptism:** Celebrated monthly. Registered (minimum 3 months) and participating parishioners may schedule infant baptism after completion of a baptism preparation workshop and reception of godparent documents. Contact Gina Drost, Director of Faith Formation, at 910-791-1003, ext 112, preferably prior to the child's arrival. \*Children over 7 are not baptized as "infants." Instead they are prepared to receive all 3 sacraments of initiation at a later date.

**To Be a Godparent/Sponsor:** for Baptism or Confirmation; you must be a registered, participating member for at least 6 months prior to requesting letter.

**1st Reconciliation & 1st Eucharist:** Second grade is our Sacramental year for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. First grade faith formation is a pre-requisite for the second grade Sacramental year. We require four meetings for the parents/guardians of youth receiving these Sacraments.

**Confirmation:** Confirmation in our Diocese is celebrated in the high school years, and is a two year process. Candidates may enroll in Level I as a freshman with immediate preparation and celebration of the sacrament in Level II the sophomore year. Stewardship opportunities and attendance to a Confirmation retreat are mandatory.

**Reconciliation:** We celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation/confession, normally, Saturdays from 3:30-4:30 pm in the Church's Reconciliation Room. In addition, the sacrament is available by appointment. Please call the Parish Office to speak to the pastor.

**RCIA:** Adults seeking Initiation into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church are invited to contact Gina Drost, gdrost@iccwilm.org or 791-1003, ext.112

**Matrimony:** Only parishioners registered at ICC for at least 6 months may request to be married here. The couple must meet with a priest before setting a date and at least 6 months in advance of an anticipated wedding in order to complete the preparation process. All aspects of marriage planning requires the participation and approval of trained personnel. Contact: Claudia Sing, csing@iccwilm.org., 791-1003, ext. 100.

**Anointing of the Sick:** Anyone who is seriously ill or who is anticipating surgery or an extended hospital stay or who is weakened because of a prolonged illness or advanced age is encouraged to call the Parish Office to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

**Funerals:** After a funeral director has been contacted but before any arrangements have been made public, the funeral director will contact the Parish Office in order to arrange for funeral time and/or vigil service. All aspects of parish funeral liturgy planning requires the participation and approval of trained parish personnel.

**Vocations to Priesthood or Religious Life:** Religious vocation as a priest, brother or sister, Fr. Michael Newman, OSFS, mnewman@oblates.us or 419-531-1421, x231. Vocation to diocesan priesthood, please visit the Diocese of Raleigh's Vocations website at dioceseofraleighvocations.org.



## This Week at Immaculate Conception

The Altar Flower Donations for This Week  
Were Donated By:

**Gina Drost & Lisa Levanti**, in celebration of the **59th wedding anniversary of their parents, Vito & Ann Salerno, Charles Nelson**, in memory of **Russell & Geraldine Nelson, Will & Pat Simms**, in celebration of **their 56th wedding anniversary**, and **Maria Wilson**, in memory of **the Pham Family & the Homeless**.

### Sunday, February 11 - 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:30 am Liturgy, Lorraine Grimsley  
10:30 am Liturgy, James Roselli  
12:00-2:00 Elementary Faith Formation, DFFC  
12:00-2:00 First Eucharist Parent Workshop #1, DFFC  
12:00-2:00 TTRPG Session, DFFC  
2:30-4:00 ICC Young Adult Fellowship, DFFC  
*Super Bowl Collection at all Liturgies*

### Monday, February 12, 2024

9:30 am Rosary/Novena

### Tuesday, February 13, 2024

9:30 am Eucharistic Adoration

### Wednesday, February 14—Ash Wednesday

9:00 am Liturgy, Philip Dagnon  
12:00 pm Liturgy of the Word & Distribution of Ashes  
5:00 pm Liturgy of the Word & Distribution of Ashes

### Thursday, February 15, 2024

9:00 am Liturgy, Ajus & Habas Westrem and the Kassem Family  
9:30 am Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Adoration Chapel

### Friday, February 16, 2024

9:00 am Liturgy, Felicia Rocchio

### Saturday, February 17, 2024

5:00 pm Liturgy, Nick Burton

### Sunday, February 18 - 1st Sunday of Lent

8:30 am Liturgy, Kay Weninger  
10:30 am Liturgy, Living & Deceased of Immaculate Conception

*Liturgical Color for February 17 & 18 is Purple*

## Stewardship - A Way of Life Following "God's Plan for Giving" Stewardship of Treasure Report

### February 3 & 4, 2024

Envelopes	188 (Envelopes)	\$ 9,755.00
e-Giving	121	\$ 9,726.18
Loose Check	37 (Checks)	\$ 2,165.00
Identifiable Contributions		\$21,646.18
Loose Cash		\$ 1,104.00
Total Contributions		\$ 22,750.18

### Offertory/1st Collection:

**Annual Budget: July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024**

**\$1,001,640.00**

**Total Collected YTD: July 1– Feb 4, 2024**

**\$ 677,984.87**

## Sanctuary Candle



A 14-day Sanctuary Candle will burn in memory of **the Kay Weninger**, and was donated by **Rosemary Block and Patti Maggi**.

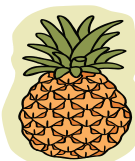
## Ash Wednesday Collection

### The Church in Central and Eastern Europe

The Collection on Ash Wednesday will be taken up to support the Church in Central and Eastern Europe. This Collection helps restore the Church and build the future in more than 25 countries still struggling to recover from former communist rule and now the war in Ukraine. Funds from this collection support reconstruction, education, formation, and poverty outreach. Please be generous to the collection this Wednesday. More information can be found at [www.usccb.org/cee](http://www.usccb.org/cee).

## Welcome Events

### Welcome/Orientation/Registration Events



New to the area? Want to join ICC? Pick up an Interest Card in the pamphlet rack in the Gathering Area, fill it out and return to the church office, then attend one of the listed

Welcome / Orientation / Registration Events. The events are on Saturday mornings, 9:00 am-10:45 am (refreshments available at 9:00 am).

#### The Next Welcome Events

May 11, 2024

June 1, 2024

## The Help Center Needs

### The Help Center Food Donations

The following items are needed in **February 2024**:

February 4	Mac and cheese
February 11	Beans (not green)
February 18	Cold cereal
February 25	Canned meat



Any other packaged or canned food items or toiletries are gratefully accepted. **Thank you so much for your continued generosity.**

## Diocesan Second Collection

### Black and Indian Missions

This week we will take up the Collection for the Black and Indian Mission. Our support of this collection helps build the Church in African American, Native American, and Alaska Native communities from coast to coast. Schools, parish religious education programs, and diocesan ministries depend on your generosity to help them spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To learn more about how your gifts make a difference, visit <https://blackandindianmission.org>.

## Lent - Fasting & Abstinence

### Church Regulations

**Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024, and Good Friday, March 29, 2024**, are days of fasting and abstinence. Fridays of Lent are also days of abstinence.

**Fasting** is to be observed by all 18 years of age and older, who have not yet celebrated their 59th birthday. On a fast day one full meal is allowed. Two other meals sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids, including milk and juices, are allowed.

**Abstinence** is observed by all 14 years of age and older. On days of abstinence no meat is allowed. Note that when health or ability to work would be seriously affected, Church law does not oblige. When in doubt concerning fast and abstinence, the Parish Priest should be consulted.

Fasting, almsgiving, and prayer are the three traditional disciplines of Lent. The faithful and Catechumens should undertake these practices seriously in a spirit of penance and of preparation for Initiation into the Church or the renewal of Baptismal Promises at Easter.

## Lenten Resource

### Best Lent Ever

If you're looking for a resource to add to your spiritual practice during the Lenten season, consider **BEST LENT EVER** from Dynamic Catholic.

By signing up for this free program, you will receive daily inspiration emails that will help you to have a truly life-changing Lent.

Interested? Visit [www.dynamiccatholic.com](http://www.dynamiccatholic.com) and start your **BEST LENT EVER** this year.





# Our Parish COMMUNITY

February 11, 2024

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46 / 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1 / Mark 1:40-45



## Bringing Outsiders In

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**A**s a child, were you teased, bullied, chosen last for a team? Did you feel apart from the in-crowd? If so, in various ways this treatment may have kept you from being fully engaged with the larger community, possibly continuing to scar you in even your grown-up world.

In 2021, the news media reported that a Louisiana cemetery refused burial for Darrell Semien because he was black. Though he had served his community as a deputy sheriff for fifteen years and had helped raise seventy-two foster children, none of that was of any significance. After the news broke, the cemetery quickly lifted its whites-only stipulation, but the damage had been done. In so many ways, we continue to exclude others from the human community, even in death.

Our Sunday Gospel tells of Jesus curing a leper, enabling the man to again become part of the community. Even more startling, by touching him, Jesus himself became "impure," and thus isolated himself from the community, thereby switching roles with the man. Bringing others into community even at a cost to ourselves is divine.

Such compassion is exemplified when people work to reform prisons, seek to integrate immigrants into national life, give voice to the voiceless, improve mental health care, strive to alleviate paralyzing poverty, and more. The world witnessed compassion at its finest during the COVID-19 pandemic when medical personnel worked to heal the sick, even at the cost of isolating themselves from their own families. Compassion toward those in need is holy. ●

### Reflect

*Who made you feel welcome when you felt locked out? Can you do the same for another?*

A leper came to him [and kneeling down] begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean."

MARK 1:40



### MONDAY

February 12

Weekday

Jas 1:1-11

Mk 8:11-13

### TUESDAY

February 13

Weekday

Jas 1:12-18

Mk 8:14-21

### WEDNESDAY

February 14

Ash Wednesday

Jl 2:12-18

2 Cor 5:20-6:2

Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

### THURSDAY

February 15

Thursday after

Ash Wednesday

Dt 30:15-20

Lk 9:22-25

### FRIDAY

February 16

Friday after

Ash Wednesday

Is 58:1-9a

Mt 9:14-15

### SATURDAY

February 17

Saturday after

Ash Wednesday

Is 58:9b-14

Lk 5:27-32

### SUNDAY

February 18

First Sunday

of Lent

Gn 9:8-15

1 Pt 3:18-22

Mk 1:12-15

## Stewardship Reflection

*“Brothers and sisters, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.”*

*(1 Corinthians 10:31)*

Do a quick check of your priorities. Where does God rank in that list? If He's not first, you have some work to do. Putting God first in everything helps us from putting other 'gods' (like our pride, ego, money, and possessions) before God. Before making a decision, ask yourself, 'Am I doing this for the glory of God, or for the glory of me?'

## Young Adult Fellowship Ministry

### ICC Young Adult Fellowship Ministry

Are you a young adult looking for an opportunity to dialogue with fellow Catholics? The Young Adult Fellowship Ministry offers a uniquely intellectual and personal experience with other young adult members on a variety of topics of faith. We will meet on Sundays at 2:30 pm in the DeSales Faith Formation Center.

For more information, please email or text us:

- **Oliver Galbraith:** [olivergalbraith@gmail.com](mailto:olivergalbraith@gmail.com) or text 910-619-3033
- **Clint Turbeville:** [turbeville\\_r@lynchburg.edu](mailto:turbeville_r@lynchburg.edu) or text at 910-523-2987



## Valentines for Denise

### Calling All Cupids

Following the most generous and loving outpouring of Christmas cards sent to Fr. John's sister, Denise, several folks have asked whether they might be able to send a Valentine. The answer is, yes, please!

If you would like to send a card to Denise, please make sure to drop or send it to us here at ICC by **February 11th** so that Fr. John can send all of them to Denise in time for Valentine's Day.



## Catholic Estate Planning

### Virtual Catholic Estate Planning Webinar

As a way to help educate parishioners in their knowledge as faithful stewards of the Lord's gifts, the Foundation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Raleigh is offering another Estate Planning Webinar on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, from 10:00 - 11:15 am.

The webinar will be led by Foundation staff and a local estate planning attorney, providing an excellent opportunity for parishioners to learn more about what personal planning is, and what it involves. Webinar topics will include:

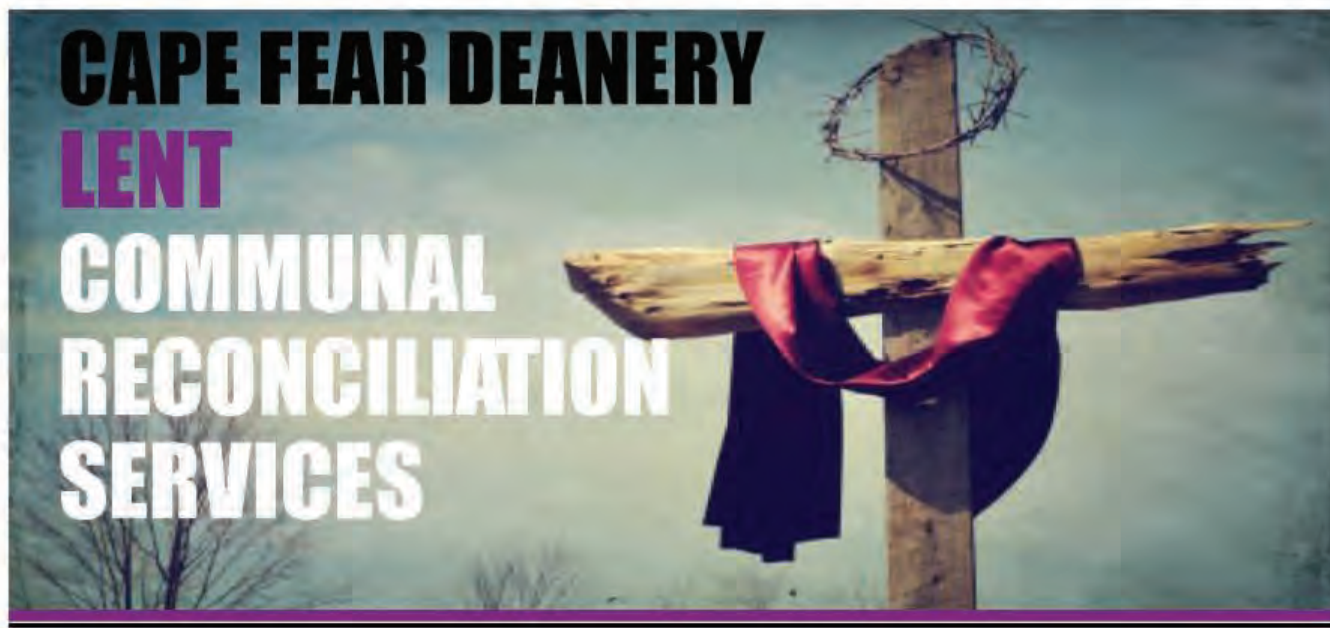
- Legal steps required in personal planning
- Understanding wills and trusts
- Catholic advanced medical directives
- Power of attorney
- Overview of the various charitable vehicles for estate planning

Guest speakers will include:

- Ryan Flood, Planned Giving Specialist, The Foundation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Raleigh
- Andrew W. Blair, Attorney and CPA, Partner, Poyner Spruill LLP

Please note that this is a free seminar, and no solicitations will be made. For more information or to reserve a virtual seat please call Donna Ashcraft, 919-568-1067, or email [office@FoundationDOR.org](mailto:office@FoundationDOR.org).





# CAPE FEAR DEANERY

## LENT

# COMMUNAL RECONCILIATION SERVICES

### February 15

11:00am St. Brendan the Navigator  
Shalotte  
910-754-8544

### February 20

7:00pm UNC-W  
Wilmington  
(910) 792-0507

### February 21

7:00pm St. Mark  
Wilmington  
910-392-0720

### February 22

11:00am St. Mark  
Wilmington  
910-392-0720

### 7:00pm St. Therese

Wrightsville Beach  
910-256-2471

### February 28

7:00pm All Saints  
Hampstead  
910-270-1477

### March 5

7:00pm St. Stanislaus  
Castle Hayne  
910-675-2336

### March 6

11:00am Basilica of St. Mary  
Wilmington  
910-762-5491

### March 12

7:00pm Basilica of St. Mary  
Wilmington  
910-762-5491

### March 13

11:00am Sacred Heart  
Southport  
910-457-6173

### 7:00pm Immaculate Conception

Wilmington  
910-791-1003

### March 14 (Spanish)

7:00pm Basilica of St. Mary  
Wilmington  
910-762-5491

### March 19

7:00pm St. Joseph the Worker  
Burgaw  
910-259-2601

# ASH WEDNESDAY



## For the Journey

Loving Father,  
during this Lenten journey,  
inspire me to meditate on your sacrifice  
as I seek to deepen my relationship  
with you.

May the ashes on my forehead,  
remind me from where I came.  
Give me strength,  
give me hope.  
You who are all-loving,  
grant that I may be in communion  
with you.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024**  
**Forever Ambassadors of Christ**



*Today's readings: Joel 2:12–18; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6ab, 12–13, 14 and 17; 2 Corinthians 5:20–6:2; Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18.* Has anyone ever asked you, “What is that on your forehead?” Each year on Ash Wednesday, we Catholics display a sign telling the world that we are followers of Christ, that we are sinful but hopeful in our redemption through the paschal mystery. The ashes remind us that we are in relationship with God, who sent his only Son to redeem humanity through the sacrifice on the cross.

Throughout the Lenten season, as a community, we ask God for his guidance and mercy as we journey together to repentance and prepare to renew our faith at Easter. The

season invites us to return to God with our whole hearts so that we may be not only one with him but also ambassadors for Christ in the world.

The Lenten ethos is one of sacrifice, primarily God’s sacrifice of Jesus for the salvation of humankind. Through our meager Lenten practices, we join in the sacrifice of Christ in the hope of sharing also in his resurrection. Jesus goes into the desert before he begins his public ministry to be alone with God as he readies himself for what is to come. Jesus put his complete trust in God. This season calls for a pause in our lives through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving so that we too may grow closer to God.





## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, February 12 Always by Our Side

Lent gives us the opportunity to deepen our relationship with God. James teaches us what unwavering faith can accomplish, while the Pharisees demonstrate how people of little or no faith live. James shows us how faith can overcome challenges that many of us know wholeheartedly and firsthand. We may know people who have no relationship with God. These people need assurance, “a sign” to believe. Let us be that sign. *Today’s readings: James 1:1–11; Psalm 119:67, 71, 72, 75, 76; Mark 8:11–13.*

### Tuesday, February 13 A Spiritual Journey

Have you ever been on a family trip when one member’s sudden exclamation of “I forgot to pack!” is followed by another’s reassuring response, “Don’t stress, we’ll figure something out”? Something similar can happen along our faith journey. In this scenario, God is that voice telling us not to worry, that he will help us prevail. God will give us the fortitude for a spiritual Lenten journey. *Today’s readings: James 1:12–18; Psalm 94:12–13a, 14–15, 18–19; Mark 8:14–21.*

### Wednesday, February 14 Symbol of Life

Today the ashes on our foreheads announce to the world that we acknowledge our sin and have faith in the saving cross of Christ. Despite the visibility of the ashes, they are meant to be a sign of conversion rather than an emblem of pride. Matthew encourages us to go about our lives without flaunting our good deeds. It is enough that we know what we have done for the love of neighbor. *Today’s readings: Joel 2:12–18; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6ab, 12–13, 14 and 17; 2 Corinthians 5:20–6:2; Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18.*

### Thursday, February 15 Perfect Role Model

Who are your role models? As children, we may name a professional athlete or our parents. As we age and our faith grows along with us, we may begin to be inspired by saints. Today’s Gospel reminds us of our greatest role model, Jesus Christ. Jesus gives us the template for a holy life. He also warns us that his path is not easy and that we must help one another along the journey. Our goal is to continue Jesus’ mission. *Today’s readings: Deuteronomy 30:15–20; Psalm 1:1–2; 3, 4, 6; Luke 9:22–25.*

### Friday, February 16 Caring for Others

Look within and discern whether your external actions reflect your internal thoughts. Do you see a relationship between the way you observe the rules of fasting and abstinence and the way you treat others? Is God pleased that a Church law has been observed when you have been unkind to someone you find annoying? When experiencing a problem with another, ask God to fill you with love toward your neighbor. Strive to live a holy life not for recognition by others but for your love for God. *Today’s readings: Isaiah 58:1–9a; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6a, 18–19; Matthew 9:14–15.*

### Saturday, February 17 Saying Yes

Many of us have heard the saying “God doesn’t call the qualified, he qualifies the called.” In today’s Gospel, Jesus called Levi, and Levi followed without hesitation. The other apostles followed the same pattern. Each of them left everything behind to join Jesus’ ministry. How can you act as a missionary disciple, inspiring others to do what is needed to follow Jesus? *Today’s readings: Isaiah 58:9b–14; Psalm 86:1–2, 3–4, 5–6; Luke 5:27–32.*





## K of C Scholarship

### College Scholarship for Future Saints

Cape Fear Deanery parishes, with Knights of Columbus Msgr. Christopher Dennen Assembly 2017 administrative support, will be awarding **\$4,000 Gold** award, **\$3,000 Silver** award, and **\$2,000 Bronze, plus \$1,000 across Honorable Mentions**, award scholarships to Catholic students enrolling for the first time in a college or university beginning in Fall 2024. The student must demonstrate academic proficiency for college admission and identify some service to church, school, or their local community. The winners will be discerned by the Knights of Columbus Scholarship for Future Saints Committee members.

To apply for the scholarship, **a student must fill out a one-page application**, write an essay on the spiritual journey of a saint, and provide the requested biographical information. The application is available on our parish website and social media or can be obtained by emailing the Scholarship Chairman at [scholarship@kofc2017.org](mailto:scholarship@kofc2017.org) . Applications must be emailed by May 30, 2024.

## Altar Flowers Correction



The altar flower donation for last weekend was mistakenly left out of the bulletin. Flowers for the weekend of **February 3 & 4** were donated by **Mary Cain** in memory of **Patrick O'Brien**. We apologize for the omission.

## Thank You Note

*Dear Fr. John, ICC Staff, and my parish family,*

*Thank you for all your well wishes, cards, and prayers. I do appreciate them, and they have helped in my healing, knowing that so many of you care. My healing process will be slow, but I am doing well.*

*I hope to see you soon!*

*With love and blessings,*

*Jeanne Dougherty*



## JOIN US FOR STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Monday's 9:30 am in the Church

February 19-Mary's way of the Cross

March 4- Praying with Pope Francis

March 11- The Way of the Cross, Ondrila

March 18- The Way of the Cross with St. Francis de Sales



*Immaculate Conception Parish Mission 2024  
All Through Love Nothing Through Fear*



*Discovering the Best in People*

Monday, February 26 at 10:00 AM and 6:30 PM

In a culture of mistrust and divisiveness, how do we maintain our faith and hope. We do so by discovering the best in people. This presentation and discussion will focus on the "human encounter," how to welcome others for who they are and as they are, how to accept differences in one another, and how to engage one another in healthy dialogue without demonizing the other.

*Accepting and Extending God's Mercy*

Tuesday, February 27 at 10:00 AM and 6:30 PM

Come explore the Gospel stories of the blind man named Bartimeaus (Mark 10: 46-52) and the tax collector Zacchaues (Luke 19: 1-10) and discover the secrets to accepting and extending God's mercy. We will spend time reflecting how Bartimeaus came to accept God's mercy and discover how we can learn to accept God's mercy in our lives. Also, we will spend time reflecting on the conversion story of Zacchaues and discover how he came to extend the mercy of Jesus to others. How do we take that intimate experience of God's mercy and forgiveness and share it with other people?

To register please go to our website [www.ICCWILM.ORG](http://www.ICCWILM.ORG) and click on the banner link.

If you have any questions, please contact Gina Drost, Director of Faith Formation, at [gdrost@iccwilm.org](mailto:gdrost@iccwilm.org) or by phone at 910-791-1003, ext. 112.

## Prayer Matters

*Please remember the following people in your prayers:*

Steven Astriakis	Gregg Lysaght
Charles Babinski	Erin Mabry
Drew Baker	The Maney Family
Gabrielle Baldwin	Petar Manolev
Megan Bardeen	Frankie Marcinkiewicz
Marley Basurto	John H. Martin
Gail Bean	Teri Massey
Carol Bigwood	Connie Mercier
Iliana Bouneva	Ernest & Margie Messing
Whitney Brenner	Bill Moore
Barry & Teresa Brighten	Chris Moore
Christopher Brooks	Irene Muccia
Phyllis Cameron	Kyle Muccia
Eva Congleton	Ernie Munoz
Susan Craig	Maurice Murphy
Debbie D.	Joanne McAteer
Margaret Deaton	Barbara McCann
Don DeBragga	Denise McGee
Marion DeCoursey	Gerald McGovern
Patrick Delaney	Josephine McGovern
Leslie Dixon	Joan McKillop
Kathy Driscoll	Ann Noack
Carol Dubin	Kelly O'Connor
Kathleen Estep	Edward & Sharon O'Neill
AC Everett	Joanne Owens
Tony Farone	John Paulhus
Mark Reynolds Farrington	Debra Paulson
Judy Faulk	Martin Plage, Jr.
Eleanor Flannery	Lexie Queen
Robert Flavin	Anne-Marie Regan
Brenda Floyd	Susan Reynolds
Jennifer Freeman	Kerri Schafer
Walt & Mary Gable	Jonathan Schoo
Keira Gibson	Beatrice Schultz
Kellie & Lilly Gibson	Rita & Ralph Seidl
Sandy Greggs	Susan Self
Dale Guy	Brian Slater
Don & Gloria Harris	Linda Snow
Louise Hebert	Lesley Stevens
Sandra Hobbs	David Stiver
Anthony Jenkins	Cynthia & Paul Streb
Barbara Jezek	Marieange Tribie
J.J. Jones	Pat Tyson
Denise Kassem	Rob Verderosa
Lauren Kelly	Jack Walsh
Carol Konicki	T. Michael Werner
Addison LaCourse	John Weisenreider
Robert LaGoe	Richard Weisenreider
Tracy Langone	Stephen Weisenreider
Beth Lessard	Maria Woodcock
Christine Levy	Anita Wynn
Margaret Lupton	
Nicholas Lusk	

*Names will remain on the list for one month from time of request. Please call the office if you wish to renew.*

## Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024

### Why Ashes?



For centuries, Catholic Christians have marked the beginning of the season of Lent by receiving ash on their foreheads on Ash Wednesday. Since Lent is a season of penitential renewal through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, it's appropriate that this ancient sign of repentance for sins marks the beginning of the season.

The ashes themselves are usually made by burning the palm fronds from the previous year's Palm Sunday. This symbolically connects the beginning of Lent with its end, connecting our change of heart with Christ's passion, death, and resurrection.

As people approach the priest or other minister, he presses the ashes to their foreheads, and speaks one or two phrases: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return," or "Repent and believe in the Gospel."

The Gospel for Ash Wednesday is a reminder that the real purpose of the season of Lent isn't to make public demonstrations of piety—even the wearing of ashes—but to seek conversion of heart.

### What's With That Dirt on Your Head?



Who hasn't gotten that question on Ash Wednesday before? Do you feel silly when people ask you about your ashes? And is it hard to answer their questions? Having ashes on your forehead isn't just some weird Catholic thing; it's a tradition that finds its roots in the Old Testament.

"I turned to the Lord God, to seek help, in prayer and petition, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes" (Daniel 9:3).

When the ashes are placed on our foreheads in the sign of the Cross, it is a reminder of several things.

First, it is a call to repentance: a physical sign that we are sinners in need of forgiveness, which is how the prophets used it in the Old Testament.

Second, it is to remind us that God created us from the earth and when we die, we will return to it.

But here's the best part: as Pope Benedict XVI has said, "Man is dust and to dust he shall return, but dust is precious in God's eyes because God created man, destining him to immortality." God so loves us that, even when our bodies return to the dust, our souls are meant to live forever with him. The ashes symbolize all of this.

Not so silly anymore, is it?





## Home Works Summer Mission

A group of 20 teens will be traveling to Fayetteville, NC on June 16– 21, 2024 to take part in a week long session that offers service projects that are prayerful and spiritual in nature. Home Works' activities focus on providing repairs to homeowners in need, assisting youth in their development, and empowering communities to meet the needs of its members. To learn more about the program, you can visit their website at [www.homeworksofamerica.org](http://www.homeworksofamerica.org).

The cost of the trip is only a \$200 dollar donation, and assistance is available. If you are interested in attending, a non-refundable \$50 deposit with completed registration forms should be turned into Marie Marshall, Youth Minister, in the Parish Office. You can only secure a spot with your registration and the deposit, and it is first come first serve! Registration forms are available through the Youth Ministry Office.

### Sponsoring a Youth

Can't go, but still want to help out? The \$200 registration fee may be out of the budget for some interested families. If you would like to help sponsor a youth for this trip (partially or fully), or would like to contribute to the overall cost of this mission, please let Marie Marshall know today at [mmarshall@iccwilm.org](mailto:mmarshall@iccwilm.org) or 910-791-1003x110!

*"Works of love are always works of peace.  
Whenever you share with others, you'll notice  
the peace that comes to you and to them."*

– Mother Teresa



## Bishop's Annual Appeal

— 2024 —

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# ALTAR FLOWERS

## January to June 2024

Our weekly Altar Flowers depend solely on donations from you, our parishioners. We need your help to ensure that we have flowers at all the weekend liturgies.

Fill out this form with the date (s) you would like to donate the Altar Flowers in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special event.

The size of the flower arrangement is determined by the number of households that contribute on a given weekend. We accept up to 4 households per weekend. Memorial contributions are **\$65.00**. Make your check payable to **Immaculate Conception Church** with "*Altar Flowers*" written on the memo line.

Place your form and check in an envelope marked "*Flowers - Tracey Kruger*" and put in the collection basket or drop off during office hours, Mon-Fri, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

*"The flowers appear on the earth, the time of pruning the vines has come, and the song of the turtledove is heard in our land."*

Song of Songs 2:12

### Choose from the following weekends:

- Jan 6 & 7, 2024 - Epiphany of the Lord
- Jan 13 & 14, 2024
- Jan 20 & 21, 2024
- Jan 27 & 28, 2024
- Feb 3 & 4, 2024 - World Marriage Day
- Feb 10 & 11, 2024

### **No Flowers during Lent**

- Apr 13 & 14, 2024
- Apr 20 & 21, 2024
- Apr 27 & 28, 2024
- May 4 & 5, 2024 - 1st Eucharist
- May 11 & 12, 2024 - Mother's Day
- May 18 & 19, 2024 - Pentecost
- May 25 & 26, 2024 - Most Holy Trinity
- June 1 & 2, 2024 - Body & Blood of Christ
- June 8 & 9, 2024
- June 15 & 16, 2024 - Father's Day
- June 22 & 23, 2024
- June 29 & 30, 2024

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