



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

P.O. Box 158, LAKELAND, LA 70752
PARISH OFFICE: 627-5124 | RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE: 627-5819
IMMACULATECONCEPTIONLAKELAND.COM

STAFF

Pastor: Rev. C. Todd Lloyd
Business Manager: Patti Aguiard
Religious Education: Dina Tunstall
Music Coordinator: Jody Doucet

MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil: 4:00 PM
Sunday Masses: 7:00, 9:00, and 11:00 AM
Daily Masses: Tues. 6:00 PM & Wed.-Sat. 8:00 AM

Care of the Sick: For emergencies please call immediately. Eucharist is brought to the sick weekly. Families of those who are sick are encouraged to notify the Parish Office as soon as possible.

Reconciliation: Tues. 5:30 PM & Sat. 3:00 PM

Marriage: Couples are asked to contact the priest at the beginning of the period of engagement or at least six months prior to the projected date of marriage.

Baptism: Celebrated monthly. Please contact the Parish Office during early months of pregnancy. Baptism preparation is required.

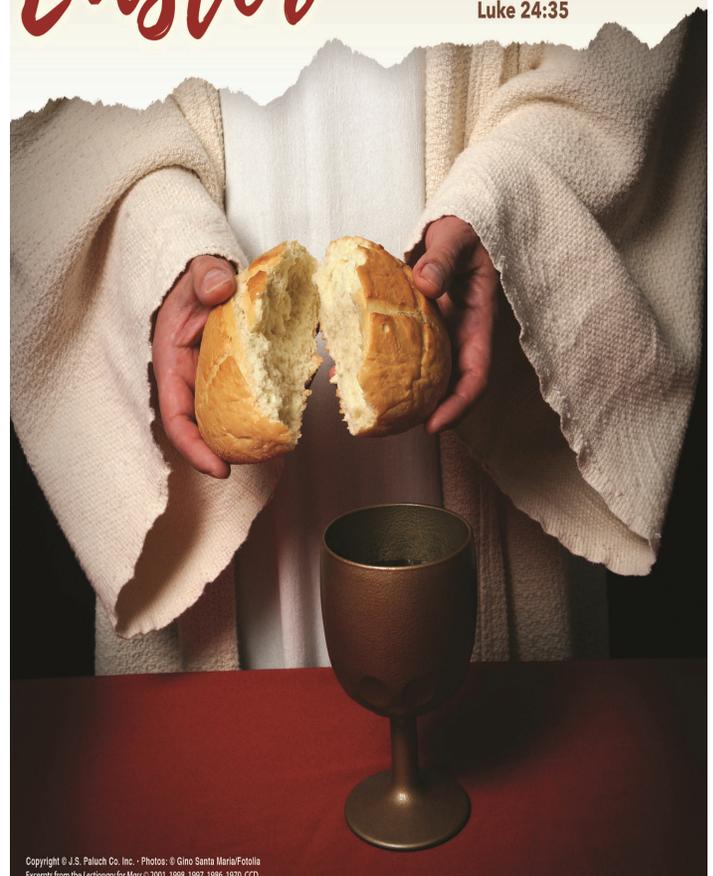
April 26
2020

THIRD SUNDAY OF

Easter

THE TWO DISCIPLES RECOUNTED
WHAT HAD TAKEN PLACE ON THE WAY
AND HOW JESUS WAS MADE KNOWN
TO THEM IN THE BREAKING OF BREAD.

Luke 24:35



Scriptures for the Week

Monday: Acts 6:8-15; Ps 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30; Jn 6:22-29

Tuesday: Acts 7:51 — 8:1a; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 7b, 8a, 17, 21ab; Jn 6:30-35

Wednesday: Acts 8:1b-8; Ps 66:1-3a, 4-7a; Jn 6:35-40

Thursday: Acts 8:26-40; Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20; Jn 6:44-51

Friday: Acts 9:1-20; Ps 117:1bc, 2; Jn 6:52-59, or, for the memorial, Gn 1:26 — 2:3 or Col 3:14-15, 17, 23-24; Ps 90:2-4, 12-14, 16; Mt 13:54-58

Saturday: Acts 9:31-42; Ps 116:12-17; Jn 6:60-69

Sunday: Acts 2:14a, 36-41; Ps 23:1-6; 1 Pt 2:20b-25; Jn 10:1-10

Your Stewardship

Collections \$ 6,391.77

Sympathy

The Sympathy of Immaculate Conception Church Parish Family is extended to:

Family of **Aubrey Fuller**.

Family of **Betty Guidroz**.

God Bless Our Troops

Please remember all of our troops overseas, especially members of Immaculate Conception Parish Family:

Jordan Todd Aguillard, Air Force; Jules Craig Cifreo, Air Force.; Samuel Edward Guidroz, Navy; Quinton T. Gaspard, P.F.C., Army.

Prayer Requests

Aguillard Family, Leslie Aguillard, Trevor Allement, Janelle Amond, Tim Amond, Numa Aucoin, Shirley Blauvelt, Herbert Brown, Kyle Cabalero, Lee Joseph Comeaux, Brittany Costello, Jean David, Brilynn Davis, Ronald Decuir, Landon Dickinson, Shannan Everett, Deborah Fountain, Robert Geier, Jr., Garrett Grafia, Alfred Gremillion, Judy Gremillion, Susie Gremillion, Lyndon Lynn Hernandez, Audrey Jarreau, Earl Jarreau, Sr., Laura Jarreau, Lillie Betty Jarreau, Sharon Jarreau, Tess Jarreau, Reid LaComb, Kevin LeBlanc, Kay Lee, Larry Lee, Janice Marks, Doug Matte, Troy Menier, Gail Metz, Sheldon Moses, Linda Olinde, Corey Patin, John Gary Patin, Jr., Abigail Politz, Shelby Porche, Dotti Purpera, Hank Ryan, Hunter Schurba, Lou Sherman, James Thames, Sonny Trabeaux, Ainsley Wolf.

This Week at I.C.C.

All masses and parish events will continue to be suspended until further notice due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Fair Raffle Tickets

Please continue to send in your raffle tickets to the office via mail, drop off at the Parish Office or place in our drop box. The drawing **will continue** as planned on **May 2, 2020**. Thanks for your support during this very difficult time.

From The Pastor's Desk

In Christ,

This Sunday's gospel is the "Road to Emmaus" scene. It is a good example in the gospels of the importance of the Eucharistic presence of Jesus in our midst. The Lord's identity was not obvious to the disciples even while he explained to them the scriptures, but was finally made known to them "in the breaking of bread." Similarly, as Catholics, while we enshrine scripture as the most important teaching and written tradition of Christianity, it is the Living Word of God in the Most Blessed Sacrament – the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist – that is the focal point of our worship. Jesus is not made known to his disciples merely through the reading of the Holy Bible, and the Bible ought not become an idol of false worship. The Eucharist, on the other hand, is where Jesus makes himself truly and really present to us.

Unfortunately for a month now we have not been able to gather in the presence of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. This Sunday is a good time to remind ourselves of some critical issues in relation to our worship of God in the Eucharist.

First, "virtual" Mass via media is insufficient for authentic worship of God. Real Eucharistic worship requires we gather together, physically, in the presence of the Eucharist. The fullest expression of Christian worship for each individual person requires their participation in the Holy Mass, which in its fullness requires physical presence. We cannot merely hear the word, but must be present for the breaking of bread, through which Jesus is made present to us. Despite our managing best we can in this time, hopefully no one has gotten too comfortable with virtual Mass. Once Mass is widely available again and we are free to come and go as we please, and are healthy, physical presence at Mass will be an obligation for Catholics that cannot be fulfilled through the media or private prayer or reading of scripture.

This first point does *not* mean to imply that the Mass being offered by the priest is any less precious when

no congregation is present. Every Mass is an offering of the perfect sacrifice of the Son of God, made to the Father, through the Holy Spirit, for the salvation of mankind – whether there is one person (the priest) or a congregation of one thousand. The congregation’s presence or participation does not “make or break” the Mass. During this unique time, and certainly at times throughout history, priests have been offering Mass *sine populo* – “without the people”. While no one but the priest may be physically present, the Church’s “Communion of Saints” theology tells us that all in heaven are present at every Mass. The Mass is heavenly worship. When I say Mass *sine populo* I do so with the understanding that the angels and saints are with me, responding just as the congregation would.

For those who have given a stipend for a Mass intention, it is important to know that your presence is not required for that Mass to be offered for the intention you have. What matters is that the priest offer the Mass with the intention as agreed upon. In this time priests have offered Mass for the intentions for which stipends have been given and they are no less effective, supernaturally speaking, than if the church were full of people.

Finally, reception of Holy Communion at Mass is not obligatory or necessary to participate in Mass. The precepts of the Church imply this, as the first one is that Catholics are required to “attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation”, while the third is to “humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season.” In other words, while we must participate by our presence at Mass every Sunday and Holy Day, we are only, at a minimum, required to receive Holy Communion once a year. This precept is preceded by the requirement to go to confession, and assumes that we are in a state of grace, not in mortal sin, when we receive Holy Communion.

The only person who must receive Holy Communion so that Mass may be valid is the priest. Certainly the fullest participation in the Mass includes receiving Holy Communion. Jesus wants his disciples to eat his flesh and drink his blood, and so we should. However, there are times when we cannot or should not receive. Perhaps this time of *cannot* because of quarantine is an opportunity to reflect on when we *should not*.

There have been many suggestions by spiritually gifted thinkers in the Church that this time of a “Eucharistic fast” imposed on lay people is a chastisement by God for abuses and unholy receptions of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Before we dismiss this idea all together, I think it is worth remembering these words of St. Paul: *A person should examine himself, and so eat the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are ill and infirm, and a considerable number are dying.* (1 Cor. 11:28-30)

It has been well documented that the faith of many in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is waning, and yet many still receive the Sacrament. How many more receive while not in communion with the Body of Christ because of a life of mortal sin? And furthermore, how many are receiving carelessly, without consideration of the profundity of what Holy Communion is?

I cannot say with any authority if this is a chastisement intended to correct abuses of the Most Blessed Sacrament, but we should not miss the opportunity to make that correction nonetheless. Just because we are at Mass does not mean we must receive Holy Communion, and just because we should not receive Holy Communion (because of a lack of faith, living in a life contrary to the life of Christ, being guilty of unrepentant mortal sin) does not mean we cannot or should not participate at Mass. We should desire to participate at Mass *and* receive Holy Communion. That desire should be motivated by faith and love of Jesus in the Eucharist. This faith and love should also motivate us to only receive when we are properly disposed to do so; thus repenting and confessing grave sins so that we can return to Holy Communion.

No doubt this time is especially a sacrifice for those who are in the habit of frequent worthy Communions. Perhaps they are being invited to offer this “Eucharistic fast” as a means of winning the conversion of souls who take the Lord for granted or who may be living far from him. The suffering of this sacrifice can be united with those faithful in ages past and present who have been deprived of the Eucharist because of persecution. The whole Church benefits from their humble sacrifice, and she can benefit from our own temporary suffering, for the salvation of souls.

As we look forward to a return to Mass according to divine providence, let us allow the hunger we have for the Eucharist to reignite a better appreciation for the Most Blessed Sacrament, enlightened by faith of Jesus’ presence in the Breaking of Bread. When the time comes that we are able to gather again at the altar of the Lord physically, I pray that we all have our eyes open to be made aware of Jesus’ presence, and wish never again to take for granted or abuse his most precious Body and Blood.

Totus Tuus,
Fr. Todd Lloyd

Third Sunday of Easter **April 26, 2020**

You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence.

— Acts 2:28