

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH

Pastor: Rev. C. Todd Lloyd

Deacon: Bob McDonner

Religious Education:

Rachel Christ

Music Coordinator:

Jody Doucet

Sunday Masses: 7:00, 9:00, and 11:00 AM

Sat. Vigil: 4:00 PM

Daily Masses:

Wed-Fri. Eucharist 8:00 AM & **Tues.** 6:00pm

Care of the Sick: Emergency calls immediately. The Eucharist is brought to the sick weekly. Families of those who are sick are encouraged to notify the Parish Office.

**P.O. Box 158
Lakeland, LA 70752**



**Parish Office 627-5124
Religious Education Office 627-5819
Immaculateconceptionlakeland.com**

Reconciliation: Saturday Vigil 4:00 PM. Saturday 3:00 PM and Tuesday 5:30pm

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 except during Lent & Advent. Please contact the Parish Office during early months of pregnancy. Baptism preparation is required.

Scriptures for the Week

Monday: I Cor 2:1-5; Ps 119:97-102; Lk 4:16-30, or, for Labor Day, any readings from the Mass "For the Blessings of Human Labor," nos. 907-911
Tuesday: I Cor 2:10b-16; Ps 145:8-14; Lk 4:31-37
Wednesday: I Cor 3:1-9; Ps 33:12-15, 20-21; Lk 4:38-44
Thursday: I Cor 3:18-23; Ps 24:1bc-4ab, 5-6; Lk 5:1-11
Friday: I Cor 4:1-5; Ps 37:3-6, 27-28, 39-40; Lk 5:33-39
Saturday: Mi 5:1-4a or Rom 8:28-30; Ps 13:6; Mt 1:1-16, 18-23 [18-23]
Sunday: Is 35:4-7a; Ps 146:7-10; Jas 2:1-5; Mk 7:31-37

Your Stewardship

Collection	\$ 8,475.85
Electronic	\$1,040.00

Sick List

Janelle Amond, Tootie Amond, Gertrude Bonaventure, Inez Bueche, John David, Robert Geier, Jr., Alfred Gremillion, Deborah Fountain, Ferd Fabre, Earl Jarreau, Sr., Laura Jarreau, Reid LaComb, Kaci McCamy, Gail Metz, Linda Olinde, Dottie Purpera, Lou Sherman, Gwen Trabeaux, Sonny Trabeaux.

-Prayer Request

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

Lance Corporal Metoyer, Marines; P.F.C.; SPC ; Timothy J. Loucks, Corporal U.S. Marine; Lance Corporal Gary R. Major, Jr., Corporal; Private First Class; Captain Jordan Morirs;; Lieutenant Stephen Burleigh, Jr.; MT2 Jacob Lamotte., Sgt. Greg Silva, Army; Jules Craig Cifreo Air Force.; Samuel Edward Guidroz, Navy.

This Week at I.C.

- 9/4 KC Mtg.** in Activity Center.
Altar Society Mtg @ 10am.
- 9/6 Bible Study** 9am or 6pm
Rm 2 Activity Center.
- 9/9 Rel Ed Classes 9th-11th @**
9:30am.

Sympathy

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

Family of Ruth Belone.

REQUEST FOR HELP

Each year there are a few of our families, who, for one reason or another, we ask for help with paying their religious education fees. Registration is \$25.00 per child, but of course any amount you can contribute would be greatly appreciated! If you can help, please drop donations at the **Office of Christian Formation, Attn Mrs. Rachel Christ, PO Box 158, Lakeland LA 70752.** Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Blood Drive Winners

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| 1st Place | Cameron Moore |
| 2nd Place | Carlos Decuir |
| 3rd Place | Melanie Brown |

Thanks to everyone that signed up to donate blood.

In Christ,

This week, amid the news that causes sadness of heart for many in the Church, my attention was turned to a letter written by famous Catholic author, JRR Tolkien, to his son, who had become depressed due to bad experiences in the life of the Church. I'd like to share with you a large part of his letter which might be helpful to us, too:

You speak of 'sagging faith', however, that is quite another matter. In the last resort faith is an act of will, inspired by love. Our love may be chilled and our will eroded by the spectacle of the shortcomings, folly, and even sins of the Church and its ministers, but I do not think that one who has once had faith goes back over the line for these reasons (least of all anyone with any historical knowledge). 'Scandal' at most is an occasion of temptation – as indecency is to lust, which it does not make but arouses. It is convenient because it tends to turn our eyes away from ourselves and our own faults to find a scapegoat. But the act of will of faith is not a single moment of final decision: it is a permanent indefinitely repeated act > state which must go on – so we pray for 'final perseverance'. The temptation to 'unbelief' (which really means rejection of Our Lord and His claims) is always there within us. Part of us longs to find an excuse for it outside us. The stronger the inner temptation the more readily and severely shall we be 'scandalized' by others. I think I am as sensitive as you (or any other Christian) to the scandals, both of clergy and laity. I have suffered grievously in my life from stupid, tired, dimmed, and even bad priests; but I now know enough about myself to be aware that I should not leave the church (which for me would mean leaving the allegiance of Our Lord) for any such reasons: I should leave because I did not believe, and should not believe anymore, even if I had never met anyone in orders who was not both wise and saintly. I should deny the Blessed Sacrament, that is: call our Lord a fraud to His face.

If He is a fraud and the Gospels fraudulent – that is: garbled accounts of a demented megalomaniac (which is the only alternative), then of course the spectacle exhibited by the Church (in the sense of clergy) in history and today is simply evidence of a gigantic fraud. If not, however, then this spectacle is alas! Only what was to be expected: it began before the first Easter, and it does not affect faith at all – except that we may and should be deeply grieved. But we should grieve on our Lord's behalf and for Him, associating ourselves with the scandalized heirs not with the saints, not crying out that we cannot 'take' Judas Iscariot, or even the absurd & cowardly Simon Peter, or the silly women like James' mother, trying to push her sons.

It takes a fantastic will to unbelief to suppose that Jesus never really 'happened', and more to suppose that he did not say the things recorded all of him – so incapable of being 'invented' by anyone in the world at that time: such as 'before Abraham came to be I am'. 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father'; or the promulgation of the Blessed Sacrament in John: 'He that he eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life.' We must therefore either believe in Him and in what he said and take the consequences; or reject him and take the consequences. I find it for myself difficult to believe that anyone who has ever been to Communion, even once, with at least a right intention, can ever again reject Him without grave blame. (However, He alone knows each unique soul and its circumstances.)

The only cure for sagging of fainting faith is Communion. Though always Itself, perfect and complete and inviolate, the Blessed Sacrament does not operate completely and once for all in any of us. Like the act of Faith it must be continuous and grow by exercise. Frequency is of the highest effect. Seven times a week is more nourishing than seven times at intervals. Also I can recommend this as an exercise (alas! only too easy to find opportunity for): make your communion in circumstances that affront your taste. Choose a snuffling or gabbling priest or a proud and vulgar friar; and a church full of the usual bourgeois crowd, ill-behaved children – from those who yell to those products of Catholic schools who the moment the tabernacle is opened sit back and yawn – open necked and dirty youths, women in trousers and often with hair both unkempt and uncovered. Go to Communion with them (and pray for them). It will be just the same (or better than that) as a mass said beautifully by a visibly holy man, and shared by a few devout and decorous people. (It could not be worse than the mess of the feeding of the Five Thousand – after which [Our] Lord propounded the feeding that was to come.)

The Church has an important saying about the sacraments: *Ex opere operato* – “by the very fact of the action's being performed.” The Catechism explains: *From the moment that a sacrament is celebrated in accordance with the intention of the Church, the power of Christ and his Spirit acts in and through it, independently of the personal holiness of the minister.* This is important to remember in times of scandal. The whole Church, like a sacrament, is holy not because of the holiness of her people or ministers, but because of Christ. Similarly, the holiness of the Church and her sacraments, or the faith she professes, is not diminished by the sinfulness of her member. As Tolkien pointed out, the Mass is effective and holy even if the priest or people are not. Thanks be to God for that.

Totus Tuus,
Fr. Todd Lloyd