



[Jesus] remained in the desert
for forty days, tempted by
Satan.

MARK 1:13



A Trek in the Desert

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Deserts come in all shapes and sizes. For Noah, it turned out to be a desert of water, an endless, dreary expanse. For Jesus, it was also without end, one of rocks and sand; it was a harsh existence. In our lives, deserts might be a debilitating illness, a dried-up marriage, grief over lost love, a job that seems to tax our sanity, or a childhood scarred by abuse. Not long ago, the world found itself in a pandemic desert. For many, it was one of cabin fever that isolated us from family and friends. Deserts are not alluring places. They are places from which we tend to run.

Some people deal with the inevitable deserts of life by becoming angry; others grow bitter and turn inward; others blame God and walk away from faith. Yet deserts can also be the very forces that reshape lives. With nothing else to distract us, in the desert we come face to face with ourselves, with who we really are and whose voice it is that we follow. There we take a stand on life, as Jesus did. It was the Spirit that drove Jesus into the desert, and it was there that he realized the future to which he was being called. So also with us. Deserts become places where we discover what God is asking of us and where we need to go, all discoveries that may otherwise never have occurred. In some strange and curious way, then, deserts may be blessings in our lives. ●

Reflect

Have you had a desert experience? How did it reshape your life?

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

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Rev. Msgr. John B. McCannPastor
Deacon Paul J. Hiryak, Deacon James A. Bardi
Parish Office610 582-2411
Parish Religious Education/CCD610 582-3880
Parish Preschool610 404-8645
Parish Website.....www.icbvm.org

Immaculate Conception Academy.....610 404-8645.....www.icaberks.org
Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator: Wendy S. Krisak, M.A. NC, LPC, 800-791-9209
Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator: Pamela Russo, MSW, MS, 610-871-5200, Ext 2204
Diocese of Allentown website.....www.allentowndiocese.org
Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service: If you have an allegation of abuse against a bishop,
please contact the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service at www.ReportBishopAbuse.org or
by calling 800-276-1562

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – FEBRUARY 18, 2024

The Sanctuary Lamp Burns in Memory of Andrew Lakatosh

★ ★ MASS INTENTIONS ★ ★

SAT 5:15 PM Linda Bardi
SUN 7:30 AM Alice and Robert Arantowicz
9:00 AM Our Living and Deceased Parishioners
11:00 AM Anne Louise Reeser
MON 7:30 AM No Mass
TUES 7:00 PM Mr. & Mrs. Barney Roberti
WED 7:30 AM Peter and Betty Bascelli

THURS 7:00 PM Andrew Lakatosh
FRI 7:30 AM James Menicucci
SAT 5:15 PM Stephen Fitzgerald 25th Anniversary
SUN 7:30 AM Josephine Bogus
9:00 AM Our Living and Deceased Parishioners
11:00 AM Stanley Pinkos 1st Anniversary

The Second Collection Next Week is the Debt Reduction Collection

WE LOVE HAVING YOU AS
**a part of our
Flock!**



Keep in touch with us via email and text!



**TEXT
ICBVM
TO 84576**



or connect with us online at

immaculateconceptionbvmc.flocknote.com

Text STOP to 84576 to stop text notifications at any time. Text HELP for help. There is no charge for this service, but your carrier message and data rates may apply. View full privacy policy & terms at flocknote.com/txt.

Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: Madge Butto, Deb Petras, Pat Fessler, Rita Ferry, Sunny Motta, Curt Miller, Loretta Hitchens, Dante Stetina, Barbara Ruby, Kara Morrison, Arlene Shirley, George Ruby, Harriet Yeager, Marjorie Hansen, Jason Leman, Ann Washko, Geri Barth, Dominic Strock, Anthony Scaglione, Aaron Gulla, Maryanne Emery, Pam Amos, Miriam Leman, Marianne Sutton, John Mingione, Henry J. Wade, Lois Muldowney, Terry Swisher, Arlene Schaeffer, Shelly Weiler, Christopher Shirk, Joe Nowotarski, Steven Blanyar, Jennifer Gazda Gruber, Adele Nieckoski, Shawn Kaeser, Catherine Mueller, Regina Marie Brown, Tanya Sanders, Louis & Renee Cutillo, Ralph Rapposelli, Joe Dantas, Debbie Watson Simcock, Judy Jones, Wanda Palmieri, Msgr. Nevin Klinger, Barbara Wright, Charlotte Glacken, Beppe McGee, David Mollura, Mary Louise Myers, Mary Ann Uivary, Michael Bobb, John Kuszniir, Joseph Ondo, Rose White, Nova Puszczkowski, Karl Husbands, Magdalene Babiarcz, Dante LaScala, Michael Gulla, Alex Lopacki, Angelina Swisher, Frances Swiezak.

Please pray for the deceased: Rev. John Little

Our parish church is open each day of the week from 8am to 3pm for private prayer and visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

N.B. The Church will be closed on Monday, February 19, 2024

Each Sunday, the 11am Mass is live-streamed on our Facebook page for those who are sick and homebound. Access the live-streaming Mass from our parish website at

www.icbvm.org.

Our parish office is open on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 11am-3pm (610-582-2411). If you call the parish office and no one is available to answer your call, please leave a detailed message and your call will be returned in a timely fashion.

Please Be Advised That There Will Be No Daily Mass On Monday, February 19, 2024. Thank You Very Much For Your Kind Understanding In This Regard

*Order for Christian Initiation
(OCIA - formerly RCIA)*

Expand your knowledge of our Catholic faith or encourage someone who is curious about it to attend. Visit our website at www.icbvm.org for program information or contact the church office.

February 19th Lent and the Church's Liturgical Year
Church Office Lower Level Meeting Room, 7-8:30pm

The first step in helping Immaculate Conception Church assess our greatest strengths and opportunities is to complete the **Disciple Maker Index (DMI) survey today!** Share your perspective now to help strengthen Immaculate Conception Church and better prepare us for the future – as we seek to grow in missionary discipleship! For more information on Next Generation Diocese refer to the Flocknote that was distributed on Feb. 8, 2024. If you have any questions, please contact Deacon James Bardi at jxb21@psu.edu. Please visit this link to take the Next Generation Diocese survey. <https://portal.catholicleaders.org/dmi/survey/byd935>. You can make a paper copy of the survey and place it in the Next Generation Diocese Box located in the Narthex.

Lenten Food Drive, Feb 14-Mar 31

Mary, Queen of Peace Council is again sponsoring the **Lenten Food Drive** this Lenten season. Our collection bins will be located in the Narthex. You may donate non-perishable food items or make a cash donation. Food donations will go to the **St. Joseph's RCC Food Pantry** and the monetary donations to the **Kennedy House Soup Kitchen**, both of Reading.

Stations of the Cross will be held this week on **Friday, February 23rd at 1:45pm** with the children of Immaculate Conception Academy and at **7:00 pm**.

Join us for a Lenten rosary this Friday at 6 pm in the church. The Angelus and Chaplet of Divine Mercy are also prayed. Hope to see you.

Eucharistic Exposition & Adoration:

Wednesday evenings from 7:00 - 9:00 PM in the Church, beginning February 21st and continuing through Wednesday, March 27th.

Parish  Giving.

SIGN UP FOR ELECTRONIC GIVING

Through Parish Giving, you are able to make your Sunday Offering, along with special diocesan and other contributions online!

Thank you for your commitment to our parish family and its Mission to proclaim the good news of the Gospel!

Won't you join us? It's easy, safe and secure. And YOU have control over your online account. How?

- † You determine a monthly or weekly withdrawal
- † Use your Credit/Debit card or your checking account
- † See your year-to-date contributions at any time
- † Best of all, you don't have to worry about missing a Sunday Collection even if you are away for any reason!

Go to www.icbvm.org and click the Parish Giving link on the lower left-hand side of the home page.

Your generosity to Immaculate Conception is greatly appreciated!

Operation Rice Bowl – Fast and pray with your family and make a sacrificial offering to Operation Rice Bowl so as to help those who live with hunger and poverty. The Rice Bowl is located in the rear of the church near the baptismal font.

Women's Society Easter candy reminders – **Sunday, February 25th** is the last day to pay & pre-order your Easter eggs. Orders may be picked up in the social hall on March 9th from 9AM – noon. Thank you!

The **Women's Society** will meet Wednesday, February 21st at 7:00 p.m. in the social hall. Meeting will begin with recitation of the Rosary, followed by a business meeting. Light refreshments will be offered. The **Women's Society** thanks all the parishioners who made soup and/or baked, as well as all those who supported us by purchasing the delicious food items the past few weeks. Both fund raisers were a huge success with all profits going to the church.

Mary Queen of Peace Council meets on the first Tuesday at 7:30pm in the social hall. Join us to learn more about the Knights of Columbus and our parish group. Contact jimkaucher@gmail.com.

EASTER EGG HUNT for our parish children age 12 and younger on March 30th at 11am in the social hall. We are collecting bags of small individually wrapped candy and cash. A donation box is in the narthex of the church. Thank you for your support!

Gotta Have My Wawa. Wawa shorti hoagie coupons are back and available for \$6.00 each. Email Rick McCann at phlyrsfn@gmail.com or Mike Bailey at mikerb@ptd.net to request coupons in any amount. Coupons never expire and can be used at any Wawa retail location

Dear Padre,

We're in the middle of home renovations, and the season of Lent is beginning. Everything is in total disarray. Any ideas to help me "keep my religion" at this time?

"There is...a time to tear down, and a time to build" (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 3). During the season of Lent—a word meaning "spring"—we are called to put away the "dead" deeds of winter. It's a time of spiritual "spring cleaning" for the individual and for the faith community. As nature renews herself every spring, so do we. The change of season may even prompt a renovation project—the kind you are now undertaking. The structural changes to a home afford many spiritual parallels—the redoing of your physical home can be a challenge to realign your spiritual home during Lent.

In the Genesis story, God is pleased with the handiwork of his creation. Likewise, our stamina, perseverance, and patience to see a work through to its completion are cause for great satisfaction and celebration. This would remind us that we are made in the same image of God, who took delight in his own work. Lent also can become a time of delighting in ourselves as God's special and ongoing creation.

When your home improvement project is completed, arrange for a blessing of your home. Enthroned a special cross or icon to venerate, light a devotional candle, and use holy water in the area of the home that was improved. At that time, remind yourself again that you and your home belong to the Lord—renewed during the spring cleaning of Lent!



Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
February 19	February 20	February 21	February 22	February 23	February 24	February 25
<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Chair of St. Peter the Apostle</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Second Sunday of Lent</i>
Lv 19:1-2, 11-18 Mt 25:31-46	Is 55:10-11 Mt 6:7-15	Jon 3:1-10 Lk 11:29-32	1 Pt 5:1-4 Mt 16:13-19	Ez 18:21-28 Mt 5:20-26	Dt 26:16-19 Mt 5:43-48	Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18 Rom 8:31b-34 Mk 9:2-10



A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

How do we hear the voice of God? We hear it in his Word. For this reason, it is important to know Scripture, because otherwise we do not know how to react to the snares of the Evil One. And here I would like to return to my advice of reading the Gospel every day....

ANGELUS, ROME, FEBRUARY 22, 2015

EASTER CANDY SALE



Ready just in time for filling your Easter baskets, the Women's Society will be making home-made, hand dipped, chocolate peanut butter eggs wrapped in yummy milk chocolate and delicious coconut cream eggs covered in deep dark chocolate. We will offer 1/2 pound boxes and 1 pound boxes. Ordering early will help us with planning and ingredient purchases.

Drop your order, along with payment, into the collection basket or you may drop your order off at the Church or School offices. Orders may also be mailed to the Church Office Building, 905 Chestnut Street, Douglassville, 19518.

Orders may be picked up in the social hall on March 9th from 9AM until noon. *If you are unable to pick up during this time please contact Gina Maicher at 610-223-5088 to make other arrangements.* There won't be many extras, so **please pay and pre-order by Sunday, February 25th** to make sure you get your favorites. Checks should be made payable to ICC Women's Society.

*****Please note that this candy may contain nut products. *****

1/2 pound boxes - \$8.00

1 pound boxes - \$15.00

Peanut Butter

Coconut

1/2 lb. Boxes (\$8 each)

1 lb. Boxes (\$15 each)

Name _____

Phone Number _____

Total # of Boxes ordered _____

Amount enclosed _____