



[Jesus said,] "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all."

MARK 9:35

## Learning How to Die Well

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**K**arl Rahner was a German Jesuit priest and a leading theologian of the twentieth century. He once observed that one of the tasks of life is to learn how to die well. On first hearing this, we may be much like the disciples who didn't understand Jesus when he spoke of his own need to enter death (see Mark 9:31–32).

How do we learn to "die well"? If we forgo the need to always have our own way, if we forgive and resist the impulse to get revenge, if we are sensitive to the needs of others even when it's inconvenient, if we care for the child among us, whether that "little one" be five, forty-five, or eighty-five—if we practice a willingness to die in such ways, then when it comes time for us to make that final journey of our earthly lives, it will not be as frightening because we will have been there before.

Furthermore, if we learn how to die well, our lives will take on new meaning. The focus of our lives will not be on ourselves, but on others and their needs. We will find ourselves less disappointed when life doesn't go our way. Blue moods will evaporate more readily. We will have a greater interest in daily life. In other words, the very aspects that once seemed to drag us down will become doorways to hope and renewed life. What once seemed to have been a kind of death will become an avenue to faith in the resurrection. ●

### Reflect

***Have you ever "died to yourself" and then experienced a resurrection?***

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

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Rev. Msgr. John B. McCann .....Pastor  
Deacon Paul J. Hiryak, Deacon James A. Bardi  
Parish Office .....610 582-2411  
Parish Religious Education/CCD ....610 582-3880  
Parish Preschool .....610 404-8645  
Parish Website.....[www.icbvm.org](http://www.icbvm.org)

Immaculate Conception Academy.....610 404-8645.....[www.icaberks.org](http://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](http://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](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org) or by calling 800-276-1562

## TWENTY FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – SEPT 22 2024

*The Sanctuary Lamp Burns in Memory Stephen A. Mammarella*

### ★★ MASS INTENTIONS★★

SAT 5:15 PM Josephine Buchanan  
SUN 7:30 AM Stephen A. Mammarella  
9:00 AM Dr. Nicholas & Margaret Christ  
11:00 AM Our Parishioners  
MON 7:30AM Ron Schwendt 4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
TUES 7:00 PM Anna & Tony DiGuglielmo  
WED 7:30 AM Cecilia Tshudy

THURS 7:00PM Theresa Swisher  
FRI 7:30AM Mary Varney 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
SAT 5:15PM Mary Lou & Andy Mancuso  
SUN 7:30AM John "Buddy" Palko  
9:00AM Our Parishioners  
11:00AM August Dentel

*The Second Collection Next Week is the Charity 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](http://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](http://flocknote.com/txt).

Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: Madge Butto, Pat Fessler, Curt Miller, Loretta Hitchens, Dante Stetina, Barbara Ruby, Kara Morrison, Arlene Shirley, George Ruby, Harriet Yeager, Marjorie Hansen, Jason Leman, Ann Washko, Anthony Scaglione, Maryanne Emery, Pam Amos, Marianne Sutton, John Mingione, Henry J. Wade, Lois Muldowney, Arlene Schaeffer, Shelly Weiler, Steven Blanyar, Jennifer Gruber, Adele Nieckoski, Shawn Kaeser, Catherine Mueller, Regina Marie Brown, Ralph Rapposelli, Joe Dantas, Debbie Simcock, Wanda Palmieri, Msgr. Nevin Klinger, Barbara Wright, Charlotte Glacken, Beppy McGee, Dave Mollura, Mary Louise Myers, Mary Ann Uivary, John Kusznr, Joseph Ondo, Karl Husbands, Magdalene Babiartz, Alex Lopacki, Angelina Swisher, Geraldine Christ, Rachel DiFrancesco, Millie Mattassa, Bill Pribanick, Rosemary Williamson, Tony Guilliams, Bob Warunek, Sharon Painter, Cletus McLaughlin, Edward Zawora, Linda Walleigh, Rose Kubovcsak, Lyn Weidenhammer & Elaine Zampella.  
Please pray for the recently departed Rose White & Deacon Von George

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

**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](http://www.icbvm.org)

+ OUR PARISH OFFICE IS OPEN WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, 11AM-3PM. 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 MANNER.

Come and be Spiritually Refreshed!  
Our parish OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults) Program for 2024-25 will begin on October 7<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. This year's theme is "Come to the Living Water" from Isaiah 55:1 and John 4:14. The program is open to Catholics and non-Catholics who want to learn more about the Catholic Faith. Visit the parish website (select Religious Education, then OCIA) for program and registration information or contact the parish office at 610-582-2411.

### CCD Information:

Please be advised that CCD Classes for the children of our parish family of the Immaculate Conception will begin on Wednesday, September 25, 2024 & Thursday, September 26, .  
Registration forms for CCD are available in the narthex of the church and on-line. Pray too for the children of our parish who will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Tuesday, October 8, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. Bishop Schlert will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation anointing our children with Sacred Chrism and sealing them with the gift of the Holy Spirit

The Women's Society & Mary Queen of Peace Council would like to express our sincere gratitude to all who participated & supported the ICC Annual Beef & Beer on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September. The day was filled with delicious food, tons of fun, lots of prizes and great fellowship. The winners of the raffles were: C. Trout, A. Palmer, K. Davis, B. Sumoski. L. Pisarek, F. Manni, J. Morta, J. Bailey, M. Sutton, M. Kaiser, M. Keohoe, C. Hiryak, T. Gaumer, L. Sauermelch. S. Phillips, B. Sumoski. The winner of the 50/50 was J. Morta. Congratulations to all.

The annual Rosary "Coast to Coast" Rally for our nation will be held at the Fatima Statue, OLME, 640 E. Main Street, Birdsboro, PA on Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM. Please bring seating and an umbrella (in case of inclement weather). The rally lasts about 45 minutes. A free will offering benefitting OLME will be taken up.

## 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](http://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!*

**Save the Date! Advent Retreat** hosted by Bishop's Commission for Women, "Finding Hope Through Prayer." Mass with Bishop Schlert & Keynote Talk with Father John Frink. Sat. Dec 14<sup>th</sup>, 9AM to 1PM, St. Francis of Assisi Parish, 1046 W Cedar Street, Allentown. Registration is open.

**In Honor of Saint Francis of Assisi, the Blessing of Animals** will occur on Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm in front of the church. Please bring your pets leashed or caged for their safety.

**Pa Prolife March - 9/23/24** in Harrisburg, PA.

Speaker: Mark Houck

Bus leaving St Catherine's Church in Exeter Township at 8:00 a.m. (7:15 a.m. Mass available to those interested)

Leaving Harrisburg at approximately 3:30; return approximately 5:00 pm

Cost: Donations greatly appreciated

Contact: Christine Gordon, Berks Chapter PA Pro Life Federation; 610-587-9917

**Miller-Keystone Blood Bank and the Diocese of Allentown** are teaming up to host a diocesan-wide blood drive in honor of Saint Januarius, the patron saint of blood banks. Parishioners are encouraged to donate blood at one MKBC's donor centers now through December 16, 2024. In addition to saving lives, all donors who provide their parish's sponsor code at the time of their appointment will receive a Saint Januarius medallion blessed by Bishop Schlert. To schedule an appointment, call 800-223-6667, ext. 2. The Sponsor Code for Immaculate Conception Church is 4543. [GiveaPint.org](http://GiveaPint.org)



# Dear Padre,

## *What is spiritual direction? How does it differ from counseling?*

In spiritual direction, a person is guided in a process of reflection, self-discovery, and recognition of God's presence in human experience; the primary focus is on one's relationship with God. Thus, in one sense, it is the Lord himself who is the "director" in all spiritual direction. In counseling, a person is also guided in a process of reflection and self-discovery; but the primary focus is on human growth and development. Counseling does not presuppose a person's faith or relationship with God; spiritual direction cannot be complete without it. Both spiritual direction and counseling share the same expectations of openness and honesty in the process; they share the same standards of confidentiality and professional conduct. Moreover, spiritual direction is similar to counseling in its aim toward human growth and development, but it further aims toward holiness and "toward ever more intimate union with Christ" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2014). That union is twofold: a personal relationship with Christ and with Christ's Church. "This union is called 'mystical' because it participates in the mystery of Christ through the sacraments" (CCC 2014). "All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity. All are called to holiness: 'Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect'" (CCC 2013). ●



**Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org**



## **A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS**

***Greatness and success in God's eyes are measured differently: they are measured by service. Not on what someone has, but on what someone gives. Do you want to be first? Serve.... [Service] has a precise and concrete meaning in the Gospel. To serve is not a courteous expression: it means to act like Jesus.***

**ANGELUS, ROME, SEPTEMBER 19, 2021**

### **Monday**

September 23  
*St. Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest*  
Prv 3:27-34  
Lk 8:16-18

### **Tuesday**

September 24  
*Weekday*  
Prv 21:1-6, 10-13  
Lk 8:19-21

### **Wednesday**

September 25  
*Weekday*  
Prv 30:5-9  
Lk 9:1-6

### **Thursday**

September 26  
*Weekday*  
Eccl 1:2-11  
Lk 9:7-9

### **Friday**

September 27  
*St. Vincent de Paul, Priest*  
Eccl 3:1-11  
Lk 9:18-22

### **Saturday**

September 28  
*Weekday*  
Eccl 11:9-12:8  
Lk 9:43b-45

### **Sunday**

September 29  
*Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
Nm 11:25-29  
Jas 5:1-6  
Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48