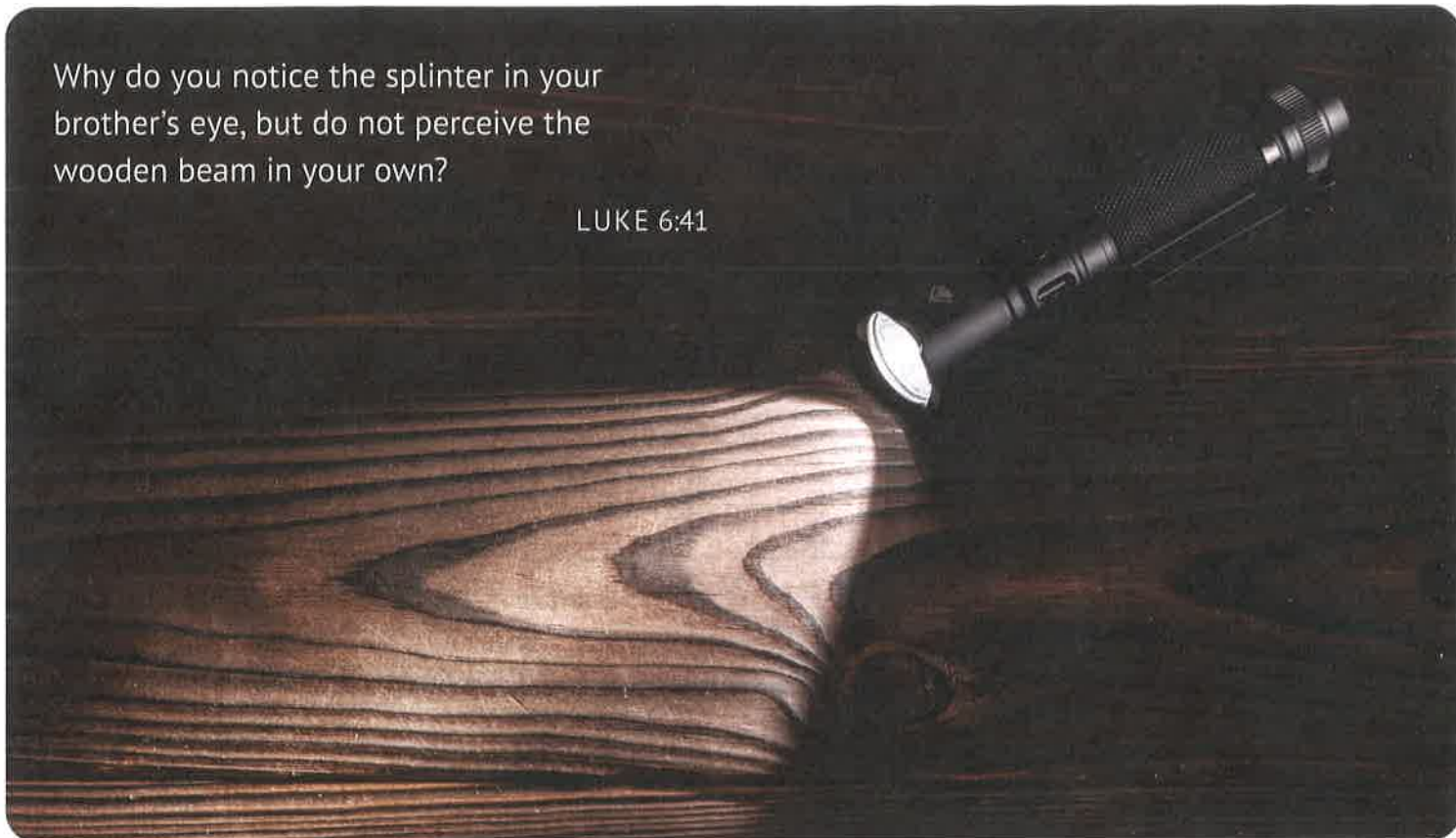




Why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own?

LUKE 6:41



## Blindsided

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**T** here are days when the darker side of who we are rises up and slaps us in the face. One evening, I decided to go to see a film. I bought a ticket, made my way into the theater, and found a seat that would give me an unobstructed view of the screen, one that had patrons on either side of the open seat in front of me. Fairly sure that no one would sit in front of me, I felt good about my maneuver. A few minutes before the film began, a group of four walked down the aisle, looking for a string of open seats in the crowded theater. One of them stopped at my row and asked if I would move down a seat. Immediately, I realized my predicament. If I moved, I'd be behind someone tall, with my vision of the screen blocked.

I'd spend the film gazing through someone's head. I said no. The woman who had asked was taken aback, said so, and then moved on. Just as quickly, I found myself shocked by my own selfishness. Where had that come from? Was I really not who I thought I was? I discovered that there are hidden pieces of who we are that seldom come to light, and when they do, we cringe. If we are fortunate, the Lenten journey we begin on Ash Wednesday might reveal to us what it is that lives in our hearts. ●

### Reflect

*What can I do for Lent that may help me see myself more clearly?*

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

905 Chestnut Street, Douglassville, PA 19518 [www.icbvm.org](http://www.icbvm.org) [secretary@icbvm.org](mailto:secretary@icbvm.org) [ccd@icbvm.org](mailto:ccd@icbvm.org)

Rev. Msgr. John B. McCann .....Pastor Immaculate Conception Academy.....610 404-8645.....[www.icaberks.org](http://www.icaberks.org)  
 Deacon Paul J. Hiryak, Deacon James A. Bardi Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator: Wendy S. Krisak, M.A. NC, LPC, 800-791-9209  
 Parish Office .....610 582-2411 Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator: Pamela Russo, MSW, MS, 610-871-5200, Ext 2204  
 Parish Religious Education/CCD .....610 582-3880 Diocese of Allentown website.....[www.allentowndiocese.org](http://www.allentowndiocese.org)  
 Parish Preschool .....610 404-8645 Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service: If you have an allegation of abuse against a bishop,  
 Parish Website.....[www.icbvm.org](http://www.icbvm.org) please contact the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service at [www.ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org)  
 Confessions Saturday .....4:00 to 5:00PM or by calling 800-276-1562

## EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIMES – MARCH 2, 2025

*The Sanctuary Lamp Burns in Memory of Anthony Volpiccini and*

*In Memory of Shawn Kaeser*

SAT	5:15 PM	Cody Luke Morris	WED	7:00PM	Jerome Setlock
SUN	7:30 AM	Our Parishioners	THUR	7:00PM	Anthony Volpiccini
	9:00 AM	Joyce Mahon	FRI	7:30AM	Alexander Chan
	11:00 AM	Dave Mollura	SAT	5:15PM	Joseph D. Nanni 8 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
MON	7:30AM	Larry Hostrander	SUN	7:30AM	Our Parishioners
TUES	7:00 PM	Ron Schwendt		9:00AM	The Carmine & Guila Bascelli Family
WED	7:30AM	Rose White		11:00AM	Linda Domergue
	9:00AM	ICA MASS Dawn O'Donnell			

The Second Collection Next Week is for the Catholic Home Missions/Black & Indian Missions

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, Lois Muldowney, Msgr. Nevin J. Klinger Arlene Schaeffer, Shelly Weiler, Steven Blanyar, Jennifer Gruber, Catherine Mueller, Regina Marie Brown, Ralph Rapposelli, Joe Dantas, Debbie Simcock, Wanda Palmieri, Barbara Wright, Beppy McGee, Jerry Miscovich, John Kuszniir, Joseph Ondo, Karl Husbands, Magdalene Babiartz, Clara Bailey, Jessica Bailey, Alex Lopacki, Angelina Swisher, Rachel DiFrancesco, Millie Mattassa, Bill Pribanick, Rosemary Williamson, Tony Guilliarns, Bob Warunek, Sharon Painter, Cletus McLaughlin, Edward Zawora, Rose Kubovcsak, Lyn Weidenhammer, Caraline Herb, Henry Wade, Jr., Joe Bailey, Daniel McLaughlin, Ann Hay & Tony Zampella, Frances Swiezak & Kathleen Grady..

Congratulate the newly Baptized: Julia Marie Breon & Gianna Grace Rubino.

Please pray the recently deceased: Shawn Kaeser, Virginia M. Lutz & Carmen Scalfaro.

**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)

**Hospital Visitations: If you or a member of your family is hospitalized, call the parish office at 610-582-2411.**

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 FASHION. 610-582-2411

**First Friday Communion Calls:** Please know that Monsignor McCann and Deacon Bardi bring Holy Communion to our parishioners who are sick and homebound on the First Friday of each month. If you or a member of your family is unable to attend Mass because of illness or infirmity, please call the parish office at 610-582-2411 and we will gladly bring Holy Communion to you.

*Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of the Forty Days of Lent, is March 5, 2025.*

*The Ashes we will receive that day are an outward sign of the inner conversion of our hearts. They remind us of our mortality and our faith in the life-giving power of God. The holy season of Lent is a call to profound conversion and renewal through deeds of penance and mercy. On Ash Wednesday, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered at 7:30am, 9:00am and at 7:00pm.*

**FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS AS HE CARRIED THE CROSS FOR OUR SALVATION. THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS WILL BE HELD EVERY FRIDAY EVENING DURING LENT AT 7:00PM IN OUR PARISH CHURCH. WE INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS BEAUTIFUL LENTEN TRADITION BY FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS AS HE CARRIED THE CROSS**

**Family Mass - On March 9 at the 9am Mass, we will celebrate the children and families of our parish Church of the Immaculate Conception.**

This inspiring and family-friendly event will bring together our cherished families, children, and the broader Parish community. We cordially invite you to join us for this special Mass, as it offers an incredible opportunity to build our community, nurture friendships, and create lasting memories. Participate in Mass alongside our talented Immaculate Conception Academy students, who will serve in key roles in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. After Mass, enjoy a delightful Social Sunday reception in the Social Hall. Engage in a family-friendly atmosphere that welcomes all age groups. Save the Date and Spread the Word! Family Sunday Mass March 9th at 9am.

Our parish **Grief Support Group** meets monthly & helps you to understand & guide you as you strive to live without your loved one. Next meeting: **Tues., March 4, at 7pm in the Church.** If you are planning to come, please call/text Toni 610 404-1389 for info.

## 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!*

### Eucharistic Adoration

*During the 40 days of Lent our church will be open every Wednesday, 7-9pm for Eucharistic Adoration starting on March 12. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed in the monstrance on the altar. You are welcome to come and spend some quiet time with the Lord Jesus. You may bring your own prayer books, use any of the books in our parish library, read the Bible, pray the Rosary, or just sit and relax and enjoy the peace that comes from simply being in the presence of God. faith. When you come, bring to the Lord your hopes and desires, your dreams and aspirations, your fears and anxieties and entrust all them all to God.*

**Friday Lenten Rosary - Starting Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup> at 6pm,** our parish will be holding a Scriptural Rosary in the church. All are welcome. Make the Rosary a part of your weekly Lent prayer practice, along with Stations of the Cross which follow at 7pm. .

**The KoC Lenten Food Drive - Please bring your non-perishable, canned and boxed food donations to Mass & drop them off in the collection bin located in the narthex. Monetary donations are also accepted. All food donations are given to the St. Joseph Pantry of Reading. Monetary donations are presented to the Kennedy House..**

**The 28nd Annual Daniel Boone Optimist Club Spring Craft Show is set for Saturday, April 5, 2025, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Daniel Boone Middle School, 1845 Weavertown Road, Douglassville. Over 120 crafters are attending with their hand-made products. Free admission, free parking, refreshments and raffle.**



# Dear Padre,

## *Does pregnancy qualify as an exemption from abstinence and fasting in Lent?*

Yes, it does. Just to be clear, abstinence is not eating meat on the Fridays of Lent and applies to Catholics over the age of fourteen. On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, Catholics between the ages of eighteen and fifty-nine are obligated to fast, that is, eat only one full meal and two smaller meals that do not add up to a full meal. In addition to children and elders, exemptions from these disciplines include pregnant or nursing women and the physically or mentally ill, including those with chronic illnesses, like diabetes.

It is presumed that mature Catholics will seek balance and integration in the practice of the faith and will routinely make careful, informed decisions and apply them to spiritual practice. Obviously, being informed and aware of what the Church teaches, why the Church teaches something, and how it is to be applied and understood will only enhance a person's discernment.

The health of an unborn baby is a clear responsibility and of the utmost importance. Maintaining a healthy and balanced diet during pregnancy and adjusting any habitual practices that may endanger the health of the baby should be a primary concern. While exempt from fasting and abstinence, a pregnant woman may want to observe Lent by adopting another penitential discipline, something that would do no harm to the baby but would still be in the spirit of Lent. ●

**Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org**



SHVETS PRODUCTION / PEXELS

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
March 3	March 4	March 5	March 6	March 7	March 8	March 9
<i>Weekday</i>	<i>Weekday</i>	<i>Ash Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday after Ash Wednesday</i>	<i>Friday after Ash Wednesday</i>	<i>Saturday after Ash Wednesday</i>	<i>First Sunday of Lent</i>
Sir 17:20–24	Sir 35:1–12	Jl 2:12–18	Dt 30:15–20	Is 58:1–9a	Is 58:9b–14	Dt 26:4–10
Mk 10:17–27	Mk 10:28–31	2 Cor 5:20–6:2	Lk 9:22–25	Mt 9:14–15	Lk 5:27–32	Rom 10:8–13
		Mt 6:1–6, 16–18				Lk 4:1–13

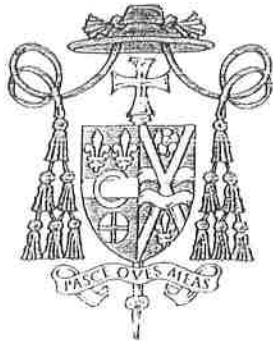


VATICAN MEDIA

### **A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS**

***What Jesus says is true: we always find reasons for blaming others and justifying ourselves. And very often we complain about things that are wrong in society, in the Church, in the world, without first questioning ourselves and without making an effort to change.... Every fruitful, positive change must begin from ourselves. Otherwise, there will be no change.***

**ANGELUS, ROME, FEBRUARY 27, 2022**



## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Mailing Address  
POST OFFICE BOX F  
ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA  
18105-1638



5 March 2025  
*Ash Wednesday*

### *Hail, O Cross, Our Only Hope!*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During the Lenten season of penance, we as a Church unite ourselves to Jesus' forty days of fasting in the desert and meditate upon His ultimate sacrifice on the Cross. Lent can be a somber time as we ponder and participate in Christ's suffering, but we are not abandoning the joyful hope of this Jubilee Year for the next forty days. *Because* Lent draws our attention and our hearts ever closer to Christ and His Cross, it is *especially* a season of ever-deepening Hope.

Our hope as Christians comes from Christ's sacrifice. The virtue of hope helps us desire and strive towards Heaven as our fullest happiness, and Heaven is only available to us because Christ entered our weakness and vanquished sin and death. Because Jesus has already experienced and defeated the worst of what life has to offer, our hope, from and in Him, carries us through the darkest of times.

The letter to the Hebrews describes that "we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sinning." The Gospels describe how Jesus encountered temptation during his desert fast: He was tempted by pleasure when the Devil offered Him bread, power when the Devil offered Him kingdoms, and pride when the Devil suggested that He abandon His God-given purpose. All our own temptations can be boiled down to these same things: pleasure, power, and pride. Jesus was presented with them all—and beaten them all.

To spend Lent walking with Jesus in the desert is not just to hone our own self-discipline. It is also to accompany the Victor in this battle. Lent is a reminder that Christ has vanquished the Tempter *for us*, so indeed we have hope even in our struggle. When we inevitably face our own weakness this Lenten Season, we will see the need to place our hope in the God who has already assumed and defeated that weakness.

*Lenten Pastoral Letter*

During Vespers (Evening Prayer) from Palm Sunday through Holy Thursday, the Church traditionally sings the "*Vexilla regis*," a hymn dating back to the sixth century. This prayer proclaims: "Hail, O Cross, our only hope!" This line can be a motto for us during this Lent of the Jubilee Year of Hope. We praise and exalt the Cross by which God brought His estranged children to Himself. We honor the Cross that is our path to eternal happiness.

Jesus tells us in the Gospels to pick up our crosses *daily* and follow Him. Often this may feel like a slog, dragging our burdens behind us as we strive to live holy lives. Even so, picking up our daily cross is our means to daily *hope*. Lent, by giving us extra occasions for penance and participation in Christ's Cross, gives us even more opportunities to receive God's gift of hope.

No matter what obstacles we encounter, even the most tragic of sufferings and most powerful of temptations, we can have hope because Christ has carried that Cross and is carrying it with us now. By our Baptism, Jesus has welcomed us into His life and grace, and He incorporates our suffering into His own. We may or may not see the signs of His victory in this life, but we will certainly see them in the next.

Please know that I will be praying for you this Lent. I invite you to join me in honoring the Cross, our only undefeatable hope, as we pick it up daily and follow Jesus.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Alfred A. Schlert".

✠ Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert  
Bishop of Allentown