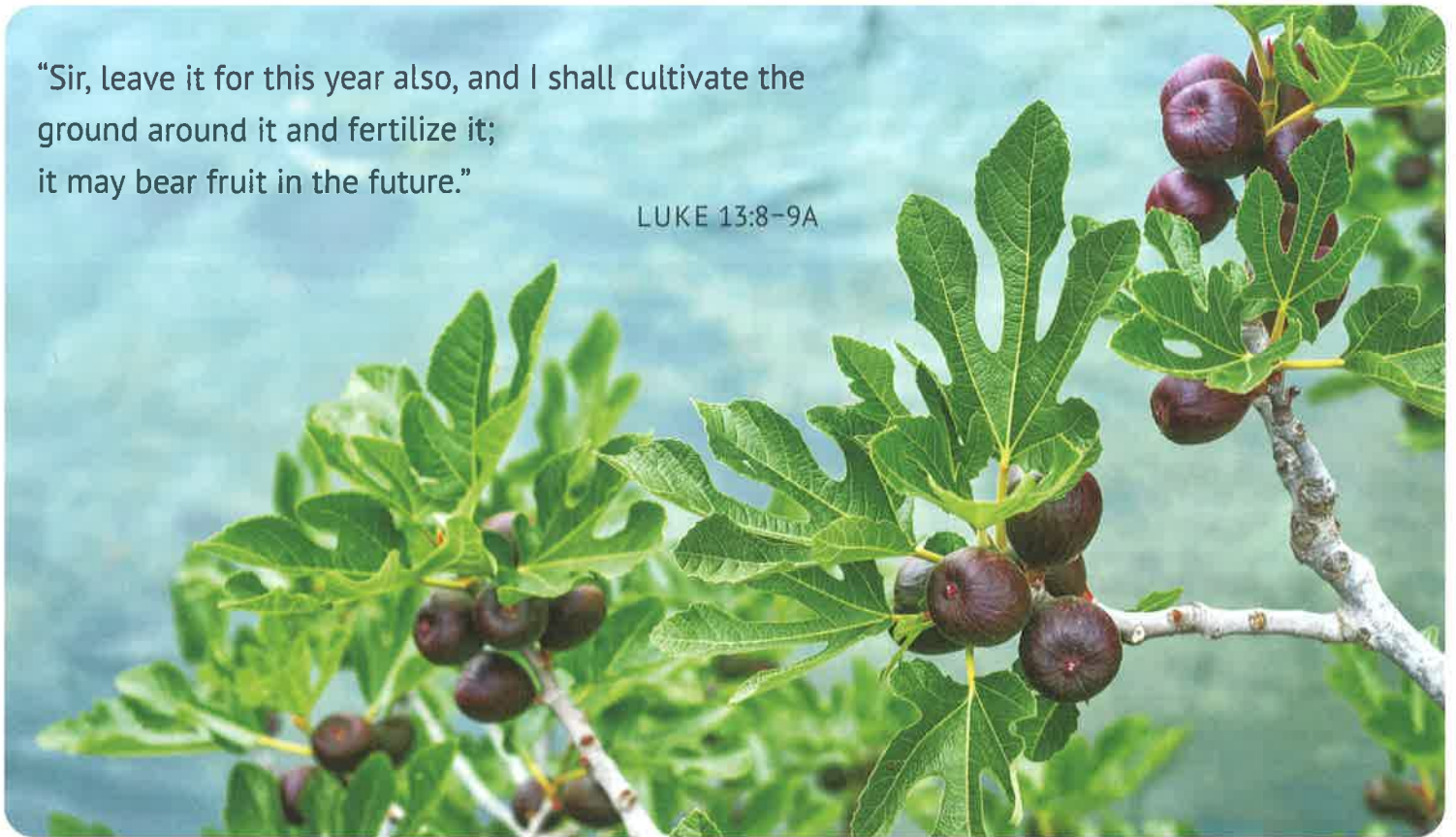




"Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future."

LUKE 13:8-9A



A Gardener God

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Charles Baudelaire was a French poet and essayist in the mid-1800s. He once observed that life is like a hospital in which each patient is possessed by the desire to change beds. In other words, he thought everyone seemed to think life would be so much better if only they had a different set of circumstances, a different job, a different marriage, a different place in life. Like trees, however, not everyone grows and matures at the same pace. There are forty-year-olds who still act and think like teenagers, and there are ten-year-olds who have an attitude toward life like that of an elder. Over time, we all grow into the lives we're given.

In this week's Parable of the Barren Fig Tree, some think God is like the owner who planted the tree, as

if God is impatient with us to begin bearing fruit and quick to uproot us if we fail. A case could be made, however, for God to be the gardener who patiently fertilizes and nurtures. In the beginning, it was God who had a garden called Eden, filled with all kinds of trees and plants among which God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening. After the resurrection, it was Mary Magdalene who went looking for the body of Jesus and mistook him for the gardener. It is God who hovers over us, watering and nudging and nurturing, waiting until in God's good time, we begin to bear fruit. ●

Reflect

***What needs nurturing in my life,
and what needs weeding out?***

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

905 Chestnut Street, Douglassville, PA 19518 www.icbvm.org secretary@icbvm.org ccd@icbvm.org

Rev. Msgr. John B. McCannPastor	Immaculate Conception Academy.....610 404-8645..... 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 Office610 582-2411	Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator: Pamela Russo, MSW, MS, 610-871-5200, Ext 2204
Parish Religious Education/CCD610 582-3880	Diocese of Allentown website..... www.allentowndiocese.org
Parish Preschool610 404-8645	Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service: If you have an allegation of abuse against a bishop,
Parish Website..... www.icbvm.org	please contact the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service at www.ReportBishopAbuse.org
Confessions Saturday4:00 to 5:00PM	or by calling 800-276-1562

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT MARCH 23, 2025

The Sanctuary Lamp Burns in Memory Of Cindy Burkholder

SAT 5:15 PM	Our Parishioners	THUR 7:00PM	Mary Butler
SUN 7:30 AM	Ollie Pribanick 5th Anniversary	FRI 7:30AM	Annette & Ray Brennan
9:00 AM	Elmer Whitaker	SAT 5:15PM	Stanley Pinkos
11:00 AM	Bob Hocker 4 th Anniversary	SUN 7:30AM	Stephen A. Mammarella 7 th Anniversary
MON 7:30AM	Marianina, Angelo & Florence DaDamio	9:00AM	Marie Kozak
TUES 7:00PM	George Sohn	11:00AM	Gerald Wright
WED 7:30AM	Clarita Castillo & Letitia Chan		

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

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: Pope Francis, Msgr. Nevin J. Klinger, Msgr. Edward Domin, Madge Butto, Pat Fessler, Curt Miller, Loretta Hitchens, Dante Stetina, Barbara Ruby, Kara Morrison, Arlene Shirley, Harriet Yeager, Marjorie Hansen, Jason Leman, Ann Washko, Anthony Scaglione, Maryanne Emery, Pam Amos, Marianne Sutton, John Mingione, Lois Muldowney, 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 Babiarz, Clara Bailey, Jessica Bailey, Alex Lopacki, Angelina Swisher, Rachel DiFrancesco, Millie Mattassa, Bill Pribanick, Rosemary Williamson, Nancy Guilleams, Tony Guilleams, Bob Warunek, Sharon Painter, Cletus McLaughlin, Carol & Edward Zawora, Rose Kubovcsak, Lyn Weidenhammer, Caraline Herb, Henry Wade, Jr., Joe Bailey, Daniel McLaughlin, Ann Hay, Geri Barth, Kathleen Grady, Jeff Stetina & Larry Palmer.

Please pray for the recently deceased: Elaine Genovese, Richard Yost & Gerald Miscovich, Sr.

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

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.

Come and be Spiritually Refreshed!

Our parish OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults) The Program for 2024-25 continues on March 24th at 7pm. We meet in the Lower Level Meeting Room in the office building. Visit the parish website (select Religious Education, then OCIA) or program registration info or contact the Parish Office at 610-582-2411

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS WILL BE HELD EVERY FRIDAY EVENING DURING LENT AT 7:00PM AND AT 1:45PM WITH THE CHILDREN OF THE ACADEMY IN OUR PARISH CHURCH. WE INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS BEAUTIFUL LENTEN TRADITION.

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 & 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 & desires, your dreams and aspirations, your fears & anxieties and entrust all them all to God.

Friday Lenten Rosary - Friday, 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.

ICC CYO Spring Track and Field Registration is open NOW until April 1st 2025. Track and Field is open to 5th through 8th Grade Girls and Boys who participate in ICC CCD, or attend ICA. <https://bit.ly/4hdZzwG> and <https://iccyoberks.org>

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

Our parish Grief Support Group meets monthly,. Next meeting: Tues., April 1, at 7pm in the Church. If you are planning to come, please call/text Toni 610 404-1389 for more information.

We have began our clean-up at the ICC Cemetery. If you have any items on gravesites you wish to keep, please visit the Cemetery to retrieve the items prior to the week of March 30,2025.

The K of C 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..



EGG HUNT for our parish children age 12 and younger on April 19th 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!

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 both at home and abroad. The Rice Bowl is located in the rear of the church near the baptismal font.

Dear Padre,

May I receive Communion if I'm divorced and haven't gotten an annulment?

Yes, you may. Divorce, in itself, is not an impediment to the reception of Communion. Divorce, although regrettable because of the many ramifications that may be part of the experience, is not in itself a sin. There are situations when divorce may be the most loving choice and make it possible for all parties involved to live the lives God is calling them to live.

Remarriage, when a person is not free to marry because of the presence of a previous bond, is an impediment to the reception of holy Communion. Although this situation is more and more common, it does not mean that the law of the Church, representative of the teaching of Jesus, can be set aside. As part of the process of healing from your divorce and moving on with your life, you may want to seek an annulment, particularly if you think you might want to marry again. The annulment process can often be healing and a source of great blessing. It also provides a rare opportunity to reflect on what was lost as a result of the original divorce and what can be learned as a way of moving forward and building a second marriage that is strong and life-giving.

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



STEVE LOVEGROVE / SHUTTERSTOCK

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
March 24	March 25	March 26	March 27	March 28	March 29	March 30
<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>The</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>	<i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i>
2 Kgs 5:1–15b	<i>Annunciation of the Lord</i>	Dt 4:1, 5–9	Jer 7:23–28	Hos 14:2–10	Hos 6:1–6	Jos 5:9a, 10–12
Lk 4:24–30	Is 7:10–14; 8:10	Mt 5:17–19	Lk 11:14–23	Mk 12:28–34	Lk 18:9–14	2 Cor 5:17–21
	Heb 10:4–10					Lk 15:1–3,
	Lk 1:26–38					11–32



VATICAN MEDIA

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

I like to think that a nice name for God could be “the God of another possibility”.... [God] does not look at the achievements you have not yet reached, but the fruits you can still bear. He does not keep track of your shortcomings but encourages your potential. He does not dwell on your past, but confidently bets on your future.

ANGELUS, ROME, MARCH 20, 2022