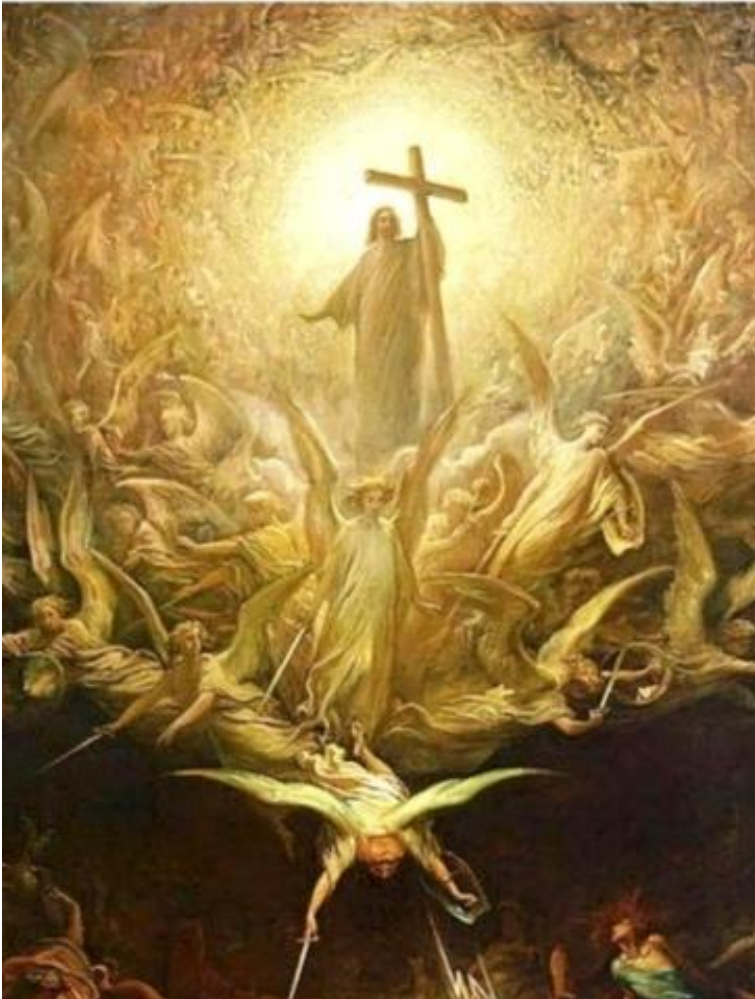


Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church

Father Herbert T. Burke, Pastor

Reverend Mr. Andrew Cilone, Permanent Deacon
Reverend Mr. David Faunce, Permanent Deacon

Sharon Date, Parish Secretary
Parish Office Hours: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri
Office/Rectory: (828) 245-4017



Exaltation of the Holy Cross September 14, 2025

Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church
1024 West Main Street ~ Forest City, NC ~ 28043

Parish email: sgdate@rcdoc.org

Website: www.immaculateconceptionforestcity.org

Bulletin Editor: pjwlmg@gmail.com

Weekend Masses

Saturday, 5:00pm

Sunday, 9:00am, 11:30am, 3:00pm (Español)

Weekday Masses

Monday, 9:00am (Chapel)

Wednesday, 7:00pm (Church)

Thursday, 12:10pm (Chapel)

Friday, 12:10pm (Chapel)

Rosary and Benediction

Thursday, 7:00pm (Chapel)

Eucharistic Adoration

Thursday, 12:30pm-8:00pm (Chapel)

Friday, 12:30pm-1:30pm (Chapel)

Saturday, 4:00pm-5:00pm (Church)

Sunday, 8:00am-9:00am (Church)

Sunday, 10:30am-11:30am (Church)

4th Thursday 12:30pm-Friday 12:00pm (Chapel)

Nocturnal Adoration

Second Saturday of the Month

10:00pm-6:00am (Chapel)

Confession

Saturday, 4:15-4:45pm (Church)

Wednesday, 6:30pm-7:00pm (Church)

Welcome to our Parish!

We welcome all visitors and newcomers to our parish family. If you need any information regarding Baptism, First Communion or Matrimony, please contact

Deacon Andrew Cilone at 828-245-6219.

For information regarding instructions in the Catholic faith through the RCIA program, please contact Deacon David Faunce at 828-429-1469.

Weekly Calendar for September 13-21, 2025

Sat 13	Saint John Chrysostom	5:00pm	Mass for the Grandchildren of the Hill Family by Chuck & Janet Hill
Sun 14	Exaltation of the Holy Cross	9:00am 11:30am 7:30pm	Mass for the Joseph Family in India by Sumy Joseph Mass for the Parish AA Meeting, call Floyd Kunkle at 289-6336 for information
Mon 15	Our Lady of Sorrows	9:00am (in the Church)	Mass for ROS Richard Feldmeth, Sr. by Claire Feldmeth 75 th Anniversary Mass of the Parish
Wed 17	Saint Hildegard of Bingen	7:00pm	Mass for ROS Michael Barnas by Thomas and Barbara Ruth
Thurs 18	Saint Joseph of Cupertino	12:10pm 7:00pm 7:30pm	Mass for ROS Florence Hill by Chuck and Janet Hill Rosary and Benediction AA Meeting, call Floyd Kunkle at 289-6336 for information
Fri 19	Our Lady of LaSalette	12:10pm	Mass for Joannie Jolley, Happy Birthday by Floyd and Ginny Kunkle
Sat 20	Saint Andrew Kim Tae-gon	5:00pm	Mass for the Parish
Sun 21	22 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time	9:00am 11:30am 7:30pm	Mass for ROS Amy Beheler by the Higgins Family Mass for ROS Dewey Williams and James Ruth by Tom Ruth AA Meeting, call Floyd Kunkle at 289-6336 for information

Save the Date

September 13: After the 5:00pm Mass, gather in the Narthex for an 75th Anniversary Cupcake, and to pick up your copy of the 2025 Parish Directory

September 14: After the 9:00am, 11:30am, and 3:00pm Masses, stroll over to the Parish Hall for 75th Anniversary Cake Celebration, and to pick up your copy of the 2025 Parish Directory

September 14: Holy Cross Novena starts today, in preparation for the September 27th Cross Novena is available at:
www.praymorenovenas.com/exaltation-holy-cross-novena

September 15: 75th Anniversary of Immaculate Conception Church; Mass to be held in the Church.

September 17: Prayer Group, 10:30am, Parish Hall

September 20: Annual Hispanic Festival; more information to come

September 21: Second Collection for Priests Retirement

September 25: Daughters of the Visitation; 4:30-6:30pm in the Parish Hall; First session of the semester.

September 25-26: 24-Hour Adoration in the Chapel

September 27: 13th Annual Cross Walk and Eucharistic Procession: and for those that cannot make the walk, the 3rd order Carmelites are sponsoring Stations of the Cross in the Large Church to coincide with the timing of the march. **Time**: 8:30AM – 1:00PM; **Objective**: To march in Reparation and for Conversion of Souls. This year we are raising funds for Cross Catholic Outreach. **NOTE: For those planning on joining us for the Cross Walk on Saturday, Sept. 27th, please also remember to pick up your pledge forms in the gold wire basked in the Narthex if you will be asking for sponsors. We will collect pledge forms and all raised funds on the day of the Cross Walk, Sat., Sept. 27th.**

October 4: Parish Council Meeting: 10:00am in the School Building

October 5: Knights of Columbus Monthly Meeting: 7:00pm in the Parish Hall, Adoration in the Chapel at 6:30pm

October 11: Walk for Life, more information to come.

Hope Quotes

"When we are troubled or wounded... we are led to 'nest' around our sadness and our fears... The Spirit feeds us with living hope. Invite him. Let us ask him to come to us and he will come near".

~ Pope Francis~

COLLECTION INFORMATION

Collection for the Week of September 7, 2025

Regular Offering: \$7,731.66
Building Repair Loan: \$200.00

You can make online donations through the following link:
<https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/immaculateconceforestcity>

A limited number of extra copies of the 2025 Parish Directory will be available for sale in the Gift Shop at \$15.00 each, while they last.

Prayers for the Sick

Mary Absher, Cynthia Beam, Emily Bailey, Alisha Benfield, Terry Bird, Teresa Burgin, Christopher Bouzon, Iris Borrás, Wade Boswell, Ruth Brown, Father Burke, Melissa Chandler, MiMi Ciccarella, JoAnn Cilone, Gary Colhouer, Frank Colini, Joanne Colini, Julie Colini, Sabrina & Kevin Collier, Julie Collins, Michelle Contreras, Michelle Daigle, Danya Davis, Claudia Dodrill, Robert DuCharme, Danya Evans, Carol Faunce, Emanuel Garcia, Rebekah Giltner, Gloria Gimpaya, Silvestre Gonzalez, Nancy Goulet, Ellie Graves, Clint Hamrick, Elaine Harding, Jim Hauelsen, David Hernandez, Julian Hernandez, Sherlin Hernandez, Janet Hill, Clare Jablonski, Betsy Jackson, Father Jenkins, Kate Johnson, Joannie Jolley, Gabriel Jones, Bishop Jugis, Ronnie Kennedy, Jim & Joan King, Jared Krantz, Bruce Lancaster, Ed Long, Stephannie Longo, Patricia Lucas, Jeff Lugo, Monica Martin, Elias Martinez, Nathan I. McCain, Jennifer McDonald, Darlene McPeters, Geri Melton, Esther Mendoza, Teresa Mendoza, Kevin Millette, Benny Montanez, Scott Moore, Alan Murfitt, Keith Oliver, Luis Parra, Maria Parra, Carmen Perez, David Picquet, Ken Pierson, Bonnie Rackley, Richard Ranc, Rick Rorey, Deborah Rowlands, John Rowlands, Camille Russo, Nathan Ryback, Dominick Samarotto, Linda Samarotto, Linda & Keith See, Samantha Smith, Sister Mary Olivia, Larry St. Clair, Nancy St. Clair, Beth Ann Stamper, Cole Suhy, Doug Suhy, Sarah Suhy, Mark Tavernia, Richard Thelen, Federico Trejo, Patty Wansor, Arwin Watts, Sammy White, Bernice Williams, Marshall Williams, Mary Wright, Lily Young.

Please let us know when you are ready to be taken off our "Prayers for the Sick" list; email pjwlmg@gmail.com



ESPECIALLY FOR....



E2 Private First Class Jayden Mills, USMC, Stationed at Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan; CDR Stuart Whitaker; John Escalera, also in the Navy;

CDR Jeffrey Gerring of the US Navy.

Please consider adding the name of someone you love to our prayer list for our Troops. Email to pjwlmg@gmail.com



Please Pray for Our First Responders, especially for:

Officer Max DeLauter, Shelby Police Department and

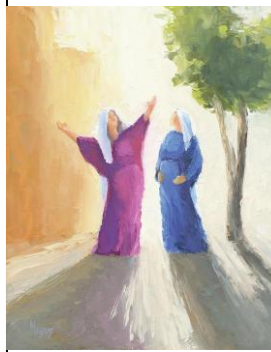
Officer Nathan Shomette, Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department

Please consider adding the name of someone you love to our prayer list for our First Responders.

Email to pjwlmg@gmail.com

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

1st Sunday (September 7)	Yokefellow Sunday	Creamy Peanut Butter
2nd Sunday (September 14)	Hospice Sunday	Ensure, any flavor
3rd Sunday (September 21)	Hands of Hope Sunday	Children's diapers, SIZE LARGE
4th Sunday (September 28)	Backpack Sunday	Individual-serving size of Mac & cheese, ravioli, beanie-weenies, etc



Daughters of the Visitation would like to extend a warm invitation to all women to join us for our Fall Semester gatherings, a time of continued renewal in Christ, deepening intimacy with the Trinity, and journeying together in sisterhood like Mary and Elizabeth.

This semester, we'll explore the healing love of Jesus in our new series: **Jesus Heals the Broken**

Hearted: My Journey Toward Inner Healing. DOV meets every **Thursday afternoon, 4:30-6:30 pm**, beginning **September 25-December 11, 2025.**

Registration is \$40. Come find out more information in the Narthex after all Masses **Sept. 13/14, and Sept. 20/21.**

Our Very Own Catholic Gift Shop

Fall is here...time to come and visit the Gift Shop!

We have new rosaries, rosary bracelets, and statues (Our Lady of Mt Carmel, Our Lady of Guadalupe and more). We now have Pope Leo Hematite Rosaries as well as 8", 10", and 13" Tomaso/Roma Crucifixes. Sterling Silver medals such as the Miraculous Medal are also available as well as those of some of the saints. Holy water bottles and fonts are available for you to use at home and fill from our dispensing font at the front of the Church and Chapel. We have an assortment of books including some in Spanish. We are expecting a shipment of some of Fr. Burke's books soon. Generally open after each of the Masses, Deacon Andy can open for you if the door is closed. Hope to see you soon. Our Gift Shop proceeds support Ladies Guild Ministries and our Parish Church.

This year the Knights of Columbus will offer a representation of the Church's Our Lady Of Guadalupe stained glass window as a glass Christmas ornament. This beautiful ornament will be available starting at the Spanish Festival on September 20th for \$30 each



Este año, los Caballeros de Colón ofrecerán una representación del vitral de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe como adorno navideño de vidrio. Este hermoso adorno estará disponible a partir del Festival Español el 20 de septiembre por \$30 cada uno.

THE SEVEN SORROWS DEVOTION

As we said last week, Devotion to Our Lady's Sorrows is one of the earliest devotions to Our Lady. In the 13th century, Our Lady appeared to the Seven Founders of the Servite Order, giving them a black garment as their habit and asking them to meditate on her Sorrows. This Order has an interesting foundation story. Around 1233, seven wealthy merchants from Florence gave up their wealth and gathered in the mountains of Italy to live a life of prayer, and they dedicated their life to Our Lady. The "Servites" are still active today.

There have also been several saints throughout the years who had particular devotion to the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Mother, but one of them, Saint Bridget of Sweden, was visited by Our Lady who made seven promises to those who practiced the devotion to her Seven Sorrows. The promises were:

"I will grant peace to their families."

"They will be enlightened about the divine Mysteries."

"I will console them in their pains and I will accompany them in their work."

"I will give them as much as they ask for as long as it does not oppose the adorable will of my divine Son or the sanctification of their souls."

"I will defend them in their spiritual battles with the infernal enemy and I will protect them at every instant of their lives."

"I will visibly help them at the moment of their death—they will see the face of their mother."

"I have obtained this grace from my divine Son, that those who propagate this devotion to my tears and dolours will be taken directly from this earthly life to eternal happiness, since all the consolation and joy."



The Seven Sorrows, or Seven Dolours, of the Blessed Virgin Mary are:

The prophecy of Simeon foretelling the Passion and Death of Jesus

The flight from Herod into Egypt

The loss of Jesus for three days

Meeting Jesus as he carried his cross to Calvary

Standing at the foot of the cross and witnessing the death of Jesus

Watching as the soldier pierced Jesus's side with a lance and receiving his body from the cross

Seeing the body of Jesus buried in the tomb

On one of the Dominican Friars websites, the Seven Sorrows Rosary is explained for us. "Beginning with the very first sorrow, each of these is connected in some way, either directly or indirectly, to the Passion of Jesus. They also provide us with a unique Marian perspective on some part of this great mystery. For example, consider the third sorrow. We typically think of this event from the perspective of the fifth Joyful Mystery, the finding of the child Jesus in the Temple. The third sorrow, however, focuses on the loss Mary experienced during the three days Jesus was separated from her and Joseph. These three days prefigure the three days Mary would be separated from Jesus while his body lay in the tomb.

Because of this intimate connection with the Passion, devotion to the Seven Sorrows became a common way for people to reflect on the mysteries of Holy Week. Today, the Church no longer celebrates the feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Following the revision of the liturgical calendar, it was combined with Our Lady of Sorrows on September 15th in order to keep the focus of the final weeks of Lent directly on the events of the Passion. But the revision kept the connection between the Seven Sorrows and the Passion because the new feast directly follows that of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14th. Thus, reflecting on the events of Holy Week by meditating on the Seven Sorrows remains a great way to delve deeper into the meaning of Jesus's Passion. Lastly, the most common way of meditating on Mary's sorrows is by reciting the Chaplet of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is similar in form to the standard Rosary.

Here's how to pray the chaplet:

Begin by making the Sign of the Cross. Recite the Act of Contrition and say the optional Opening Prayer: My God, I offer you this rosary for your glory. I want to honor your Holy Mother, the Blessed Virgin, by meditating upon and sharing in her suffering. O my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, trusting in your infinite love I turn to you for forgiveness and mercy.

Then, announce the First Sorrow. Say one *Our Father* and seven *Hail Marys*. Repeat for each of the Seven Sorrows.

Say three *Hail Marys* in honor of the tears which Mary shed in her sorrows. Say the optional Closing Prayer and finish by making the Sign of the Cross: O God, Our Father, from the Passion and Death of Jesus, shared by the compassion of His Mother, You brought healing to fallen man. Grant that we, your people, may experience this healing and rise from the power of sin to a wholeness of life promised by Jesus, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen"

We Care Enough to Give Our Very Best

When we began planning a celebration for our parish's 75th Anniversary, our little committee had grand plans, but first and foremost, we wanted prayer and community to be the major pieces of the plan.

Regarding prayer, one example is the Rosary Pledge. We hear about the Rosary frequently at Immaculate Conception, so it was no surprise that 79 families and individuals signed a pledge to pray the Rosary for the 75 days prior to our anniversary date (September 15th). That means around 6,000 rosaries were said for the future growth in our parish.

Another example of where prayer was important to us was when it came to our parishioners who are shut-ins. Deacon Andy visits over 20 people each month, bringing prayer, Holy Communion, an occasional song, and sometimes even groceries. The Carmelites in our parish prepared a book of prayers for each of them. These prayers included some old favorites, for sure, but also many focused on prayers for those who might be lonely, dealing with chronic illness, and more. For over half of these parishioners, the Carmelites visited them in person. They were asked to join the Carmelites in their prayers for special intentions of our parish, and they were asked if they would like to join in, and participate in our Parish Directory. If they said yes, their pictures were taken, and were included in the Parish Directory.

One of our parishioners, Donna Kersey, wrote a special prayer for the Anniversary that we posted in the Bulletin.

Regarding community, we got approval from Father Burke to develop a new Parish Directory, one that has turned out to be a lot different than any others before it. Thank you to the almost 200 parishioners who posed for pictures or submitted pictures for inclusion in the Parish Directory. Those who did will get a copy of the Directory after Mass starting the weekend of September 13-14th and after the 9am Mass on the 15th, the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, and our 75th Anniversary.

We also developed a parish Business Directory where parishioners could advertise their businesses free of charge. Thanks to the 15 business owners who shared their information with us. We plan on keeping this directory updated, so if you want to advertise your business, just send the information to the Bulletin Editor. Copies will continue to be available.

Our celebrations during this weekend are fairly low-key. We had hoped for rented tents, lots of people, and music, but we had to work with who we had, and the number of volunteers was quite small, so we did our very best with who we had, and are quite proud of what we have accomplished.



That seems to be a hallmark of this parish. They always do their best with who they have. A perfect example is our Chapel. Its size matched the number of parishioners. Its simple grandeur matched the love, devotion, and number of parishioners.

The stained glass windows in our 1950's Chapel are beautiful in their reverent simplicity. Each of the windows tells a story of faith.

The stained glass windows in the Church were completed over a couple of years. Each of these windows is dramatic in color, more complex in the depiction of the story of the window, but still reverent in how each story of faith is portrayed.

In both cases, the parishioners of our parish gave their very, very best for the honor and glory of God.



So, this weekend, join us after Mass, have a bit of celebration cupcake or cake, pick up your complementary copy of the Parish Directory, and look for your picture.

Remember, not everyone posed or submitted a family/individual picture. But for those who didn't, there will be several copies available for purchase in the Gift Shop next weekend. The price will be \$15.00

A Recurring Presence, with a Song in His Heart

By Penny Watkins

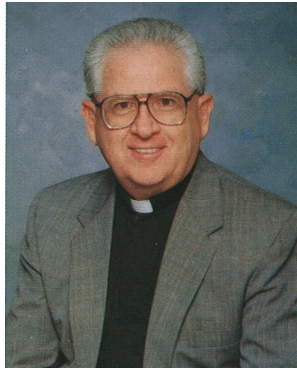
When I went to have my taxes done after we moved to North Carolina 16 years ago, the man who did my taxes asked, "Where do you go to church?" I told him that I went to Immaculate Conception. Then he said "I go there too. Don't you just love Deacon Andy Sunday?" That was what we called the first Sunday of the month back in 2009. The Mass parts would be sung in Latin, and Deacon Andy would give the Homily. I never knew if Deacon Andy or Father Burke knew we called it Deacon Andy Sunday, but we did. When Deacon Andy went into "retirement" a couple of years later, he no longer gave the homilies. I miss them. I think all of us "old-timers" do. He had a person-to-person approach that was so special, and it remains so today.



What brings Deacon Andy to my mind was all the photos and history articles I've been reading and writing during the past few months. Looking through the oldest Directory, 1982, and he was there. Most times, JoAnn was by his side.

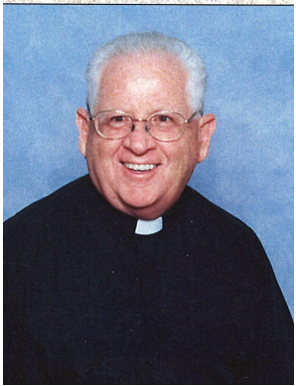
The years went by, and the only thing that seemed to change was the hair color. He's like the Energizer Bunny, he just keeps moving.

That seems to be a good thing too, because he is always there when you need him.



Recently, as part of our preparations for the 75th Anniversary, we Carmelites visited several of our parishioners who are homebound or in senior care settings. We went on the person-to-person visits, two by two. We all came home truly touched by the experiences we had. I will personally admit that one location brought my companion and I to tears when we got back in our car. But ever-faithful, one of the men we visited said that Deacon Andy visits him every week. I don't know for sure, but our Deacon Andy has a heart of pure platinum, and I think that's a miraculous treasure for our parish. He is continually focused on God, and serving His Master.

He has been in this parish for six decades, and assisted at least five pastors, and I am certain that they all appreciated the amazing things that Deacon Andy did to make their job as pastor a little easier. In fact, other deacons praise Deacon Andy and called him the best of the best.



And while he is an outstanding deacon, he is also quite the recording artist. Mind you, I'm not just talking about him being a back-up singer for Bobby Vinton. He has his own series of CDs. My favorite is the one of Old Italian Favorites. He's a true example of a person who has been given gifts from God, and he uses every one of them.

By the way, did you catch the phrase "When Deacon Andy went into retirement"? It seems that term really doesn't mean the same thing to him that it means to many of us.

It's a sure bet that he won't be happy with me for writing this little article. But after all Andy, I had a page to fill!

But from one parishioner to another, I can say that he has been a friend, a listener, and consultant, and bulletin proof-reader...

...and an absolutely amazing gift from God.

Thank you, Deacon Andy.

