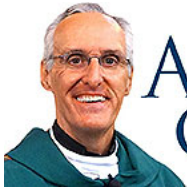


February 18, 2024 | First Sunday of Lent



Listen to the Lord and  
Live In  
God's Light



ALL  
OF US

Fr. Larry's  
Weekly Letter  
#553

## HOLY SMOKES



On Monday, in preparation for Ash Wednesday, I gathered with our 2nd Graders in the parking lot at Immaculate Conception Church to burn a bundle of dry palm branches that were used last year on Palm Sunday. The dry and brittle branches quickly burst into a beautiful

campfire within a few seconds. The kids were mesmerized by the flames and marveled at the smoke and heat from the fire pit.

Before we lit the fire, we all sang "Alleluia" for one last time. I reminded the kids that we don't sing "Alleluia" again until we get to Easter Sunday.



*Continued on the next page*

The children shared with me all the good things that they were going to do for Lent that would help them grow in holiness. When the ashes were traced on their foreheads on Wednesday, they certainly knew where they came from.

## OKAY, WHAT NOW?

The black ashes we wore on our foreheads on Wednesday are now long gone. We used them like a spiritual tattoo to let anyone who sees us on the street know that we believe in Jesus, and that we just stepped into a church to start our Lenten journey. There are not a lot of shy Catholics on Ash Wednesday.

There must be something special going on within a person to not be afraid or embarrassed to dirty their face on Ash Wednesday. My hunch is that being blessed with sacred dirt is a tangible way of connecting with God's grace and mercy. It makes one feel holier, maybe a little more repentant, forgiving and patient. It's ironic that we dirty our faces, yet, at the same time we feel that we are cleaning our souls.

But now what will we do with the five remaining weeks of Lent? May we use this time well. May we embrace the opportunities for prayer, service and taking care of the poor.

Sometimes Lent can feel like a gloomy season for us, but it is also a time of blessing. It gives us time to reflect and it is a great opportunity to commit to change. We can take a new direction in our life. We can make a fresh start.

In the gospel for this Sunday, we hear how Jesus tells the crowds that the kingdom of God is close at hand. The kingdom is good news for all, especially those who are poor or disadvantaged, oppressed or enslaved. It is freedom—not to hurt, but to heal, not to divide, but to bring together.

The crowds listening to Jesus were invited to change direction—to create better relationships with each other, with God and with their neighbor.

This Sunday, we remember how Jesus was called into the quiet of the desert so that he could better hear the

calling of his Father. When he finishes his 40-day retreat, the first thing he has to say is, "Repent, and believe in the gospel."

**Where is a quiet place that we can go this Lent to better listen to Jesus, as he speaks to our hearts?**

## CAN YOU GO "7 FOR 7" THIS LENT?

I invite you go "7 for 7" this Lent. The challenge is this: Attend Sunday Mass for all the five Sundays in Lent, followed by Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. This can be a wonderful Lenten exercise.

Allow the Sunday Eucharist to nourish your soul. The scripture readings this Lent are rich and powerful. "Go 7 for 7" this Lent. Let this become your personal Lenten mission.

## PRAYING FROM THE HEART

Writing down our thoughts and feelings can be a helpful form of prayer and reflection. Journaling can help us to focus on our relationship with God and allow us to enter into a deep, personal and private conversation with God.

In today's bulletin, there is a simple page entitled, "*Praying from the Heart*." Consider using these simple questions this Lent to let God know where you are at and what you need right now in your life.

After the 40 days of Lent, you can go back to review what you wrote. You can see if things changed. Did God hear and answer your prayers? Give it a shot!



## Charitable Contributions for 2023

Our Parish Office mailed out the tax statements for those that have made a charitable contribution of \$250 or more to Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph Parish in 2023. If you believe you are missing a statement, or have any questions, please contact Angela Gore at: [agore@icsjparish.org](mailto:agore@icsjparish.org).

# PRAYING FROM THE HEART

DEAR JESUS, ♥

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



*Thank you for...*

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I am worried about...

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I need...

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PEOPLE I AM PRAYING FOR TODAY...

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.....  
.....  
.....



*Other things on my heart that I want to share with you...*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



Thank you  
for hearing  
my prayers.

*Amen.*



ICSU Lent 2024

# Reflection Guide

Until we take the time to be quiet, we will not hear God. God cannot be heard in noise, restlessness, or distraction. God will speak to us if we give God a chance, if we listen, if we will be quiet. 'Be still' the psalmist wrote, "and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

Sometimes we may feel like we are too mentally or emotionally weary and tired to connect with God in our hearts. We just aren't there! The good news is that even during these times of trouble, we can turn our tired heart to God. Don't try to make the agenda for your prayer time. *Just sit and "Listen to the Lord!"*

**During Lent we will use the questions below at our Sunday Masses** to help us hear what God is trying to tell us. May our Lenten gospels lead us away from the darkness we face in life and enable us to live in the light of God's love.

## Ash Wednesday

**"Turn away from sin, and be faithful to the gospel"**

- What is your attitude as you enter Lent this year?
- What do you hope will happen this Lent?
- What would you like to do this Lent to make it more meaningful for you and your family?

## Fourth Sunday of Lent

**"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son"**

- What difference does Jesus make in your life?
- What was it like to find light in the darkness?
- How has God's love for you opened your eyes and heart?

## First Sunday of Lent

**"Jesus is tempted in the desert by the Satan"**

- What is one temptation that you may experience this week and what will you do resist it?
- Jesus was called into the quiet of the desert so he could better hear the calling of his Father. Where is a quiet place that you can go in order to better listen to your heart?

## Fifth Sunday of Lent

**"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be gloried"**

- How do you identify yourself?
- What parts of your identity do you usually share with others (nationality, race, religion, gender, occupation or others)?
- How do you live out your identity as a child of God?

## Second Sunday of Lent

**"Jesus is transfigured on the mountain"**

- When, where, and how do you recognize Jesus when you encounter him?
- What was your last experience of awe?
- How were you changed by this event?
- What is God trying to tell me through this encounter?

## Palm Sunday

**"Jesus dies on the cross"**

- How do you identify with in this great story about love and sacrifice?
- Which person, or group of people in the Passion story, stands out the most for you? Why?
- Are there similarities in your life?

## Third Sunday of Lent

**"Jesus cleanses the temple area"**

- Where are places you experience the presence of God?
- What are the things within us that we need Jesus to overturn and drive out in order to live in God's light?
- Jesus was angry at times. When is your anger a good thing? When is it not?

**"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life."**

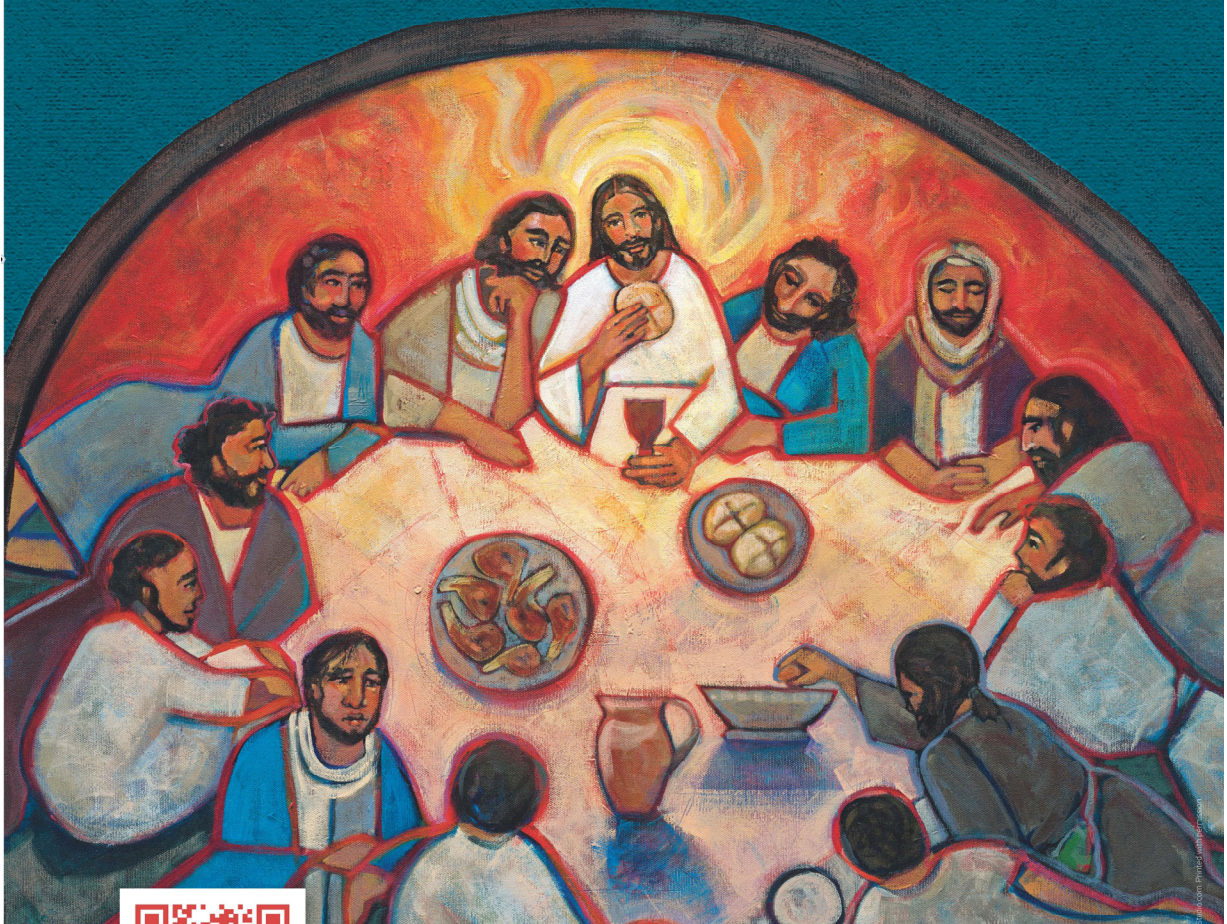
John 3:16

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



## 2024 Annual Catholic Appeal

# Together at the table



[annualcatholicappeal.com](http://annualcatholicappeal.com)

# C.L.O.W. DURING LENT



## Children's Liturgy of the Word 4 y/o to 3rd Grade

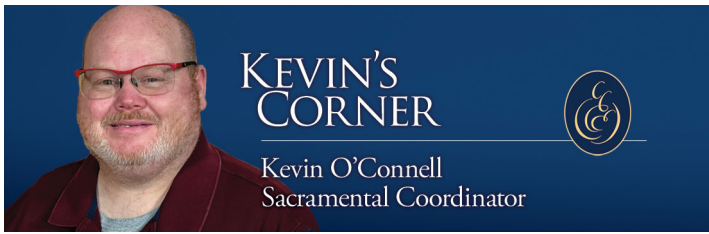
During the beginning of Mass, Children will hear the Word of God, pray with friends, and do a small craft related to the Gospel. Children return to their parents' pews after the Prayers of the Faithful.

**At 9:30 Mass at Immaculate Conception:**

**Kendra Yocom** Feb. 18 & March 10

**Mimi Leritz** March 3, 17 & 24

There will be no session on Feb. 25th



We are excited to welcome three catechumens (those to be baptized) this year within our Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. These men have been preparing, formally, since last September. Please pray for them as they enter this final stage of formation which will find fulfillment at the Easter Vigil on Saturday, March 30th. May they feel fully embraced by our community, especially during this special season of Lent.



**Jim Ppool**

My name is Jim L Ppool. I was born in Northwest Indiana and lived in Clearwater FL, Boston MA, and The Chicagoland area. For the past 11 years, I lived here in the Gold Coast neighborhood.

Supporting myself since I was 16, I excelled in the Hospitality Industry. Most recently, a Server at the (now closed) SignatureRoom. While in the Boston area, I completed my degree in Interior Design and ran my own design business.

I was introduced to ICSJ by my wonderful friends Mary & Tom. I immediately felt welcomed and at home in the congregation. I look forward to becoming part of the ICSJ community.



**Daniel Chen**

I decided to explore the Catholic Church partially because my wife, Amanda, expressed her desire to raise our kids in the Catholic faith. Growing up in Taiwan, I have had a vastly different experience with Christianity from that in the States. Despite the differences, I do strongly believe in raising our kids within a community that shares the same values.



**Brendan Gray**

I was raised in Colorado and ended up in the Midwest beginning with undergrad at Indiana University and eventually settling in Chicago. I have worked across different areas of finance across aviation and now in consulting.

My fiancée (Emily) and I have been at ICSJ since January 2022. The community and Father Larry's passion and comedic relief have kept us involved. Being around the Catholic faith for 7 years now, I am thrilled to grow in faith and learn through the RCIA process.



*Charles Andrew Rossi  
Baptized Saturday, February 10  
Timothy & Lee Marie Rossi*

## Join ICSJ's *Wedding Ministry*



### **Join our team of Wedding Sacristans!**

A wedding sacristan serves at the wedding rehearsal and helps behind the scenes on the day of the wedding. They help with setting-up so that things run smoothly, and bring a sense of welcome and hospitality, especially to our visitors and guests.

Our parish has a reputation for making the whole wedding process a meaningful and positive experience for the bride, groom, and their family.

This is a truly a fun and rewarding ministry. Please give it some thought. We certainly could use your help!

If you are interested in joining this ministry, please contact Kevin O'Connell, our Parish Wedding Coordinator [koconnell@icsjparish.org](mailto:koconnell@icsjparish.org)



Save the date for our annual  
***Easter Morning of Reflection***  
***with Fr. McBrady and Elly Rodriguez***  
on Saturday, April 13th  
from 8:30-11AM at Immaculate  
Conception Church







IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
AND ST. JOSEPH PARISH

*Presents our Annual*

# ST. JOSEPH *Table*

*A Luncheon Feast in Honor of our Patron Saint*

**Save the Date**

*Sunday, March 10th*

**12:00 to 2:00 pm • ICSJ Hill Street Campus**

Circle Sunday, March 10th on your calendar for St. Joseph Table, ICSJ's annual lunchtime "Festa Italiana" in honor of our patron saint, St. Joseph. This complimentary feast features mouth-watering selections from area restaurants along with parishioner pot-luck favorites.

*All are invited - more details to come!*



# Growing *in Grace*



## Gratitude *and* Forgiveness

Paul of Tarsus, when writing to the feisty & feuding earliest Christians, repeatedly spoke of gratitude & forgiveness. It's a spiritual path, easy to remember. Join us with **Fr. Ken Simpson** on this 2-part journey as we reflect, discuss, & practice these two pillars of faith.

### March 2 - Gratitude

*Let us give thanks to the Lord. It is right and just. It IS truly right and just, our duty and salvation, always and everywhere, to give thanks.*

-Preface dialogue at Mass

*The root of joy is gratefulness. It is not joy that makes us grateful; it is gratitude that makes us joyful.*

- Br. David Steindl-Rast

### March 9 - Forgiveness

Consider the advantages and disadvantages of forgiveness... then decide.

- a Zen Koan

**The heart of God is Mercy.**

- Francis

REGISTER  
TODAY!



[clement.org/growingingrace](http://clement.org/growingingrace)

**SATURDAYS, MARCH 2 & 9**

9:30 a.m. *hospitality*

10:00-11:30 a.m. *program*

**Saint Clement Parish Chapel**



Saint Clement Parish | 642 W. Deming Place | Chicago, IL 60614 | 773-281-0371 | [clement.org](http://clement.org)



# DOLPHIN DAYS

NEWS FROM IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - ST. JOSEPH



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

Join us for an upcoming

## ADMISSIONS TOUR

Thursday, February 15 | 9 AM  
Wednesday, February 28 | 9 AM  
Friday, March 22 | 9 AM  
Thursday, April 18 | 9 AM

RSVP on our school website at  
[www.icsjschool.org](http://www.icsjschool.org)  
or, by scanning  
the QR code -->



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

## TOT PROGRAM

Tuesdays & Thursdays  
9:30 - 11 AM

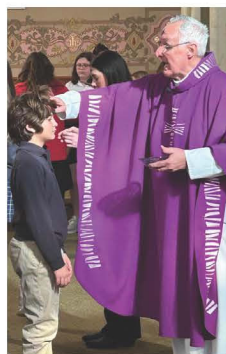
8-week sessions

Toddler and Caregiver

[www.icsjschool.org/  
apps/pages/totprogram](http://www.icsjschool.org/apps/pages/totprogram)



**TRY A  
FREE CLASS!**  
Contact Jodi at  
312-944-0304  
Ext. 312



Who are you?  
And, who  
do you  
want  
to be  
this Lent?"



- Father Larry

Learn more about Immaculate Conception-St. Joseph School at [www.icsjschool.org](http://www.icsjschool.org)!



## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Nancy Gies  
Parish Business Manager



# Have you considered a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)?

A QCD gift (a.k.a. IRA charitable rollover) allows individuals age 70½ or older to authorize their IRA administrator to make a direct transfer of funds from their IRA to qualified charities, tax-free. This way of giving does not generate taxable income, which may lower your annual income level. If you are age 72 or older, the amount you transfer may count towards your required minimum distribution.

If you would like more information on how to make a QCD gift to Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph Parish please contact: Nancy Gies at [ngies@icsiparish.org](mailto:ngies@icsiparish.org) or (312) 787-7174 ext 7.

## Sign up for eGiving

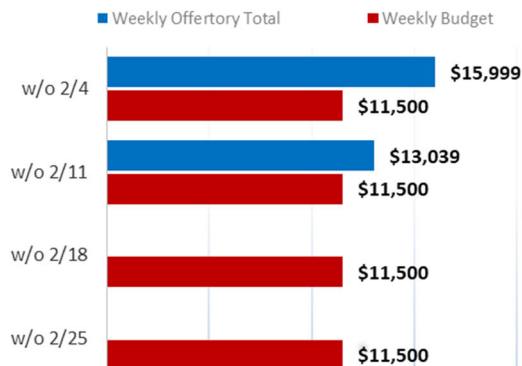
eGiving is a secure and convenient way of giving to Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph parish. It is eco-friendly and cost-saving. Just click **HERE** and to make your one-time, weekly, or monthly donation.

To all our faithful parishioners who give their time, talent and treasure— thank you for your generosity!

## Get Involved

Check out all the opportunities here at ICSJ parish, click **HERE**. Or let's set up a coffee so we can get to know each other, your talents and strengths and where they might be used best here at ICSJ. Contact Elly Rodriguez at [erodriguez@icsjparish.org](mailto:erodriguez@icsjparish.org) or (312)787-7174 ext 4.

### Weekly Offertory - February 2023

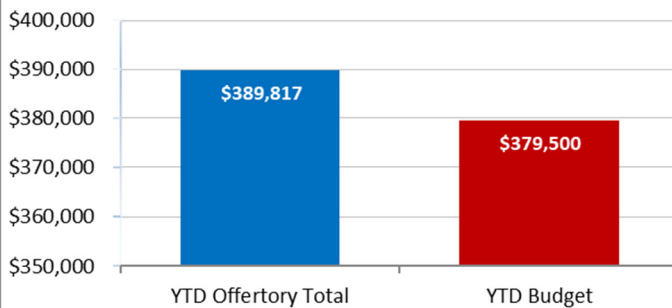


The parish budget requires over one weeks' worth of collections just to cover parish utilities, maintenance, and insurance each month.

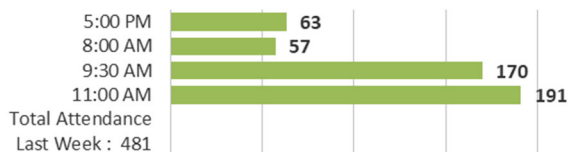
**It takes \$3,093 per day to run our parish.**

### Fiscal Year Budget to Date

Parish Fiscal Year runs from July 1 through June 30



### Attendance for 2/10 & 2/11



# Mass Intentions

week of February 17-23

## Saturday, February 17

5pm at Immaculate Conception with  
Fr. Larry Lisowski: **John Rowan**

## Sunday, February 18

8am at St. Joseph with Fr. Larry Lisowski:  
**Jim Lail**

## Sunday, February 18

9:30am Mass at Immaculate Conception with  
Fr. Joe Glab: **Dennis Snider**

## Sunday, February 18

11am Mass at St. Joseph with  
Fr. Larry Lisowski: **Jim Lail**

## Monday, February 19

9am Mass at St. Joseph Fr. Larry Lisowski:  
**Dennis Snider**

## Wednesday, February 21

9am Mass at St. Joseph with  
Fr. Larry Lisowski: **Patricia "Pat" Schafer**

## Friday, February 23

9am Mass at St. Joseph with  
Fr. Larry Lisowski:  
**For the healing of Sarah**

# What is a Mass Intention?

Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph parish offers the possibility for you to request that a Mass be celebrated for a particular intention. Requesting a Mass intention means that you are asking that the grace of Christ's sacrifice in his death and resurrection be applied for a particular purpose, for example, for a deceased person or a living person who is ill or in thanksgiving for a favor received. An intention can also be made for an occasion of a birthday, anniversary or special need, or it can be directed to a cause, such as an increase of vocations or respect for life. Usually, a single intention is attached to a given Mass. But it is also possible to gather several intentions in one Mass with exactly the same effect.

To request a Mass Intention, please visit [www.icsjparish.org/mass-intentions](http://www.icsjparish.org/mass-intentions) or call Angela at the parish office (312)787-7174 ext 1.

# Prayer Request

Every month, we receive dozens of prayer requests on our website. No matter where you live in the world, you are invited to share your needs with those who have committed to pray on your behalf. Please visit [www.icsjparish.org/the-prayer-connection](http://www.icsjparish.org/the-prayer-connection) to submit a prayer Request. To join our ICSJ prayer ministry, email Angela at [agore@icsjparish.org](mailto:agore@icsjparish.org)

# Sacrament of Reconciliation

Consider taking advantage of celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Going to confession is great for one's soul. Receive the wonderful gift of healing and peace that our God longs for us to have in our life.

Contact Fr. Larry, at [pastor@icsjparish.org](mailto:pastor@icsjparish.org), to schedule a time to meet.



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
AND ST. JOSEPH PARISH

*A family of families*

## OUR VISION

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

Inspired by God's great love,  
we are called to be the  
face of Jesus in today's world,  
welcoming all to  
our Family of Families,  
and walking as disciples  
through our works of  
compassion and mercy.

## OUR MISSION

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

We will be  
disciples on a joyful mission,  
constantly committed  
anew to praying,  
serving, growing, sharing  
and belonging  
in Jesus' name.

# Be the Face of Jesus and change the world!



PRAY

Imagine having a deep, rich prayer life  
which brings clarity, comfort, hope and joy  
into your life and to others!



GROW

Imagine feeling really close with God,  
who loves you always!



SERVE

Imagine being God's hands and feet in  
this world, that desperately needs  
help and healing!



SHARE

Imagine brimming with faith and God's love  
so that it spills over into every relationship  
and aspect of your life!



BELONG

Imagine creating a diverse, loving community  
where everyone is welcomed and  
appreciated for who they are!

Visit [icsjparish.org/mission](http://icsjparish.org/mission)  
for ideas on taking the next step!



# Welcome

Inspired by God's great love, we are called to be the face of Jesus in today's world, welcoming all to our Family of Families, and walking as disciples through our works of compassion and mercy.

## Our Two Places of Worship



### Immaculate Conception Church

1431 N. North Park Avenue, Chicago, IL 60610



Free parking available in church parking lot; street parking also available.

### St. Joseph Church

1107 N. Orleans Street, Chicago, IL 60610



Street parking available; free parking available across the street at ICSJ School, 363 W. Hill St.

## Mass Schedule

### Sunday

8:00 a.m. – St. Joseph Church

9:30 a.m. – Immaculate Conception Church

11:00 a.m. – St. Joseph Church

### Saturday

5:00 p.m. – Immaculate Conception Church

### Monday • Wednesday • Friday

9:00 a.m. – St. Joseph Church

## Contact Us

**Parish Office: 312-787-7174 • Visit Us Online: [www.icsjparish.org](http://www.icsjparish.org)**

### Main Office

1107 N. Orleans Street, Chicago, IL 60610

### Main Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday  
9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (closed Thursday)

### North Park Office

1431 N. North Park Ave, Chicago, IL 60610

### North Park Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday 4:00-8:00 p.m.,  
Saturday 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

For questions regarding Weddings, Registration, Mass Intentions, Baptisms, Giving, volunteering, and other general information, please visit our website or call the Parish Office.

## Follow ICSJ Parish on Social Media



@icsjparish (Parish)



@i.do.at.icsj (Weddings)



@icsjparish

## Staff Directory

### Pastor

Rev. Lawrence Lisowski  
[pastor@icsjparish.org](mailto:pastor@icsjparish.org)  
312-787-7174, ext. 5

### Senior Priest

Rev. Larry McBrady  
312-787-7174

### Deacon

Neil Rogers  
[nrogers@icsjparish.org](mailto:nrogers@icsjparish.org)  
312-787-7174, ext. 6

### Business Manager

Nancy Gies  
[ngies@icsjparish.org](mailto:ngies@icsjparish.org)  
312-787-7174, ext. 7

### Sacramental Coordinator

Kevin O'Connell  
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### Director of Music

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### ICSJ School Co-Principal

Katie Sullivan  
[ksullivan@icsjschool.org](mailto:ksullivan@icsjschool.org)  
312-944-0304, ext. 3

### ICSJ School Co-Principal

Heather Lux  
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### Maintenance Supervisor

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### Parish Coordinator, Bulletin Editor

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### Assistant to the Pastor

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312-787-7174, ext. 4

### Outreach Ministries Coordinator

Allie Klazura  
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312-787-7174, ext. 3

### Assistant to the Director of Music

Josephine Stracek  
[jstracek@icsjparish.org](mailto:jstracek@icsjparish.org)  
312-787-7174

### Evening/Weekend Receptionist

Sherrine Manning  
312-787-7174, ext. 0