

P.O. Box 1227
580 Main Street
Westhampton Beach, NY 11978

**Church of the
IMMACULATE
CONCEPTION**

Website: iccwmb.org
Parish email: parishoffice@iccwmb.org
FB: www.facebook.com/iccwmb
YouTube: www.youtube.com/@iccwmb

**Behold, I am sending my
messenger ahead of you;**

**he will prepare your way
before you.**



Matthew 11:2-11

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 14, 2025**

STAFF

Rev. Thomas Pers, Pastor

Deacon Joseph Byrne
Deacon Mark Herrmann

Shawn Pinson, Sacristan
Bobby Peterson, Music Director
Donna Cosme, Director of Religious Education
Mary Lou Giacobbe, Asst to Director of Religious Ed
Linda Geoghan, Parish Secretary
Juan Vicente, Maintenance Manager

Parish Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday
9:00am to 5:00pm

CLOSED Friday, Saturday, Sunday, & Holidays

Parish Office 631-288-1423
Fax 631-288-5498
parishoffice@iccwhb.org

Religious Education 631-288-4188
Fax 631-288-8215
religioused@iccwhb.org

Queen of Apostles, Regional School 631-878-1033

Spanish Apostolate
Rev. José Luis Tenas 631-914-1538

Celebration of the Eucharist

Saturday

5:00pm Vigil Mass

Sunday

8:00am, 9:30am, 11:00am
6:00pm (Spanish Mass)

Daily Mass

8:00am Monday through Friday
The Rosary is recited immediately after daily Mass

Holy Days

Vigil @ 7:00pm (Spanish Mass)
Day @ 8:00am, 12:00pm, & 7:00pm

Eucharistic Adoration

The FIRST FRIDAYS (Novena & silent adoration to Sacred Heart) of each month at 8:30am and the LAST MONDAYS of each month at 7:00pm in the Church.

Confessions

Every Saturday 4:00pm to 4:45pm

PARISH TRUSTEES

Beth Hard & Linda O'Brien

PARISH COUNCIL

Michael Berdinka, Tom Day, Lori Francescani,
Lisa Guzman, Tara Hudson, Verna Merkel,
& Amabilia Estrada Ruiz

PARISH FINANCE COMMITTEE

Kevin Dwyer, Beth Hard, Daily Hill,
Christine Lennon, Linda O'Brien, Scott O'Brien,
Joe Sala, & Michael Strebel

MARRIAGES: Arrangements should be made at least 1 year in advance. Marriage dates may be made only with the priest after he interviews the couple. Please call the Parish Office to set up an appointment. Pre- Cana classes are required.

BAPTISMS: Parents are required to attend one evening class before Baptism; and are encouraged to attend class during pregnancy. Baptismal class is held on the 1st Wednesday of January, March, May, July, September, and November. Baptisms take place the 1st Sunday of each month. To register for Baptism, please contact the Parish Office.

SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING THE SICK:

Emergency calls for the Sacraments for the seriously ill may be made any time of the day or night, every day of the year. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick will also be celebrated every second Friday of the month at the 12:00pm Mass. All those who are seriously ill, including those preparing for surgery or a hospital stay, are invited to receive the Sacrament.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a; Mt 21:23-27
Tuesday: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13; Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-19, 23;
 Mt 21:28-32
Wednesday: Gn 49:2, 8-10; Ps 72:1-4ab, 7-8, 17;
 Mt 1:1-17
Thursday: Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-25
Friday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Lk 1:5-25
Saturday: Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38
Sunday: Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-6; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24

TODAY'S READINGS

Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10 The desert will bloom.

Psalms 146 "Lord, come and save us."

James 5:7-10 Be patient like a farmer waiting for spring.

Matthew 11:2-11 In prison, John received word of the coming of Christ.

The powerful imagery in Isaiah's poetry overwhelms us with joy on this Gaudete Sunday. Deserts bloom with abundant flowers! Parched land exults in joyful song! The blind will see, the deaf will hear, and those who cannot walk will leap like a stag! In this season of watchful preparation for the Lord's coming into our lives, may we recognize his transformative presence in our world as we long for the coming of the kingdom, when all this and more will be fulfilled.



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MASS ATTENDANCE

DATE	5pm	8am	9:30am	11am	6pm	TOTAL
11/16/25	160	157	187	178	180	862
11/23/25	150	154	136	176	186	802
11/30/25	130	144	119	155	100	648
12/07/25	155	169	148	160	160	792

WEEKLY COLLECTIONS

DATE	COLLECTION	AMOUNT
12/07/2025	Weekly Collection	\$10,433.00
12/08/2024	Weekly Collection	\$7,562.50

Thank you for your continuous support!

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

Saturday
 5:00pm
December 13
 Deceased Members of the Franza Family (Fr. Peter)

Sunday
 8:00am
 9:30am
 11:00am
December 14
 Karl Bonawandt (Fr. Tom)
 Anthony Mineo (Fr. Tom)
 Antonetta & Francesco Morrone (Fr. Peter)
 The People of the Parish (Fr. Jose)

Monday
 8:00am
December 15
 Gus Cimino

Tuesday
 8:00am
December 16
 Karl Bonawandt

Wednesday
 8:00am
December 17
 (Guild Mass) Richard Hill;
 Eleanor Farrell (61st Anniversary in Heaven); Intentions of Mary Torres

Thursday
 8:00am
December 18
 Clare Robb

Friday
 8:00am
December 19
 Intentions of Catherine Joan Fenton (Birthday)

Saturday
 4:00pm
 5:00pm
December 20
Confessions
 Marco Oliveri (Fr. Tom)

Sunday
 8:00am
 9:30am
 11:00am
 6:00pm
December 21
 Michael Betjemann (Fr. Peter)
 Joseph & Celia Maturando (Fr. Peter)
 Anthony Mirro (Msgr. Mirro)
 The People of the Parish (Fr. Jose)

PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED

Martin Sarocky

Neither Father Tom, nor any other staff member, will ever contact you asking for money via email or text. Please do not respond or reply to any such requests.

CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL

The 2025 Catholic Ministries Appeal

The 2025 Catholic Ministries Appeal is happening in our parish and in parishes across the Diocese. Please give prayerful consideration to help fund the essential ministries and services supported by this appeal.

Goal	\$ 62,100.00
Total Pledged	\$ 27,160.00
Payments Received	\$ 26,935.00

Donors: 80 % of Goal: 43.74%

The parish will receive 20% of the goal once all pledged payments are received. The parish will receive an additional 80% of monies pledged & received over goal.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education Office Hours are:
Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday
9am to 5pm
631-288-4188

DATES TO REMEMBER IN DECEMBER

Monday, December 15th – Wednesday, December 17th
Adoration w/ parents in Church (Levels 1-9)

Monday, December 22nd – Wednesday, December 31st
NO CLASSES — Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Congratulations to the following students from our Parish who received Honor Roll certificates for the first quarter at St. Anthony's High School:

Charles Blaine
Matilda Ferran
Cecilia Fracapane
Jaiel Lindo-Jean Louis
Christian Pinto

Keep up the good work!!!

QUESTION OF THE WEEK



If I am honest with myself, what part of Jesus' message offends me?

MEDITATION with Deacon Joe

Tuesdays at 2pm in the Parish Center
Try this spiritual practice, it will surprise you!

eGIVING OPPORTUNITIES

eGiving makes it easy to give, anytime, anywhere. To continue lifesaving ministries and outreach in our parish community, we depend on generous online donations from our church family. We prayerfully invite you to use eGiving from your computer, smartphone, or tablet to set up a recurring donation or make a one-time gift.



FAITH DIRECT

Enrolling with Faith Direct will provide Immaculate Conception with consistent support and simplify your giving without the use of envelopes. Visit:

<https://membership.faithdirect.net/NY66>

Thank you for your continued support!

REFLECTIONS

Living Stewardship

We are called to think of and care for others. We only have a certain amount of time on this earth to do good and prepare ourselves for the next life. This week, do something kind for someone else.



Bulletin Reflection

In today's second reading, we are reminded to be patient with one another and do good before the coming of the Lord.

SACRAMENTALS

BREAD & WINE, SANCTUARY LAMP, and ALTAR FLOWERS

Wondering what to give that hard-to-buy-for loved one for Christmas? Having a Mass said or arranging a Sacramental for the living is a beautiful way to say "I love you!"

Visit the Parish Office to arrange yours today!

Available Dates:

Sanctuary Lamp: December 22, 29

Bread & Wine: December 22

Altar Flowers: January 11, 18, 25, February 1, 8, 15

Please contact the Parish Office for more information.

PRAY FOR OUR SICK

Cathy Burch, Deacon Joseph Byrne, Claire Cowcer,
Jeffrey Davis, Millie Ferrin,
Rev. Dan Fitzpatrick (& fellow Jesuits in Nursing Home),
Gerri Martin, & Barbara Storer

Please call the Parish Office (631-288-1423) to add/delete a name to the sick list. This list will be cleared occasionally.

SECOND COLLECTION

This weekend, December 13th/14th, our 2nd Collection will be for Religious Retirement. Thank you for your continued generosity!

PRAYER REQUESTS

There is a great power in prayer. It is our lifeline to God. Through it we communicate with God, and people are strengthened, helped, and made whole.

Do you know of some concern, or of some person with a special need for whom we ought to pray? We have 29 prayer warriors praying, please call Charles Schmidt at 631-288-4243 and leave a message with your prayer request.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

At the time of the fulfillment of God's reign, there will be no division, no disease, no despair, no sorrow, no mourning. This eucharistic meal gives us a foretaste of that life to come. For this we offer our great prayer of thanksgiving and praise.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LITURGY OF THE DAY

On Gaudete Sunday we rejoice, for we know that the Lord is near. With eyes of faith, we can sense his presence even as we prepare for the celebration of his coming to us as a newborn infant. With eyes of faith, we can see his coming as well as the prophet Isaiah or the New Testament prophet John the Baptist, who each prepared his people for God's transformative presence. With eyes of faith, let us glory in Jesus' presence right here, right now: in God's word, in the Eucharist, and in those around us.



To share your Christmas cheer with Fr. Ken:

Rev. Kenneth Grooms
Corpus Christi Church
155 Garfield Avenue
Mineola, NY 11501

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY

NAVY: Ethan Bentley, Julia Blake, Michael J. DiLeo, William Robesch, RJ Ruggiero, Matthew Worden, & Cameron Worden

MARINES: Christopher Fencel

AIR FORCE: Joseph Ferraro III

USSF: Thomas Hellman

Please contact the Rectory @ 631-288-1423
to add a loved one to the military list

PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY



FOOD PANTRY

Some items our Food Pantry needs are: RICE (2, 3, or 5 lb. packages), BLACK BEANS, CANNED VEGETABLES, TOILETRIES, HEARTY-TYPE SOUPS, CONDIMENTS, & #6 DIAPERS. But ANY food/toiletry is welcomed!

On behalf of the many families in need that we serve here at Immaculate Conception Parish ... THANK YOU and may God bless you in your giving!

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION



When the ties of affection and authority that bound Europe's Catholics unraveled in the sixteenth century, many cultures lost time-honored customs of faith. Some customs proved to be especially difficult for the reformers to wrest away from the people, especially those celebrated in the home. This week in Sweden, a country where the Catholic Church was disestablished four hundred years ago, a Catholic martyr from Sicily is the most beloved figure. St. Lucia, Lucy, is celebrated on December 13. The long-story-short is that Lucy was a Christian whose father wanted to marry her off to a pagan fellow, and she rejected her father's authority. To make an example of her, her father had her killed. In the course of the brutal martyrdom, Lucy lost her beautiful eyes, but her vision was miraculously restored. The candles worn today by the eldest daughter of the family are tokens of the fire that refused to harm the saint. So this patroness of light and clear vision is revered on the shortest, darkest days of the Nordic winter. Before the reform of the Gregorian calendar in the sixteenth century, December 13 was the winter solstice.

Today, young girls appear in the morning wearing lighted candles on their crowned heads (battery-operated now after many mishaps) and serve sweet rolls and coffee to everyone in the house. For the Swedes, who are not churchgoers, the "Lucias" are the official heralds of the holiday season and a sign of everyone's yearning for more light in this world. Europe once abounded with customs like this; the survival of this custom in Scandinavia is a sign of God's grace, and how fertile the soil is to receive the true message of Advent.

CHRISTMAS 2025 MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve, December 24th

(No morning Mass on Christmas Eve)

4:00pm (Church)

4:00pm (Parish Center)

6:00pm (Church)

9:00pm Spanish (Church)

12:00 Midnight (Church)

Christmas Day, December 25th

9:30am, 11:00am, 12:30pm, & 6:00pm Spanish
(all held in the Church)

New Year's Eve, December 31st

8:00am (Church)

New Year's Day, January 1st

8:00am, 12:00pm, & 6:00pm Spanish
(all held in the Church)

Clint Hammond
Memorial

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS WREATH SALE



FATHER SLOMSKI
COUNCIL #7423

Fr. Joseph Slomski Council
Knights of Columbus

The Knights are back this year selling Christmas Wreaths and Cemetery Pillows after every weekend Mass now through December 14th. Thank you for your support!

Embryo Adoption: An Open Question?



When it comes to the plight of the hundreds of thousands of IVF embryos frozen in the U.S. and elsewhere, it is often claimed that the Catholic Church has never definitively addressed the liceity, or moral allowability, of “embryo transfer” (also known as embryo rescue or embryo adoption).

I recently had the chance to participate in a public debate on this topic in Indianapolis. I argued that the Magisterium of the Catholic Church has, in fact, settled this question. If we scrutinize the two major teaching documents of the Church dealing with this issue, the immorality of the practice of embryo transfer becomes clear.

The 2008 document entitled *Dignitas Personae* states: “The proposal that these embryos could be put at the disposal of infertile couples as a treatment for infertility is not ethically acceptable” (19). It identifies a specific situation, namely, attempting to treat a couple’s infertility by embryo transfer, as being always immoral.

The document then goes on to point out that these moral objections extend beyond this single case, so that the same set of concerns will apply in other instances where embryo transfer might be proposed or considered:

“It has also been proposed, solely in order to allow human beings to be born who are otherwise condemned to destruction, that there could be a form of ‘prenatal adoption.’ This proposal, praiseworthy with regard to the intention of respecting and defending human life, presents however various problems not dissimilar to those mentioned above.”

This passage reveals that even when we face the stark prospect of the outright killing of frozen human embryos (“otherwise condemned to destruction”), this does not allow us to bypass or ignore the substantive moral objections inherent in embryo transfer proposals.

The final section of the passage concludes with a forceful and unambiguous assertion: “All things considered, it needs to be recognized that the thousands of abandoned embryos represent a situation of injustice which in fact cannot be resolved.”

Despite the tragedy of the countless embryonic humans “frozen in time” (with thousands more each day being added to the stockpiles), *Dignitas Personae* rejects the practice of embryo adoption.

A second, older Church document released in 1987 and entitled *Donum Vitae* references the “absurd fate” to which human embryos have been exposed by freezing them, and then notes that there is “no possibility of their being offered safe means of survival which can be licitly pursued” (5). Hence, it would seem even as far back as the late 80s, a negative judgment had already been made by the teaching authority of the Church regarding the question of embryo adoption.

In addition to there being no morally permissible means of a path to survival for these embryos, *Donum Vitae* declares the basic human right of every person “to be conceived and to be born within marriage and from marriage.” For embryos to be “born from marriage” points also to the moral significance of the circumstances of our gestation.

Cont'd ...

Interestingly, *Donum Vitae* repetitively employs the phrase, “IVF and ET” (*in vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer). This conjoined phrase appears a remarkable sixteen times throughout the document as it seeks to explain the ethical concerns surrounding assisted reproductive technologies.

The deliberate inclusion of “ET” points to the fact that it is not merely the “*in vitro*” or “extracorporeal conception” aspect that renders the procedure immoral, but also that the ET step itself violates sound ethics.

In other words, it seems that a double moral evil can be identified in each instance of *in vitro* fertilization and embryo transfer:

The manufacture of human beings in glassware, outside-the-body (and outside-the-marital-act); and

The importation/implantation of an outside-the-body generated embryo into the uterus.

Number two, of course, would constitute an action largely synonymous with "embryo adoption" or "embryo rescue."

Taken together, these documents point to the fact that transferring a stranger's embryo into one's wife violates the inner structure of marital fruitfulness.

Based on these texts, we can also begin to grasp how embryo transfer, even motivated with the best of intentions, nevertheless involves a form of “pirating” the wife's body for designs that are not proper to its intrinsic order within marriage. *Dignitas Personae* also compares embryo adoption to “any form of surrogate motherhood,” which the Church teaches to be morally unacceptable.

Couples who have done IVF and ended up with frozen children face an excruciatingly difficult situation as they try to figure out what to do with their “leftover” embryonic offspring. I offered some possible approaches to this situation in a previous article (see <https://tinyurl.com/4eua5j5p>).

So it is clearly problematic to assert that embryo adoption remains an “open question” for Catholics. Close scrutiny of key magisterial texts and reflection upon the explanations provided by those documents indicate that the practice of embryo transfer involves fundamentally unethical actions.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as Senior Ethicist at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org and www.fathertad.com.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A LECTOR?

Do you like to read? Volunteer your time and talents to join the Lector group! You'll receive a Lector book that gives you a deeper dive into the day's readings as well as pronunciation guides. You will be scheduled for the Mass time you prefer, and you'll read on average 2 Masses a month, possibly more during holidays and holy days. You'll read the announcements, the readings, and the Prayers of the Faithful.

Please contact Beth at 631-495-5931 or bethflanagan@optonline.net if you'd like to participate in this ministry.



Our Lady Queen of Apostles
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Contact
Us!

631-878-1033
olqany.org



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Food Drive



Last month, our students
donated more than 1,200
non-perishable food items to
benefit the Food Pantries of our
supporting parishes!



All I want for Christmas is ...You!

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or

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Attorneys at Law

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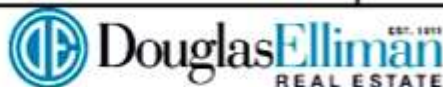


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