

Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church

Father Herbert T. Burke, Pastor

Reverend Mr. Andy Cilone, Permanent Deacon

Reverend Mr. Dave Faunce, Permanent Deacon

Sharon Date, Parish Secretary

Parish Office Hours: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri

Office/Rectory: (828) 245-4017



The Star of Bethlehem by Edward Byrne-Jones

January 5, 2025 Epiphany of the Lord

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, and 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)

Sunday, 2:30pm-3:00pm (Church)

Nocturnal Adoration

Second Saturday of the Month,

10:00pm—6:00am (Chapel)

Confession

Saturday, 4:15pm-4:45pm

Wednesday, 6:30pm-7:00pm

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 Andy Cilone at 828-245-6219.

For information regarding instructions in the Catholic faith through the RCIA program, please contact Deacon David Faunce at:

dmfaunce@rcdoc.org

What We Can Learn From the Magi

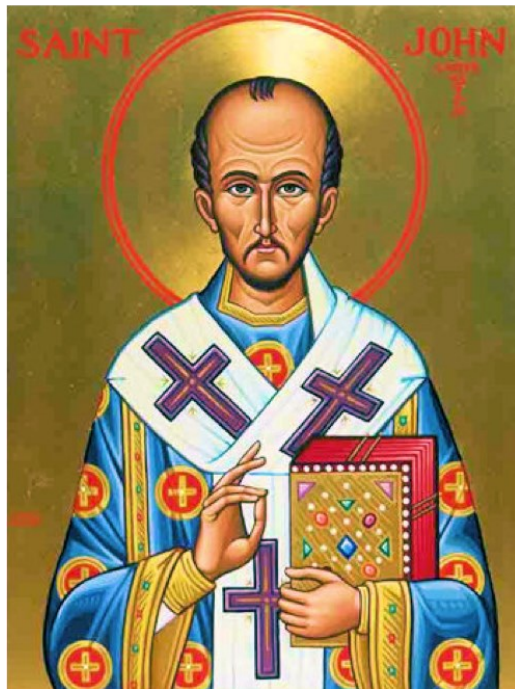
Saint Gregory wrote about how the Magi and Herod both had incorrect ideas about Christ's Kingdom. But the Magi were willing to learn from Scripture. Sadly for him, Herod did not. Here are Saint Gregory's words.

"The three wise men, stirred up by God through the light of a strange star, followed its twinkling light as a guide, thinking they would find the child it pointed to in Jerusalem, the royal city. But when they found that they were mistaken in that idea, they learned through the scribes and teachers of the Jews what the Holy Scripture had foretold about the birth of Christ, so that— confirmed by a double witness— they searched with still more eager faith, to find the One who was revealed both by the brightness of the star and by the certain word of prophecy.

How easy and natural it would have been for these leading men among the Hebrews to believe what they taught! But they seem to have held material notions along with Herod, thinking that Christ's Kingdom was the same sort as the kingdoms of this world. They hoped for a worldly leader, while he dreaded an earthly rival.

The fear that racks you is wasted, Herod! In vain do you try to vent your rage on the infant you suspect. Your realm cannot hold Christ. You do not wish him to reign in Judea, but he reigns everywhere—and you would rule more happily yourself if you submitted to his command. Why don't you do sincerely what you promise with treacherous deceit? Come with the wise men, and worship the true King in suppliant adoration."

Two hundred years before Pope Saint Gregory, Saint John Chrysostom wrote about the Magi as well. He looks at the Magi as role models for us. He wrote about how the Magi left their own countries, most likely barbarian, and followed the star to follow Christ.



Saint John Chrysostom

He suggests that we should leave our old lives behind and follow Christ more closely. He wrote:

"Let us follow the Magi. Let us separate ourselves from our barbarian customs, and put them far behind us, so that we may see Christ—since they, too, would have missed seeing him if they had not been far from their own country.

Let us depart from the things of earth. For the wise men saw only the star while they were in Persia, but after they had left Persia they saw the Son of righteousness. And they would not have even seen the star if they had not been so ready to get up and go.

Let us also rise up. Though everyone else is troubled, let us run to the house of the young Child. Though kings and nations and tyrants stand in the way, let our desire not fade. In that way we shall repel all the dangers that we face.

The Magi, too, would not have escaped the danger from the king if they had not seen the young Child. Before they saw the Child, fears and dangers and troubles pressed on them from every side. But after the adoration, all was calm, all was safe, and no longer a star but an angel received them. They had become priests from the act of adoration—for we see that they also offered gifts."

Without a doubt, the comparison of Herod's actions with those of the Magi shows us that the Magi were humble. They didn't follow their scientific know-how, they humbled themselves before the little Child. They were prepared to follow the star wherever it took them. They trusted in their new knowledge and did not return to Herod as he requested. They generously gave their gifts to the holy Child.

Our question to answer is this. Are we prepared to drop everything and follow Jesus where He leads us?



Pope Saint Gregory the Great

Epiphany of the Lord

January 5, 2025 ~ Bulletin No.1 XXXXI

WEEKLY CALENDAR for January 4-January 12, 2025

Sat 4	Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton	5:00pm	Mass for ROS Betty Sparks by Jackie Beam
Sun 5	Epiphany of the Lord	9:00am 11:30am 7:30pm	Mass for ROS Richard Feldmeth, Jr. by Claire Feldmeth Mass for the Parish AA Meeting, call Floyd Kunkle at 289-6336 for information
Mon 6	Saint André Bessette	9:00am	Mass for Lee Hyer by Floyd & Ginny Kunkle
Wed 8	Saint Apollinaris	7:00pm	Mass for Living & Deceased Members of the Staab & Botz Families by John & Rosanne Staab
Thurs 9	Saint Adrien of Canterbury	12:10pm 7:00pm 7:30pm	Mass for ROS Pete & Virginia Hyer by Floyd & Ginny Kunkle Rosary And Benediction AA Meeting, call Floyd Kunkle at 289-6336 for information
Fri 10	Saint Nicanor	12:10pm 7:00am	Mass for Judith Saul, Happy Birthday by the Krantz Family Men's Prayer Group
Sat 11	Saint Theodosius	5:00pm	Mass for the Parish
Sun 12	The Baptism of the Lord	9:00am 11:30am 7:30pm	Mass for ROS Jonathan Lane by Alicia Lane Mass in Thanksgiving for Blessings Received by Sini Kalapurakal AA Meeting, call Floyd Kunkle at 289-6336 for information

Save the Date

January 10: Charlotte March for Life: 12:00-1:00pm; Line up by 12:00pm at the Diocese of Charlotte Pastoral Center, 1123 S. Church Street Charlotte.

January 11: Ladies Guild Christmas Party, 12:00-2:00pm, Marios, \$13.00, sign up in the Narthex by January 7th

January 11: Knights of Columbus Christmas Dinner, 7:00pm at Mario's; For information call Joe Stenard at 518-469-4898 or Pete Siviglia at 704-641-4999

January 13: Ladies Guild Meeting, 10:00am in the Parish Hall. All women of the parish are invited.

January 20: Prayer Shawl Ministry, NO Prayer Shawl gathering today.

January 23-24: Twenty-Four Hour Eucharistic Adoration



Hope Quotes

“My soul, be at rest in God alone, from whom comes my hope. God alone is my rock and salvation.”
~ Psalm 62:6-7 ~

“I have hope because you are faithful and do not allow us to be tempted beyond our endurance, but along with the temptation you give us the means to withstand it.”
~ Saint Ignatius of Antioch ~

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

1st Sunday (January 5)	Yokefellow Sunday	Saltine Crackers
2nd Sunday (January 12)	Hospice Sunday	Ensure, any flavor
3rd Sunday (January 19)	Hands of Hope Sunday	Children's diapers, SIZE LARGE
4th Sunday (January 26)	Backpack Sunday	Individual-serving size of Mac & cheese, ravioli, beanie-weenies, etc

COLLECTION INFORMATION

Christmas Collection:
\$7,511.25

Collection for the Week of December 29:
Regular Collection: \$ 5,617.58

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

For Annulment Information Contact:

Rachel Harrill 1-828-447-1908 or
Email: reharrill@rcdoc.org.

C A T E C H I S M

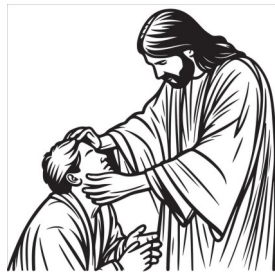
O R N E R

¶1817: **Hope** is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful." "The Holy Spirit . . . he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life."

Prayers for the Sick

Mary Absher, Cynthia Beam, Emily Bailey, Alisha Benfield, Iris Borrás, Wade Boswell, Father Burke, Melissa Chandler, Deacon Andy Cilone, Gary Colhouer, Frank Colini, Joanne 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, Gertrude Hand, David Hernandez, Julian Hernandez, Sherlin Hernandez, Janet Hill, Clare Jablonski, Betsy Jackson, Father Jenkins, Kate Johnson, Gabriel Jones, Bishop Jugis, Ronnie Kennedy, Jim & Joan King, Jared Krantz, Charlie Kutilek, Ed Long, Stephannie Longo, Patricia Lucas, Jeff Lugo, Wilson Mancipe, Monica Martin, Elias Martinez, Nathan I. McCain, Jennifer McDonald, Joan Meade, Geri Melton, Esther Mendoza, Teresa Mendoza, Gloria Millette, Kevin Millette, Benny Montanez, Scott Moore, Lucas Cade Motter, 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, Linda Samarotto, Cassie Schmanski, Gloria Sears, Linda & Keith See, Samantha Smith, Sister Mary Olivia, Larry St. Clair, Nancy St. Clair, Beth Ann Stamper, Cole Suhy, Doug Suhy, Mark Tavernia, Richard Thelen, Federico Trejo, Patty Wansor, Arwin Watts, Fred White, Patricia White, Sammy White, Bernice Williams, Marshall Williams, Mary Wright

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



Please Pray for Our First Responders, especially for:

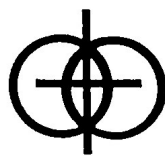
Officer Max DeLauter, Shelby Police Department and
Officer Nathan Shomette, Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department

Please consider adding the name of someone you love to our prayer list for our First Responders. Email to pjwlm@gmail.com

Prayerful Ponderings

"I think of this new year as a white page given to me by Our Father, on which He will write, day by day, whatever His divine good pleasure has planned. I shall now write at the top of the page, with complete confidence: *Lord, do with me what You will*, and at the bottom I already write my *Amen* to all the proposals of Your divine will. *Yes Lord, yes to all the joys, the sorrows, the graces, the hardships prepared for me, which You will reveal to me day by day.*

~ Sister Carmela of the Holy Spirit, O.C.D.



Banns of Marriage

Announced for the second time between James Andrew Cilone and Gabrielle Sara Lance



Opening of 2nd Holy Door Prison of Rebibbia, December 26, 2024

Dear sisters and brothers, good morning and merry Christmas! I wanted to open the Door wide, today, here. I opened the first in San Pietro, the second is yours.

It is a beautiful gesture to open wide, to open: to open the doors. But more important is what it means: it is opening your heart. Open hearts. And this is what brotherhood does. Closed hearts, hard ones, don't help you live. For this reason, **the grace of a Jubilee is to widen, open and, above all, open hearts to hope. Hope does not disappoint** (see Rom 5:5), never! Think carefully about this. I think so too, because in bad moments one thinks that everything is over, that nothing can be resolved. **But hope never disappoints.**

I like to think of hope as the anchor that is on the shore and we are there with the rope, safe, because our hope is like the anchor on dry land (see Heb 6:17-20). Don't lose hope. This is the message I want to give you; to everyone, to all of us. I'm the first. Everyone. Don't lose hope. Hope never disappoints. Never. Sometimes the rope is hard and hurts our hands... but with the rope, always with the rope in hand, looking at the shore, the anchor carries us forward. There is always something good, there is always something that keeps us going.

The rope in his hand and, secondly, the windows wide open, the doors wide open. Especially the door of the heart. When the heart is closed it becomes hard as a stone; he forgets about tenderness. Even in the most difficult situations - each of us has our own, easier, more difficult, I think of you - always have an open heart; the heart, which is precisely what makes us brothers. Open wide the doors of the heart. Everyone knows how to do it. Everyone knows where the door is closed or half-closed. Everyone knows.

Two things I tell you. First: the rope in your hand, with the anchor of hope. Second: open wide the doors of the heart. We have opened this one wide, but this is a symbol of the door of our heart.

I wish you a great Jubilee. I wish you much peace, much peace. And every day I pray for you. Really. It's not a figure of speech. I think of you and pray for you. And you pray for me. Thank you.

May the Lord help us in all of this. Thank you.

Franciscus