**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**506 COUNTY ROAD 1 - WEDOWEE, AL 36278**

**March 23, 2025**

**3rd. Sunday in Lent**

**Reverend Gali** **Balaswamy gbalaswamy10@gmail.com**334-497-4847

**Mass Times: Sunday English 10:30 am**

 **Spanish: 12:00 pm**

 **Friday Mass: Spanish: 6:00 pm**

**Sacrament of Reconciliation: Friday’s at 5:30 pm**

 **Sunday’s at 11:30 am**

**Contact Information:** Parish office: 256-357-2977

 Email: immaculateconceptional@gmail.com

 Website: Immaculateconceptional.org

 Facebook: Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

**Mission Statement:** *To enable ourselves and others to know, love and serve God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To participate in and provide the Sacraments. To promote spiritual growth and religious education and fellowship of the Catholic Church to all. To utilize the talents, leadership qualities and special skills given to us as a diversified parish family and to promote unity and develop closer relationships with other Christian faiths.*

**Pope's March Prayer Intention** --  For Families in Crisis -- Let us Pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences

Weekly Mass Attendance: English 52 Spanish 174

**Weekly Offerings**

 Weekly Collection: $ 965 Flowers $25 Candles $82

 Weekly Online: $ 264

 Building Fund: $ 1,393

 Building Online: $



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**ONLINE GIVING IS NOW AVAILABLE AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION. Text to give is now available at Immaculate Conception.** Just text the word “give” to 256-330-5544 and follow the links to set up a one time or recurring donation. Choose your convenient way to contribute either by text, online link https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/icwedowee or QR Code Why not set up your recurring donation today and forget about writing checks. If anyone has any questions or needs help concerning any online giving options, feel free to contact Gerry Gettinger. 

**ST. BLAISE HALL** is available for small gatherings. Anyone wishing to use the hall for any reason **MUST HAVE THEIR GATHERING PUT ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR**. Contact Michele at variscom506@gmail.com or 678-481-0529

**PRAY FOR THE SICK** –Bennett Lundy (grandson of Brett and Laurie Lundy), Chuck Smith, Jim Betts, Cass, Helen Betts, Marie Lettieri

**GUIDELINES FOR RECEPTION OF SACRAMENTS**

**BAPTISM:** Contact Maria Gembe. She will set the date for Classes and confer with Fr Bala for a Baptismal Date. A minimum of 30 days, notice and completion of Baptismal preparation class and documentation must be completed before a date may be set.

**MARRIAGE**: Anyone planning a wedding must first contact Fr Bala. The guidelines set by the Diocese of B’ham state that one must contact the Pastor a minimum of 6 months prior to the selection of a date for the marriage. There are no exceptions.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**: The youth must be in the second grade, older, and actively engaged in PSR for 2 or more years.

**CONFIRMATION:** The individual must be in the 7th grade, or older, and actively engaged in a two-year Confirmation preparation program.

**QUINCEANERA:** Individuals must contact Fr Bala at least 6 months prior to setting a date and begin a time of preparation to fully understand the significance of the celebration. There are no exceptions.

**PARISH NEWS:**

***SEVEN LAST WORDS***:  Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church, Anniston Al., will be having the service of **Seven Last Words** on Sunday, April 6 at 6:30 p.m.    Prelude music will begin at 6:10 p.m.  You are invited to attend this service of music, readings, silence and reflection.

Please consider making an ***EASTER FLOWER OFFERING*** to help defray the cost of decorating our church for Easter.  There are Flower Offering envelopes on the table in the Narthex and in your weekly collection envelope box.  You can designate on the envelope if you wish to have the flower offering in Memory of a loved one or in Honor of someone.  Once you have filled out the envelope, please put it in the regular collection basket or give it to one of the ushers.  Your intentions will be prayed for at the Masses during the Easter Season.  We appreciate your generosity and support.

The ***RANDOLPH COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER BOOK SALE*** will take place Saturday, April 5 and April 12, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Old Cotton Warehouse across from Cedarwood Cemetery in Roanoke.  Books are $2 for hardback, $1 for paperbacks and Children’s books are 3 for $1. All proceeds go to the care of the animals at the shelter.  Plan to attend and support our county animal shelter.

***LENT:***  We begin our season of Lent preparing our hearts for Easter by recognizing our brokenness and need for conversion, a turning of our hearts to God.  The ashes symbolize our mortality.  They are a physical reminder that our bodies will decay, but our souls will live on in eternal life.  LENT is a good time to renew our commitment to prayer and almsgiving.  Anyone can practice almsgiving, which is not limited to simply donating money. Rather, practicing almsgiving can also mean donating one's time in service, perhaps volunteering or serving those in need.

***LENTEN GUIDELINES:***  There are only two obligatory days of fasting and abstinence: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.  We are asked to abstain from MEAT on the Fridays of Lent.   Fasting is a sign of repentance and helps us embody our spiritual hunger for Christ, who himself fasted in the desert for forty days preceding his death and Resurrection.

**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY:**   The council met Wednesday, March 12.  Holy Thursday & Good Friday Services will be 6:45 each evening.  There will be Stations of the Cross on Good Friday at 2:30.  There was a discussion about bringing back the Precious Blood during Communion.  Father Bala said the Diocese has not given permission to do that yet.  The Parish Fiesta will be Sunday, April 27, starting w/a 10:30 bi-lingual Mass followed by food & fellowship in the hall.  There will be a spring clean up on Saturday, April 12.  Our loan from the diocese for building our church and hall will be paid up this spring.   Several big improvement projects are being planned.  New video security cameras will be installed around both the church and hall.  A new sprinkler system will be installed along with improved lighting for the parking lot area.  The big project will be paving the parking lot.  3 bids were obtained.  We will need to apply for a loan from the diocese to get this done.  Once the finance council approves, paperwork will be sent to the diocese to get their approval on the loan.

**CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES:**  On March 30, there will be a special collection for Catholic Relief Services.  Funds from this collection provide food to the hungry, support displaced refugees, bring Christian love and mercy to vulnerable people here and abroad.  Please give generously to the collection and reveal Christ’s love to those most in need.

**FOOD PANTRY** If you would like to donate food to the Immaculate Conception Food Pantr**y**, there is a list of needed items in the pantry. Monetary donations may also be made.Please remember that if you need food, whether you are Immaculate Conception parishioner or not, please contact Elvira Allende, 256 914-9645 or Stephanie Roberts, 256 276-8133, bedeh0426@gmail.com



**PASTORAL MINISTRIES**

**Reverend Bala Balaswamy**

**Michele Varisco:** Parish Council Chairperson

Email: variscom506@gmail.com Cell (678) 481-0529

**Tommy Cain:** Finance Council Chairperson

 Email: tcain8@bellsouth.net Cell (251) 454-8160

**Jim & Stephanie Roberts:** Building Committee

 Email: jim@multimetco.com

**Anel Covarrubias:** Hispanic Liaison

 Cell: (334) 863-1137

 anercovarrubias7@gmail.com

**MARCH MINISTER SCHEDULE**

Sun., 3/23  -  Lector:  Brett    Announcer:  Charlotte

                      E.M.:  Gerry

                      Usher:  Diane & Tommy

Sun., 3/30  -  Lector:  Chip     Announcer:  Michele

                      E.M.:  Roger

                      Usher:  Frank & Paul

**Sacristan:** Alison & Nawana

**Alter Linens 2025**

**March** Nawana

**April** Deysi

**May** Denise

**June**  Genoveva

**July** Chip

**August** Elvira

**September**  Cecilia

**October** Alison

**November**  Sandra

**December** Bernardina

**Church Cleaning Schedule:**

March 29 – Broyles & Variscos

April 12 - Horacio/Bernadina & Baldomer/Hilaria

April 26 - Vicente/Elvira & Jose/Sandra

May 10 - Anker & Burke

May 24 - Francisca Velasquez & Family

June 7 -  Cain & Broyles

June 21 - Juana Velazquez & Family