**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH**

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

**March 9, 2025**

**1st. 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: 5:30 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

***DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME STARTS THIS WEEKEND.  SET CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR***

Weekly Mass Attendance: English 52 Spanish 138 Ash Wednesday 125

**Weekly Offerings**

 Weekly Collection: $ 1,925 Flowers $400

 Ash Wednesday $394

 Weekly Online: $ 581.56

 Building Fund: $ 3,134

 Building Online: $ 550.00



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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:**

***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.

The next **Parish Council**meeting will be Wednesday, March 12, at 6:00 in the parish hall.  All are welcome to attend.

Father will be celebrating **Mass on Wednesday, March 12**, at 5:00 p.m. Mass followed by Stations of the Cross. Please join us.

This Sunday, March 9, there will be a special collection for the Black and Indian Missions. Together we build up the Church and announce the Good News of Jesus Christ.  Education is fundamental in changing the morals of a society. Your monetary assistance provides opportunities for a solid Catholic education in our Indian and Black Catholic mission schools, allows the purchase of catechetical materials and bibles, and provides for the formation of lay leadership, these are just a few ways the collection supports evangelization.  Please be generous.

**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

***JUBILEE YEAR:***  2025 is a Jubilee Year which is a special year of grace and reconciliation.  The Catholic Church celebrates a Jubilee Year every 25 years.  There are a number of ways in which Catholics can participate in the Jubilee year.  The most traditional observance is making a pilgrimage, as pilgrimages are emblematic of our life's journey toward God.  A key symbol of the Jubilee is the holy door which reminds us of Jesus' saying in the Gospel of John: "I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture"  Another major part of the Jubilee Year is the special opportunities to earn indulgences.  An indulgence is "the remission in the sight of God of the temporal punishment due for sins, the guilt of which has already been forgiven.



**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., 3/9  -  Lector:  Michele    Announcer:  Michele

                    E.M.:  Pat

                    Usher:  Tom & Frank

Sun., 3/16  -  Lector:  Charlotte    Announcer  Michele

                      E.M.:  Tommy

                      Usher:  Frank & Roger

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 15 – Varisco & Fussell

March 29 –

April 12 - Horacio/Bernadina & Baldomer/Hilaria

April 26 - Vicente/Elvira & Jose/Sandra

May 10 - Anker & Burke

May 24 - Francisca Velasquez & Family