



St. Gerard Catholic Church

640 Edrie Street, NE
Aiken, SC 29801
803 649-3203

Rev. Emmanuel O. Andinam, Pastor
Deacon Dr. Charles Cooper, Retired

Mission Statement

Anchored by faith, hope and love in Jesus Christ, we strive to be active disciples, serving each other and all God's people by welcoming and embracing the enriching diversity of our community of faith.

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time *July 27, 2025*

Mass Schedule

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday – 8:15 AM

Saturday Vigil - 4:00 PM

Sunday - 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM

First Friday: Benediction & Divine Mercy Chaplet following 8:15 AM Mass.

Confessions: Tuesday & Thursday after Mass and by appointment

Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals: By appointment

Religious Education: Contact office for information

OCIA: Contact office 803-649-3203

Bible Study: Fridays 10:00 AM in the church hall

Website: www.stgerardinaiken.org

Readings for The Week

Sunday:

Gen 18:20-32; Ps 138:1-2,2-3,6-7,7-8; Col 2:12-14; Lk 11:1-13

Monday:

Exo 32:15-24,30-34; Ps 106:19-20,21-22,23; Mt 13:31-35

Tuesday: Sts Martha, Mary & Lazarus

Exo 33:7-11; 34:5b-9,28; Ps 103:6-7,8-9,10-11,12-13; Jn 11:19-27

Wednesday:

Exo 34:29-35; Ps 99: 5,6,7,9; Mt 13:44-46

Thursday: St Ignatius of Loyola, Priest

Exo 40:16-21,34-38; Ps 84:3,4,5-6a & 8a,11; Mt 13:47-53

Friday: St Alphonsus Liguori Bishop & Doctor of the Church

Lev 23:1,4-11,15-16,27,34b-37; Ps 81:3-4,5-6,10-11ab; Mt 13:54-58

Saturday:

Lev 25:1,8-17; Ps 67:2-3,5,7-8; Mt 14:1-12

Mass Intentions

Saturday, July 26

4:00 PM - For our Parish

Sunday, July 27

8:00 AM - For our Parish

10:00 AM - For our Parish

Tuesday, July 29 - For our Parish

Thursday, July 30 - For our Parish

Friday, July 31 - For our Parish

Ministers

<u>August 2</u>	<u>August 3</u>	<u>August 3</u>
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Linda Cooper	Denise Gelinas	Cathy Ciani
Cindy McHale	Jack Kline	Wayman Johnson
Joan Hesik	Betsy Kenney	

Pray for our sick

Rosa Johnson, Paula Thurston, Ellen Heim, Rich Borst, Betty Hyslop, Jeffrey Hesik, Angelo Perrino, John Burke, Krystal Ortiz, Mary Rose, Michell Novotny, Nancy Gardzina, Jean Schodowski

Anointing of the Sick

The Rite of Anointing tells us there is no need to wait until a person is at the point of death to receive the Sacrament. In this Sacrament, the Holy Spirit gives us peace and courage to deal with the difficulties that accompany serious illness and our frailty. To receive the Sacrament of Anointing, contact the church office.

Communion for Hospital/Homebound

If you would like Holy Communion brought to someone in the hospital or confined to home, please contact the church office: 803-649-3203

Legion of Mary

Active members meet Tuesdays at 2:00 PM in the church Conference Room. Auxiliary members can pray at home. If you are interested in becoming an active or auxiliary member of the Legion of Mary, contact the church office.

Bible Study

There are no Bible Study classes during the summer months. Classes will resume on September 5.

Weekly Collection 7/19-7/20/25

Budget	\$3,162.00
Collected	\$3,269.00
Short/Over	+\$107.00
YTD+-	+\$2,294.00

Second Collection August 10

Disaster Assistance

Tabernacle Candle

In accordance with traditional custom, a special lamp fueled by oil or wax should be kept alight near the tabernacle to indicate and honor the presence of Christ. The July candle is for Ada White, Matt & Kyndal Solenberger Birthdays

Monthly After Mass Social

The Monthly After Mass Social is the first Saturday of the month after the 4:00 p.m. Mass. The host for August 2nd is Holder & Rose. If you would like to host a social, contact the office: 803-649-3203.

Our Lady of the Valley Food Pantry

Our collection for the OLV food pantry is the third weekend of the month. Food donations are welcome at any time during the month; however, our focused collection is the third weekend of the month. The focus food for the weekend of August 16-17 is: Muffin Mixes.

***** Family Ministry News *****

Our Family Ministry will kick off on **August 1, 2025, with a Family Friday** get-together at Fermata Club from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Please sign up (link below) to let us know you are coming and to bring food.

On **Sunday, August 3, 2025, at 10am Mass**, youth will serve as ministers. Get your kiddo involved in and loving Mass by being a part of the liturgy. Sign them up for a role using the link below. We will also have a **Backpack Blessing on August 3**, so students and teachers should bring their bags for a special prayer from Father.

<https://tinyurl.com/AugustFamFri>

Note: Our Family Ministry welcomes all members of St. Gerard, as we are all one family in Christ.

For information, contact: Veronica L. Andreassen-Barker, 803-262-8934, Vla.barker@gmail.com

I don't hear a lot of people say, "Why was my prayer answered? Why did I receive exactly what I asked for?" I know God has answered but it may not be the answer I expected. Sometimes we ask and receive, search and find, knock and the door opens. What really concerns a person praying is knowing why they asked but did not receive, why they searched but did not find, why they knocked but the door never opened. Some will get angry. Some will feel hurt or betrayed, lose faith, and some will even leave the church.

Do we tell God what we want and expect to always get what we asked for? I don't know why some prayers seem to be answered and others go unanswered. Perhaps the greatest difficulty of prayer is that sometimes we just want God to change our circumstances. While God can and sometimes does change circumstances, I am increasingly convinced that God, more often than not, changes us. Only God can sustain us by nourishing, strengthening, empowering, emboldening, and enabling us to face the circumstances of life. Where do we find these sustenance's: in the Word and the holy Eucharist at each Mass. With God's help we are called to endure and suffer with courage, and trust in God's providence, sometimes with joy and gratitude, other times with pain and loss. God's divine providence is God's caring provision for his people as he guides them in their journey of faith through life, accomplishing his purpose in them. Having trust in God's providence can bring us comfort and confidence. Even if our lives seem chaotic, we need to remind ourselves that God is ultimately in control.

By persistently knocking and boldly asking, the friend in the first story got what he asked for. He sought and found what he was seeking. We as disciples need to be consistently and persistently praying daily and motivated by the assurance that like this friend who gave what was sought, even if inconvenient, then God who is a good God and loving Father, will answer our petitions in a way that is for our highest good.

Prayer: "When you pray say: our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Amen.



"Jesus loved Martha and Mary and Lazarus." This statement in John's gospel tells us of the special relationship Jesus had with Martha, her sister, and her brother. Jesus was a frequent guest at Martha's home. We read of three visits in Luke 10:38-42, John 11:1-53, and John 12:1-9.

Martha welcomes Jesus and his disciples into her home and immediately goes to work to serve them. Hospitality is paramount in the Middle East and Martha believed in its importance. Imagine her frustration when Mary ignores the rule of hospitality to sit and listen to Jesus. Instead of speaking to her sister, she asks Jesus to intervene.

Jesus' response is not unkind. He observes that Martha is worried about many things that distract her from really being present to him. He reminds her that there is only one thing that is truly important -- listening to him. And that is what Mary has done.

In Martha we see ourselves -- worried and distracted by all we have to do in the world and forgetting to spend time with Jesus. It is comforting to note that Jesus loved her just the same.

The next visit shows how well Martha learned this lesson. She is grieving the death of her brother when she hears that Jesus has come to the area. She gets up and leaves the guests and goes to meet him. Her conversation with Jesus shows her faith and courage. She states that she believes in Jesus' power, in the resurrection, and that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus tells her that he is the resurrection and the life and then goes on to raise her brother from the dead. Our final picture of Martha in Scripture is the one that sums up who she was.

Jesus has returned to Bethany some time later to share a meal with his good friends. In this home were three extraordinary people. We hear how brother Lazarus caused a stir when brought back to life. We hear how Mary causes a commotion at dinner by anointing Jesus with expensive perfume. But all we hear about Martha is the simple statement: "Martha served." She isn't in the spotlight, she doesn't do showy things, she doesn't receive spectacular miracles. She simply serves Jesus.

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV

Sunday, 20 July 2025

Dear brothers and sisters,

The first reading and the Gospel invite us to reflect on hospitality, service, and listening

First, God visits Abraham in the figure of “three men” who arrive at his tent in the heat of the day. The scene is easy to imagine: the blazing sun, the stillness of the desert, the intense heat, and the three strangers seeking shelter. Abraham is seated “at the entrance of his tent,” the position of the master of the house. Recognizing the presence of God in the visitors, he gets up, runs to greet them, and prostrates himself on the ground, imploring them to stay. The afternoon’s stillness is filled with gestures of love that involve not only the Patriarch, but also his wife, Sarah, and the servants. Abraham is no longer seated, but stands “by them under the tree”, and it is there that God gives him the best news he could have hoped for: “your wife Sarah shall have a son”.

The dynamics of this encounter prompt us to reflect on how God chooses the path of hospitality to enter into the lives of Sarah and Abraham, announcing that they would have a child, which they had long desired but had given up hope of receiving. Having visited them before in many moments of grace, God returns to knock on their door, asking for hospitality and trust. The elderly couple responds positively, despite not yet understanding what will happen. They recognize God’s blessing and his presence in the mysterious visitors, and offer them what they have: food, company, service, and the shade of a tree. In return, they receive the promise of new life and descendants.

While the circumstances are different, the Gospel also teaches us about God’s way of acting. Jesus appears as a guest at the house of Martha and Mary. This time, however, he is not a stranger: he comes to his friends’ home amid a festive atmosphere. One of the sisters welcomes him by serving him, while the other sits at his feet, listening as a disciple would her teacher. As we know, Jesus responds to the first sister’s complaints that she would like some help with the tasks at hand by inviting her to recognize the value of listening.

It would be incorrect, however, to see these two attitudes as mutually exclusive, or to compare the merits of the two women. Service and listening are twin dimensions of hospitality. Our relationship with God comes first. Although we must live out our faith through concrete actions, faithfully carrying out our duties according to our state of life and vocation, it is essential that we do so only after meditating on the Word of God and listening to what the Holy Spirit is saying to our hearts. We should set aside moments of silence, moments of prayer, times in which, quieting noise and distractions, we recollect ourselves before God in simplicity of heart. This is a dimension of the Christian life that we particularly need to recover today, both as a value for individuals and communities, and as a prophetic sign for our times. We must make room for silence, for listening to the Father who speaks and “sees in secret.”

Pope Francis said that “If we want to savor life with joy, we must associate these two approaches: on the one hand, ‘being at the feet’ of Jesus, in order to listen to him as he reveals to us the secret of everything; on the other, being attentive and ready in hospitality, when he passes and knocks at our door, with the face of a friend who needs a moment of rest and fraternity”. These words were pronounced just a few months before the pandemic broke out; that long and difficult experience, which we still remember, taught us much about their truth.

Certainly, all of this requires effort. Serving and listening do not always come easily; they require hard work and the ability to make sacrifices. For instance, it takes effort to listen and serve to be faithful and loving mothers and fathers raising their families, just as it requires effort for children to respond to their parents’ hard work at home and at school. It also requires effort to understand each other when disagreements arise, to forgive when mistakes are made, to help when someone is ill, and to comfort one another in times of sadness. However, it is precisely by making an effort that something worthwhile can be built in life; this is the only way to form and nurture strong, genuine relationships between people. Thus, with the foundations of everyday life, the Kingdom of God grows and manifests its presence.

Saint Augustine, reflecting on the story of Martha and Mary in one of his homilies, said: “These two women symbolize two lives: the present and the future; a life lived in toil and a life of rest; one troubled and the other blessed; one temporary, the other eternal.” And considering Martha’s work, Augustine said: “Who is exempt from the duty of caring for others? Who can rest from these tasks? Let us try to carry them out with charity and in such a way that none will be able to find fault with us... The weariness will pass and rest will come, but rest will only come through the effort made. The ship will sail and reach its homeland; but the homeland will not be reached except by means of the ship.”

Today, Abraham, Martha and Mary remind us that listening and service are two complementary attitudes that enable us to open ourselves and our lives to the blessings of the Lord. Their example invites us to reconcile contemplation and action, rest and hard work, silence, and the bustle of our daily lives with wisdom and balance, always taking Jesus’ charity as our measure, his Word as our light, and his grace as our source of strength, which sustains us beyond our own capacity.