



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.

The Twenty First Sunday in Ordinary Time August 23, 2026

Weekly 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:

Isa 22:1-23; Ps 138:1-2,3,6,8; Rom 11:33-36; Mt 16:13-20

Monday: St. Bartholomew, Apostle

Rev 21:9b-14; Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18; Jn 1:45-51

Tuesday:

2 The 2:1-3a, 14-17; Ps 96:10, 11-12, 13; Mt 23:23-26

Wednesday:

2 The 3:6-10, 16-18; Ps 128:1-2, 54-5; Mt 23:27-32

Thursday: St. Monica

1 Cor 1:1-9; Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7; Mt 24:42-51

Friday: St. Augustine, Bishop & Doctor of The Church

1 Cor 1:17-25; Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 10-11; Mt 25:1-13

Saturday: The Passion of St. John The Baptist

1 Cor 1:26-32; Ps 33:12-13, 18-19, 20-21; Mk 6:17-29

Mass Intentions

Saturday Vigil August 22

4:00 PM - For our Parish

Sunday, August 23

8:00 AM - For our Parish

10:00 AM - For our Parish

Tuesday, August 25

8:15 Mass - For our Parish

Thursday - August 27

15 AM - For our Parish

Friday, August 28

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Ministers

<u>August 29</u>	<u>August 30</u>	<u>August 30</u>
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Joel Southwick	Peter Stanley	Janet Menefee
Cindy McHale	Kelly Stanley	Gregg Wright
Joan Hesik	Betsy Kenney	Gregg Wright

Pray for our Sick

Rosa Johnson, Rich Borst, Jeffrey Hesik, John Burke, Krystal Ortiz, Michell Novotny, Casey Bay, Dennis HooChung, Joe Monahon, Michelle Bullington, Janet Menefee

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

Bible Study classes resume on Friday, September 11th.

Weekly Collection 8/15-8/16/26

Budget	\$4,325.00
Collected	\$6,616.00
Short/Over	+\$2,291.00
YTD+-	+\$148.60

Second Collection

September 13th The Catholic University of America

Tabernacle Candle

A special candle should burn continuously near the tabernacle to indicate the presence of Christ. The candle for August is for Connor Brady's 8th birthday.

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 15-16 is Peanut Butter.

Men's Prayer Group

Meetings are on Tuesdays in the parish social hall at 7:30 a.m. for prayer and discussion. Following the meeting, the group will attend the 8:15 a.m. Mass. For more information contact Bill Collins at 803-998-7191. All men of the parish are welcome to the meetings.

Monthly After Mass Social

The Monthly After Mass Social is the first Saturday of the month after the 4:00 p.m. The hosts for September are the McHales. If you would like to host a social, contact the parish office: 803-649-3203.

Sunday After Mass Social

The Sunday After Mass social is August 16 after the 10 a.m. Mass. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the back entrance to the social hall.

Thinking About Becoming Catholic or Know Someone Else Thinking About It?

Are you wondering how to become Catholic? Whether you're feeling a spiritual pull, exploring the beauty of Catholic teaching, or simply curious about the process, you're not alone. Every year, thousands of people begin the journey into the Catholic Church through a process called OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults). We would welcome hearing from you and walking with you through the process. Contact Deacon Chuck Cooper at 815-985-3636 or Linda Cooper at 815-985-3637.

Deacon Chuck's Corner
Reflection: "Who do you say that I am"
Matthew 16:13-20

Jesus could trust Peter to be honest – he would say what was on his mind and in his heart. Jesus asks what others say, but what matters to him is what Peter says.

Jesus was not, for Peter, another great or admirable figure, but was the one who could change his life. Simon speaks up: "You are the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God." It is a huge step forward for Peter and his companions. As we shall see, it is not yet a total recognition of his identity or mission, but is an exciting moment in their relationship with Jesus.

Peter confirmed Jesus' growing sense of his vocation and role. I linger with this question: what are you (Jesus) to me? In today's hearing, Jesus calls each of us to consider our own response. We either answer, Jesus, you are the Christ and the Son of the living God, or we're wrong. But for those, by God's grace, who answer correctly, it's a blessed, revealed, foundational, and rewarded confession.

Through Jesus's question and Peter's confession, we see three important identities of Jesus. He is the Son of Man (Human). He is the Christ, the anointed Messiah. And He is the Son of God (God Himself). *Jesus called Peter blessed because flesh and blood did not reveal My identity to you, but My Father who is in heaven.* In other words, *Peter* believed *this*, not because he had discovered it on his own and not because a person told him. He knew it because *God had revealed this to him*.

Simon's nickname was *Peter*—the Greek word is "Petros," which means *rock*. A *rock* is hard, and it is immovable. *Simon* was nicknamed for his stubborn personality and hardheadedness. His obstinacy made him the last to understand something, and Jesus may have known that Peter, of all the disciples, saw this, for he was so hardheaded and slow that only *God* could have *revealed this insight* to him. The positive aspect of being stubborn is that even though it may have taken *Peter* a long time to "get" an idea, once he got it, it would not easily be dislodged from his conviction or purpose. *Jesus* added *that upon this rock* of bold conviction, *I will build My church*. Conviction like *Peter's* would be the foundation of *Jesus's church*.

Prayer: Lord, help me emulate Peter, the Rock, today and every day in my faith, my confession and steadfastness in building up the body, the Church. Amen

St Augustine
Feast day: August 28

This famous son of St. Monica was born in Africa in 354 and spent many years of his life living wickedly and holding false beliefs. Though he was one of the most intelligent men who ever lived and had been brought up a Christian, his sins and pride darkened his mind so much that he could no longer see or understand the Divine Truth. Through the prayers of his holy mother, Augustine finally became convinced that Christianity was the one true religion.



He was baptized, became a priest, a bishop, a famous Catholic writer, a Founder of religious priests, and one of the greatest saints that ever lived. He became very devout and charitable. St. Augustine overcame strong heresies, practiced great poverty and supported the poor, preached often, and prayed with great fervor right up until his death.

Augustine was canonized and later recognized as a Doctor of the Church. His feast day is 28 August, the day on which he died. He is considered the patron saint of brewers, printers, and theologians.

Summary of the Holy Father's words:

In our continuing catechesis on the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, today we consider the importance of sacred music. Indeed, singing and playing a musical instrument are acts of prayer. Music thus fosters our unity in praising God and opens our hearts to be fashioned by his grace. Far from being merely decorative, therefore, sacred music is a treasure of profound value. It should always be dignified, draw inspiration from Sacred Scripture and reflect the grandeur of the mystery celebrated. Sacred music is also to reflect local cultures, expressing the authentic traditions of peoples, while promoting the universal Church's musical heritage. The Council also emphasized the need for solid liturgical formation and education in sacred music. Dear brothers and sisters, in the liturgy, may we join together in love, and – in the words of Saint Ignatius of Antioch – "with one voice sing to the Father through Jesus Christ."

LEO XIV
Wednesday, 19 August 2026
Catechesis. The Documents of the Second Vatican Council.
III. Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. 7. *Sacred Music*

Dear brothers and sisters,

The sixth chapter of the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC) of the Second Vatican Council is dedicated to *sacred music*. The document states that “The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.” It specifies that “Sacred music is to be considered the more holy in proportion as it is more closely connected with the liturgical action, whether it adds delight to prayer, fosters unity of minds, or confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites. The Church approves all forms of true art that have the needed qualities and admits them into divine worship.

Here we find the core of the Council’s teaching, which confirms and deepens the *ministerial function* of music in the liturgy. Music is part of the liturgical action and is not merely a decorative part of the celebration. In the liturgy, to sing and to play music means to pray, attuning one’s heart to that of our sisters and brothers and to God, through active participation in the mystery that is being celebrated. Music expresses the affective dimension of prayer. As Saint Augustine says: “Singing belongs to those who love.” It helps us open our hearts to God’s action in grace and allow ourselves to be molded by it. Singing also fosters *communion*. It contributes to the unity of hearts, overcoming differences between people and bringing everyone together in praise of God through the symphony of voices. Thus, it becomes an epiphany of the Church, a tangible manifestation of the communion that belongs to her very nature.

The profound theological significance of sacred song as an integral part of liturgical action brings forth certain requirements. First, it must respond to what is most appropriate for the liturgical moment. Its form, especially in its melodic aspect, must be at once noble and simple, of high musical quality and easily performable, particularly when it is intended to be sung by the whole assembly. The Council recommends that the texts, too, should be suitable, profound, and at the same time readily understandable, inspired mainly by Sacred Scripture, the liturgical books, and the spiritual Tradition of the Church.

Sacrosanctum Concilium devotes considerable attention to the theme of the *active participation of the faithful*. This “must be understood on the basis of a greater awareness of the mystery being celebrated and its relationship to daily life”, in a “spirit of constant conversion which must mark the lives of all the faithful”. As for the concrete way in which this can be achieved through the specific role of sacred music, the Constitution offers a clear answer: “the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs” and “reverent silence” should be fostered. It urges each person, minister or member of the faithful, to perform “all of, but only, those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy”, in a harmonious balance among the different ministries, the various interventions, and moments of silence.

The Council then attributes great value to Gregorian chant, without excluding other genres of sacred music from the celebration. Particular attention is also given to the organ, while the use of other instruments is permitted “on condition that the instruments are suitable, or can be made suitable, for sacred use, accord with the dignity of the temple, and truly contribute to the edification of the faithful”.

A theme close to the Council’s reform is that of *inculturation*, including in the field of sacred music. With regard to the musical traditions of different cultures, the Council emphasizes the importance of taking them seriously into consideration, as they form part of people’s religious and social life. Therefore, on the one hand, an “attitude toward religion” should be promoted in everyone. On the other hand, every effort should be made to see that the traditional music of these peoples, both in schools and in sacred services, may be promoted.

For this reason, the composer of sacred music is called to know and preserve the musical heritage of the Church, allowing it to inspire new compositions at the service of the liturgy, while respecting contemporary sensibilities and the different cultural traditions, so as “‘purify worship from ugliness of style, from distasteful forms of expression, from uninspired musical texts which are not worthy of the great act that is being celebrated’, to guarantee dignity and excellence to liturgical compositions”.

The Fathers of the Church held liturgical singing in great esteem as a symbol of ecclesial communion. In the words of Saint Ignatius of Antioch: “Let each of you unite to become a choir, so that, harmonious in love and taking up the song of God in unison, you may sing with one voice through Jesus Christ to the Father, so that he may hear you and recognize, from the good works you perform, that you are members of his Son”.