



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.

Palm Sunday

March 29th, 2026

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

Palm Sunday:

Mt 21:1-11; isa 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; Phi 2:3-11; Mt 26:14-27, 66

Holy Thursday:

Exo 12:1-8, 11-14; Ps 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18; 1 Cor 11:23-26, Jn 13:1-15

Good Friday:

Isa 52:13-53:12; Ps 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25; Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9; Jn 18:1-19:42

Saturday Easter Vigil

Gen 22:1-18; Ps 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11; Exo 14:15-15:1; Ps 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18; Isa 55:1-11; Isa 12:2-3, 4, 5-6; Bar 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11; Rom 6:3-11; Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23; Mt 28:1-10

Mass Intentions

Saturday, March 28

4:00 PM - Souls in Purgatory

Sunday, March 29

8:00 AM - NO MASS

10:00 AM - Bishop Jacques Fabre-Jeune will celebrate Holy Mass. Weather permitting, Mass will be held outdoors.

Holy Thursday, April 2

6:00 PM - For our Parish

Good Friday Service, April 3

3:00 PM - Celebration of the Lord's Passion

Ministers

<u>April 4</u>	<u>April 5</u>	<u>April 5</u>
8:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Chioma Nwoga	Diane Begic	Janet Menefee
Betsy Kenney	Cindy McHale	Gregg Wright
Joan Hesik		Gregg Wright

Pray for our Sick

Rosa Johnson, Paula Thurston, Ellen Heim, Rich Borst, Betty Hyslop, Jeffrey Hesik, Angelo Perrino, John Burke, Krystal Ortiz, Michell Novotny, Casey Bay, Dennis HooChung, Joe Monahon

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

Weekly Collection 3/21-3/22/26

Budget	\$3,799.00
Collected	\$4,021.00
Short/Over	-\$222.00
YTD+-	+\$11,892.16

Second Collection

April 3rd Good Friday
The Holy Land

Bible Study

Classes are held on Fridays at 10:00 a.m. in the Parish Center. If you are unable to attend in person, you can participate by teleconference. The phone number is: 1-978-990-5273 and the Access Code is 236101#.

Tabernacle Candle

A special candle should burn continuously near the tabernacle to indicate the presence of Christ. If you would like to donate in honor or memory of a loved one, call the church office. The candle for April: Viola E Beckert, Jimmy Cooper, & Edith M Cassidy, birthday memorials

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 April 18-19 is Granola Bars.

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. Mass. The host for April 11th is The Coopers. If you would like to host a social, contact the office: 803-649-3203.

Sunday After Mass Social

The Sunday After Mass social is April 19, after the 10 AM Mass. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the back entrance to the social hall.

Deacon Chuck's Corner

Reflection: Palm Sunday– Matthew 21:1-11

In today's Gospel, Jesus processes into Jerusalem on a donkey. Today we celebrate Palm Sunday, the beginning of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Today is a day of celebration! Have you ever found yourself caught up in a cheering crowd? It is an experience unlike any other, to be surrounded by such positive energy and blissful joy. It is a rallying cry and unifying moment for many, all pointed in one direction.

Our gospel text from this morning paints this amazing picture as Jesus triumphantly enters Jerusalem to a cheering crowd. "Hosanna!" a shout of praise, but literally means "save or help, I pray."

We shout Hosanna: for the sins of the world that need divine presence – whether we are directly involved or indirectly watching from a distance; for the ways in which we have failed to care for our neighbors and have abandoned the least of these. We shout Hosanna: for all of this and more, the things we dare not say out loud, but in our Lenten journey have discovered in the dark corners of our lives.

Prayer: We still shout, "Hosanna!" And we rejoice that our shouts will not just echo into the abyss. For God has given us the gift of a King. Jesus Christ is our Savior. The Messiah has entered the gates triumphantly, and goes before us. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Amen.

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Easter Flower Memorials

- Jack Holder
- Herbert & Evelyn Houser
- Paul & Louise Kenney
- The Heim Family
- June Mcgee
- The Ellis Family
- The Wright Family
- Mary Ann & Jerry Goebel
- Gloria Ressler, Ruth, Kenneth
& Mary Lou Noah
- The Hadlock, Becker, Early, Cassidy
& Norton Families

Holy Week

Holy Week begins with **Palm Sunday**, a distinct liturgy that begins with a Gospel reading of Jesus's journey to Jerusalem at the entrance of the worship space. Those attending the service receive palms, a reminder of Scripture that tells us people welcomed Jesus by laying down their cloaks and waving palm branches. Palm Sunday is the first time we hear the Lord's Passion in the liturgical calendar.

The Easter Triduum is the pinnacle of the Christian liturgical year, inviting the faithful to reflect deeply on the core events of their faith.

Holy Thursday – Mass of the Lord's Supper – This Mass commemorates the Last Supper, where Jesus instituted the Eucharist and washed the feet of his disciples.

Good Friday – Celebration of the Lord's Passion – This service includes the reading of the Passion, veneration of the cross, and distribution of Holy Communion, which was consecrated the previous evening.

Easter Vigil – Mass of the Resurrection – This vigil marks the transition from darkness to light, celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus with readings, baptisms, and the Eucharist.

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Summary of the Holy Father's words:

Dear brothers and sisters, in our ongoing catechesis on the Second Vatican Council, today we reflect on the teachings of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* concerning the hierarchical structure of the Church. In this regard, it is helpful to bear in mind that the Church is not something we invented, but is a divine institution established by Jesus himself. Christ appointed the apostles, placing Peter at their head, and sent them out to continue his salvific mission until his return in glory. To perpetuate this same mission, ministers were invested with sacred power to be the successors of the Apostles as Bishops, in whose ministry priests and deacons likewise participate through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Sharing in the ministry of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, they are consecrated to serve the faithful, build up the Church, and ensure the fruitful transmission of the faith. Let us therefore ask the Lord to continue to bless his Church with shepherds after his own heart.

*The full text of the Pope's Audience is on the last page of the bulletin.

LEO XIV
Wednesday, 25 March 2026
Catechesis. The Documents of Vatican Council II.
II. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*
5. The Hierarchical Structure of the Church

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

We will continue our catechesis on the Documents of the Second Vatican Council, commenting on the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium* on the Church. After presenting her as the People of God, today we will consider her hierarchical form.

The Catholic Church is founded on the Apostles, whom Christ appointed as the living pillars of His mystical Body, and possesses a hierarchical structure that works in the service of the unity, mission, and sanctification of all her members. This sacred Order is permanently founded on the Apostles, as authoritative witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus and sent by the Lord Himself on mission into the world. Since the Apostles are called to faithfully preserve the Master's salvific teaching, they hand on their ministry to men who, until Christ's return, continue to sanctify, guide, and instruct the Church "through their successors in pastoral office."

This apostolic succession, founded on the Gospel and in the Tradition, is explored further in Chapter III of *Lumen gentium*, entitled "*On the hierarchical structure of the Church and in particular on the Episcopate*". The Council teaches that the hierarchical structure is not a human construct, functional to the internal organization of the Church as a social body, but a divine institution whose purpose is to perpetuate the mission given by Christ to the Apostles until the end of time.

The fact that this theme is addressed in Chapter III, after the first two chapters have considered the very essence of the Church, does not imply that the hierarchical constitution is a subsequent element with respect to the People of God: as the Decree *Ad gentes* notes, "the Apostles were the first budding-forth of the New Israel, and at the same time the beginning of the sacred hierarchy", inasmuch as they were the community of those redeemed by Christ's Paschal Mystery, established as a means of salvation for the world.

To understand the Council's intention, it is advisable to read carefully the title of Chapter III of *Lumen gentium*, which explains the fundamental structure of the Church, received from God the Father through the Son and brought to fulfillment by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Council Fathers did not want to present the institutional elements of the Church, as the noun "constitution" might imply if understood in the modern sense. The Document concentrates instead on the "ministerial or hierarchical priesthood", which differs "in essence and not only in degree" from the common priesthood of the faithful, recalling that the latter are "nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ." The Council thus addresses the ministry conferred upon men endowed with *sacra potestas*, sacred power for service in the Church: it focuses in particular on the episcopate, then on the priesthood and the diaconate as degrees of the one sacrament of Holy Orders.

By the adjective "hierarchical", therefore, the Council intends to indicate the sacred origin of the apostolic ministry in the action of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, as well as its internal relationships. The Bishops, first and foremost, and through them the priests and deacons, have received tasks which lead them to the service of "all those who belong to the People of God," so that, "working toward a common goal freely and in an orderly way, [they] may arrive at salvation."

Lumen gentium repeatedly and effectively recalls the collegial and communal nature of this apostolic mission, reaffirming that the "duty which the Lord committed to the shepherds of His people is a true service, which in sacred literature is significantly called 'diakonia' or ministry." We can therefore understand why Saint Paul VI presented the hierarchy as a reality "born of the charity of Christ, to fulfil, spread and ensure the intact and fruitful transmission of the wealth of faith, examples, precepts and charisms bequeathed by Christ to His Church."

Let us pray to the Lord that He may send to His Church ministers who are ardent with evangelical charity, dedicated to the good of all the baptized, and courageous missionaries in every part of the world.