



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 Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 15, 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

Sunday:

1 Sam 16:1b,6-7,10-13; Ps 23:1-3a,3b-4,5,6; Eph 5:8-14; Jn 9:1-41

Monday:

Isa 65:17-21; Ps 30:2 & 4,5-6,11-12 & 13b; Jn 4:43-54

Tuesday:

Eze 47:1-9,12; Ps 46:2-3,5-6,8-9; Jn 5:1-16

Wednesday:

Isa 49:8-15; Ps 145:8-9,13cd-14,17-18; Jn 5:17-30

Thursday: St. Joseph, Spouse of The Blessed Virgin Mary

2 Sam 7:4-5a,12-14a, 16; Ps 89:2-3,4-5,27 & 29; Romans 4:13,16-18,22; Mt 1:16,18-21,24a

Friday:

Wis 2:1a,12-22; Ps 34:17-18,19-20,21 & 23; Jn 7:1-2,10,25-30

Saturday:

Jer 11;18-20; Ps 7:2-3,9bc-10,11-12; Jn 7:40-53

Mass Intentions

Saturday, March 14

4:00 PM - For our Parish

Sunday, March 15

8:00 AM - For our Parish

10:00 AM - For our Parish

Tuesday, March 17

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Thursday, March 19

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Friday, March 20

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Ministers

<u>March 21</u>	<u>March 22</u>	<u>March 22</u>
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Joel Southwick	Denise Gelinias	Chioma Nwoga
Cindy McHale	Jack Kline	Gregg Wright
Joan Hesik	Betsy Kenney	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 Monahan

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

The Legion of Mary Aiken Curia cordially invites all Active and Auxiliary members of the Legion of Mary to join in the annual Acies Mass at St. Mary Help of Christians Church, 203 Park Avenue, Aiken, SC on Saturday, March 28, 2026 at 10 a.m.

Sunday After Mass Social

The Sunday After Mass social is March 15, after the 10 AM Mass. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the back entrance to the social hall.

Weekly Collection 3/7-3/8/26

Budget	\$3,799.00
Collected	\$3,298.00
Short/Over	-\$501.00
YTD+-	+\$13,345.16

Second Collection

March 15 Catholic Relief Services

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 March: William E Beckert, birthday memorial.

Our Lady of the Valley Food Pantry

Our collection for the OLV food pantry is the third weekend of the month. The focus food for the weekend of March 21-22 is Pancake Mix & Syrup.

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.



Annual Garden Cleanup

It's springtime and time for the garden cleanup. As in the past, we need your help. We are looking for those interested to be at the church from 8:30 am to noon on Saturday, March 28th. We will spread mulch and clean up afterward. We would also appreciate financial support to offset the cost of mulch. Should that be your choice, please put your donation in an envelope, note on the outside that it is for "Garden Cleanup," and place it in the offertory basket during collection. Last year, we had great participation and nearly covered the cost of supplies.

Thanks in advance for your help!

Jackie, Kari & Chuck
(The Garden Committee)

Deacon Chuck's Corner
A Reflection on The Blind Man – John 9:1-41

Today's Gospel is all about blindness, seeing versus not seeing. It begins with a blind man from birth who was assumed to be blind because of sin. Jesus rubbed dirt and spit on his eyes and the man rinsed in the pool of Siloam. His eyes were opened and he could see Jesus. Seeing Jesus leads to a restored vision for sinners who are willing to respond to Jesus on the basis of who he is. In this blind man's case, it leads to healing of his physical blindness, and ultimately, to his capacity to "see" Jesus as the Son of Man, believe in him, and worship him. In the simplest of terms, when it comes to Jesus — believing is seeing!

On the other hand, rejecting what is obvious about Jesus leads to blindness. What about those who refuse to see what God is doing through Jesus, and who opt instead for loyalty to systems and ideas (whether worldly or religious), that do not ultimately express God's restorative work in the world?

Conversely, the Pharisees concluded that Jesus was not from God, that the blind man really wasn't blind to begin with, that anyone who *did* believe in Jesus, confessing him as Messiah, should be put out of synagogue fellowship, and that both Jesus and the blind man were obviously sinners from birth. In a sense, they were running around saying, "We'll be the judge of who is healed, who is from God, and who is a sinner."

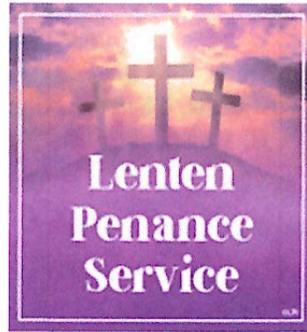
But Jesus' words at the end of the chapter push back: "if you want to be healed and to truly see things the way they really are, then believing in me is seeing!"

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world. We are blind. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Come and bring light into darkness. Heal us that we may see. And seeing may we see you Jesus, the Son of Man, and believe in you. Amen.

The Pope's Intention for March

For disarmament and peace

Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.



Parish Penance Service
March 20, 2026

Continue your Lenten preparations by attending our **Parish Penance Service on Friday, March 20, at 6:00 pm.**

Two priests will be available to hear confessions, and we will support and celebrate five children in our parish as they receive their First Reconciliation. Veronica Barker will lead a short examination of conscience at 5:30 to help youth and families prepare for the sacrament. We will have dinner together following the service; the Winn family will be doing a fish fry! Please let us know by Monday, March 16, whether you will be joining us for dinner by calling or texting Veronica at 803.262.8934!

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who art all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

Summary of the Holy Father's words*

Dear brothers and sisters, in our continuing catechesis on the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, we reflect on God's salvific work in history by choosing a people as his own. He makes a covenant with Abraham and calls his people to be a light for other nations. In this way, he foreshadows the new and perfect covenant in Jesus Christ. With his Death and Resurrection, Jesus gathers all peoples, men and women of different nationalities, languages, and cultures into his Bride, the Church. The Church is the new people of God, who are united by faith and animated by Christ's love, proclaiming the Gospel to the whole world. We, too, as members of the Church, are called to be signs of hope and to spread the message of the Father, who desires to gather to himself all his children.

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

LEO XIV
GENERAL AUDIENCE
Wednesday, 11 March 2026
Catechesis. The Documents of Vatican Council II.
II. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

Continuing in our reflection on the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, today we will look at the second chapter, dedicated to the People of God.

God, who created the world and humanity, and who wishes to save every man, carries out his work of salvation in history, choosing a real people and dwelling among them. For this reason, He calls Abraham and promises him descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand on the seashore. With Abraham's children, after freeing them from slavery, God makes a covenant with them, accompanies them, cares for them, and gathers them together whenever they stray. Therefore, the identity of these people is given by God's action and by faith in Him. They are called to become a light for other nations, like a beacon that will draw all peoples, the whole of humanity, to itself.

The Council affirms that "All these things, however, were done by way of preparation and as a figure of that new and perfect covenant, which was to be ratified in Christ, and of that fuller revelation which was to be given through the Word of God Himself made flesh". Indeed, it is Christ who, in giving His Body and His Blood, unites this people in Himself and in a definitive way. It is a people now made up of members of every nation; it is united by faith in Him, by adherence to Him, by living the same life as Him, animated by the Spirit of the Risen One. This is the Church: the people of God who draw their existence from the body of Christ and who are themselves the body of Christ; not a people like any other, but the People of God, called together by Him and made up of women and men from all the peoples of the earth. Its unifying principle is not a language, a culture, an ethnicity, but faith in Christ: The Church is therefore, according to a splendid expression of the Council, the assembly of "all those who in faith look upon Jesus".

It is a messianic people, precisely because it has Christ, the Messiah, as its head. Those who belong to it do not pride themselves on merits or titles, but only on the gift of being, in Christ and through Him, daughters and sons of God. Above any task or function, therefore, what really matters in the Church is to be grafted onto Christ, to be children of God by grace. This is also the only honorary title we should seek as Christians. We are in the Church to receive life from the Father unceasingly and to live as His children, brothers, and sisters among ourselves. Consequently, the law that animates relationships in the Church is love, as we receive and experience it in Jesus; and her goal is the Kingdom of God, towards which she walks together with all humanity.

Unified in Christ, Lord and Saviour of every man and woman, the Church can never turn inwards on herself but is open to everyone and is for everyone. If believers in Christ belong to it, the Council reminds us that "All men are called to belong to the new people of God. Wherefore this people, remaining one and unique, must extend to the whole world and to all ages, so that the intention of God's will may be fulfilled, who in the beginning created human nature as one and wants to gather his children who were scattered". Even those who have not yet received the Gospel are, therefore, in some way oriented towards the people of God and the Church, cooperating in Christ's mission, and are called upon to spread the Gospel everywhere and to everyone so that every person may come into contact with Christ. This means that in the Church there is, and there must be, a place for everyone, and that every Christian is called to proclaim the Gospel and bear witness in every environment in which he or she lives and works. Thus, these people show their catholicity by welcoming the wealth and resources of different cultures and, at the same time, offering them the newness of the Gospel to purify and raise them up.

In this regard, the Church is one but includes everyone. A great theologian described it thus: "The unique Ark of Salvation must welcome all human diversity into its vast nave. The only banquet hall, the food it distributes is drawn from all of creation. The seamless garment of Christ, it is also – and it is the same thing – the garment of Joseph, with its many colors".

It is a great sign of hope – especially in our times, traversed by so many conflicts and wars – to know that the Church is a people in which women and men of different nationalities, languages and cultures live together in faith: it is a sign placed in the very heart of humanity, a reminder and prophecy of that unity and peace to which God the Father calls all his children.