



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.

Feast of The Ascension of The Lord

May 17, 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:

Acts 1:1-11; Ps 47:2-3,6-7,8-9; Eph 1:17-23; Mt 28:16-20

Monday:

Acts 19:1-8; Ps 68:2-3ab,4-5acd,6-7ab; Jn 16:29-33

Tuesday:

Acts 20:17-27; Ps 68:10-11,20-21; Jn 17:1-11a

Wednesday:

Acts 20:28-38; Ps 68:29-30,33-35a,35bc-36ab; Jn 17:11b-19

Thursday:

Acts 22:30; 23:6-11; Ps 16:1-2a & 5,7-8,9-10,11; Jn 17:20-26

Friday:

Acts 25:13b-21; Ps 103:1-2,11-12,19-20ab; Jn 21:15-19

Saturday

Acts 28:16-20,30-31; Ps 11:4,5 & 7; Jn 21:20-25

Mass Intentions

Saturday Vigil May 16

4:00 PM - For our Parish

Sunday, May 17

8:00 AM - For our Parish

10:00 AM - Josh Czarnecki (D)

Tuesday, May 19

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Thursday - May 21

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Friday, May 22

8:15 AM - For our Parish

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|------------|--------------|
| Budget | \$3,799.00 |
| Collected | \$2,644.75 |
| Short/Over | -\$1,154.25 |
| YTD+- | +\$12,579.91 |

Second Collection

May 17 Catholic Communications Campaign

Bible Study

Bible Study Classes will not be held during the summer months of June, July and August. The last class before the summer break is Friday, May 22nd. Classes will resume on Friday, September 11th.

Tabernacle Candle

A special candle should burn continuously near the tabernacle to indicate the presence of Christ. The candle for May: Margaret & Howard Hadlock, Wedding Anniversary memorial; In honor of Cayla Beckert's 13th birthday

Ministers

| <u>May 23</u> | <u>May 24</u> | <u>May 24</u> |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| 4:00 PM Vigil | 8:00 AM | 10:00 AM |
| Linda Cooper | Perry Stanley | Anita Brown |
| Joel Southwick | Kelly Stanley | Gregg Wright |
| Joan Hesik | Betsy Kenney | Gregg Wright |

Pray for our Sick

Rosa Johnson, Ellen Heim, Rich Borst, Jeffrey Hesik, Angelo Perrino, John Burke, Krystal Ortiz, Michell Novotny, Casey Bay, Dennis HooChung, Joe Monahon, Michelle Bullington

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

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 May 16-17 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.

Sunday After Mass Social

The Sunday After Mass social is May 17, after the 10 a.m. Mass. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the back entrance to the social hall.

Baby Bottle Campaign

The Baby Bottle Campaign started on Mother's Day weekend. Take a baby bottle from the back of the church, fill it with your spare change or other donations (checks should be made payable to Life Choices), and return it on Father's Day. Your donation will help to provide the necessary support to the Life Choices Pregnancy Center.

Weekly Collection 5/9-5/10/26

Deacon Chuck's Corner

**Reflection: Hearing the Lord Pray for Us
John 17:1-11**

In today's Gospel, we find ourselves standing on holy ground as we listen to the prayer of Jesus to his Father. We hear Jesus praying for each of us! We can trust that the prayer of Jesus for each of us will be answered. We can rely on this prayer at every moment in our lives and know that we are surrounded by the protection that Jesus has prayed for.

All our life we struggle to know God, through words and parables, and through the world which he has entrusted to us. At no stage can we say that we understand God and his ways. Saint Augustine wrote: "Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore, do not seek to understand in order to believe, but believe that you may understand".

Let us strive in our human mission to seek God through every means, and to remain a God-seeker until the day when he reveals himself to us face to face.

Prayer: God, protect me and those I love. Keep me in the hollow of your hand, and draw me ever more deeply into your friendship. I pray that the Lord of the universe may be glorified in me. Amen.



The Ascension of the Lord into Heaven

The Ascension of the Lord is one of the central mysteries of the Catholic faith and, at the same time, one of the least understood. The most common confusion is to interpret it as a farewell, as if Jesus had gone away and left the world to its own devices. The Catechism of the Catholic Church corrects this precisely: the Ascension is "*the irreversible entry of Jesus' humanity into divine glory*" (CCC 659). There, he assumes a new lordship. From that moment on, he exercises his eternal priesthood before the Father and continually intercedes for humanity. And at the end of time, he will return to judge the living and the dead.

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Summary of the Holy Father's words:

In our catechesis today, we contemplate Mary, whom the final chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium recognizes as a model, perfect member, and as mother. Docile to the Father's will, her son's work of redemption, and the promptings of the Holy Spirit, Mary is the model of what the Church is meant to be. Her unconditional "yes" shows us how to be members of the Church. As our mother by grace, she is the one to whom we can turn with filial trust, in the certainty of being heard, protected, and loved. In a special way, Mary cooperated in the work of salvation, through obedience, faith, hope, and ardent charity, to restore through her Son, the supernatural life of souls. Let us be challenged by Mary's example of humility, active faith, and obedience. Let us respond generously in love, magnifying God in our hearts and receiving strength from the sacraments. Let us ask Mary to help us be faithful disciples of her Son.

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*Lord Jesus,
You who in your ascension
filled the Eleven with joy,
make us worthy of that same joy
through your prayer and your mercy.*

*Lord Jesus,
You who in your ascension
bore our fragile humanity into heaven
and opened for us the way that leads to Heaven,
fill us with the joy of serenity and peace.*

*Lord Jesus,
You who by ascending into heaven
clothed us with the gift of the Holy Spirit,
make us your witnesses in our daily lives
telling of the joy of your Mercy.*

LEO XIV

Wednesday, 13 May 2026

Catechesis. The Documents of the Second Vatican Council. II.

II. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium*.

9. The Virgin Mary, model of the Church

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

The Second Vatican Council chose to dedicate the last chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church to the Virgin Mary. She “is hailed as a pre-eminent and singular member of the Church, and as its type and excellent example in faith and charity”. These words invite us to understand how, in Mary, who, under the action of the Holy Spirit, welcomed and brought forth the Son of God made flesh, we can recognize both the *model* and the pre-eminent *member* and *mother* of the entire ecclesial community.

By allowing Herself to be shaped by the work of Grace, which came to fulfillment in Her, and by welcoming the gift of the Most High with Her faith and Her virginal love, Mary is the perfect *model* of what the whole Church is called to be: a creature of the Word of the Lord and mother of the children of God, begotten in docility to the action of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, as she is the believer *par excellence*, in whom we are offered the perfect form of unconditional openness to the divine mystery within the communion of God’s holy people, Mary is an *excellent* member of the ecclesial community. Finally, inasmuch as she brings forth children in the Son, loved in the eternal Beloved who came among us, Mary is the mother of the whole Church, which can turn to her with filial confidence, in the certainty of being heard, protected, and loved.

One might express the sum of these characteristics of the Virgin Mary by referring to her as a *woman who is the icon of the Mystery*. The word *woman* highlights the historical reality of this young daughter of Israel, to whom it was granted to live the extraordinary experience of becoming the mother of the Messiah. The expression *icon* emphasizes that, in Her, the twofold movement of descent and ascent is fulfilled: in Her, both God’s gratuitous election and Her free consent of faith in Him shine forth. Mary is the woman who is the icon of the Mystery, that is, of the divine plan of salvation, once hidden and now revealed in its fullness in Jesus Christ.

The Council has left us clear teaching on the unique place reserved to the Virgin Mary in the work of Redemption. It recalls that the sole Mediator of salvation is Jesus Christ, and that his Mother Most Holy “in no way impedes, but rather fosters the immediate union of the faithful with Christ. At the same time, “predestined from eternity by that decree of divine providence which determined the incarnation of the Word to be the Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin in this singular way cooperated by Her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the work of the Savior in giving back supernatural life to souls. She is our mother in the order of grace”.

The mystery of the Church is also reflected in the Virgin Mary: in Her, the people of God find the representation of their origin, their model, and their homeland. In the Mother of the Lord, the Church contemplates her own mystery, not only because she finds in Her the model of virginal faith, maternal charity, and the spousal covenant to which she is called, but also and above all because in Her she recognizes her own archetype, the ideal figure of what she is called to be.

As we can see, the reflections on the Virgin Mother collected in *Lumen gentium* teach us to love the Church and to serve within her the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God, which is coming and will be fully realized in glory. Let us allow ourselves to be questioned by the sublime model given to us by Mary, Virgin and Mother, and let us ask Her to help us, through Her intercession, to respond to what is asked of us through Her example: do I live my participation in the Church with humble and active faith? Do I recognize in her the community of the covenant that God has given me to respond to His infinite love? Do I feel that I am a living part of the Church, in obedience to the pastors whom God has given? Do I look to Mary as a model, an outstanding member and Mother of the Church, and ask Her to help me be a faithful disciple of her Son?

May the Holy Spirit, who descended upon Mary and is invoked by us humbly and trustfully, grant us the grace to live these wonderful realities to the full. And, having reflected deeply on the Constitution *Lumen gentium*, let us ask the Virgin to obtain this gift for us: that love for the Holy Mother Church may grow in all of us. So be it!