



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 Second Sunday in Ordinary time *January 18, 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:

Isa 49:3,5-6; Ps 40:2,4,7-8,8-9,10; 1 Cor 1:1-3; Jn 1:29-34

Monday:

1 Sm 15:16-23; Ps 50:8-9,16bc-17,21 & 23; Mk 2:18-22

Tuesday:

1 Sm 16:1-13; Ps 89:20-21,22,27-28; Mk 2:23-28

Wednesday: St. Agnes, Virgin & Martyr

1 Sm 17:32-33,37,40-51; Ps 114:1b,2,9-10; Mk 3:1-6

Thursday: Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

1 Sm 18: 6-9; 19:1-7; Ps 56:2-3,9-10a,10b-11,12-13; Mk 3:7-12

Friday:

1 Sm 24:3-21; Ps 57:2,3-4,6 & 11; Mk 3:13-19

Saturday: St. Francis de Sales, Bishop & Doctor of the Church

2 Sm 1:1-4,11-12,19,21-27; Ps 80:2-3,5-7; Mk 3:20-21

Mass Intentions

Saturday, January 17

4:00 PM - For our Parish

Sunday, January 18

8:00 AM - Brian Karahalios

10:00 AM - For our Parish

Tuesday, January 20

8:15 AM - Mr & Mrs DiStefano &

Mr & Mrs Carlos Gonzalez

Thursday, January 22

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Friday, January 23

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Ministers

<u>January 24</u>	<u>January 25</u>	<u>January 25</u>
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Joel Southwick	Denise Gelinas	Youth
Cindy McHale	Kelly Stanley	Jackie Brown
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, Nancy Gardzina, 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 1/10-1/11/26

Budget	\$3,799.00
Collected	\$2,727.00
Short/Over	-\$1,072.00
YTD+-	+\$2,351.66

Second Collection

January 25 - Church in Latin America

Bible Study

Classes are held on Fridays at 10:00 AM in the church hall. 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 and honor it. If you would like to donate in honor or memory of a loved one, please call the church office. The donation is \$25. The candle for January: Lisa Solenberger birthday.

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 January 17-18 is Peanut Butter.

Monthly After Mass Social

The Monthly After Mass Social is the first Saturday of the month after the 4:00 p.m. Mass. If you would like to host a social, contact the office: 803-649-3203. The hosts for February 7 are the Holder and Rose families.

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.

Welcome to St. Gerard Catholic Church

We welcome all who are visiting. If you attend regularly and consider St. Gerard Church your parish, we encourage you to register as a member. You can fill out a registration form, located in the back of the church, and return the form to the parish office. If you have any questions, please contact the office: 803-649-3203.

Deacon Chuck's Corner

Reflection on Jesus, Lamb of God - John 1:29-34

Today's gospel presents a profound declaration by John the Baptist, identifying Jesus as the "Lamb of God" who takes away the sin of the world. This title holds deep meaning in the Christian faith, as it symbolizes Jesus' sacrificial role in the redemption of humankind. John is pointing to Jesus as the ultimate atonement for sin by calling Him the Lamb of God, drawing a parallel to the sacrificial lambs in the Old Testament that were offered for the forgiveness of sins. This title emphasizes Jesus' mission to offer himself as a perfect sacrifice to save humanity from sin and reconcile them with God.

This passage invites us to consider the profound implications of Jesus' identity as the Son of God and the ultimate sacrificial Lamb of God.

- How does this declaration shape our understanding of Jesus' divinity and sacrificial role in our salvation?
- What does it mean for us to accept Jesus as the Son of God and the Lamb of God in our own lives?

John's affirmation that Jesus is God's Chosen One further solidifies Jesus' messianic role and mission. As the Chosen One, Jesus embodies the fulfillment of prophecies, including Isaiah 53:7, where the suffering servant is likened to a lamb led to slaughter. This connection underscores Jesus' sacrificial purpose and his willingness to bear the sins of the world.

The relevance of this passage extends to us today, offering hope and redemption through Jesus, the Lamb of God. The concept of Jesus' sacrificial atonement provides assurance of forgiveness and reconciliation with God. Additionally, the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit serve as a source of strength and transformation in our lives as believers, enabling us to live out our faith boldly and authentically. Just as individuals in biblical times experienced radical change through encountering Jesus, we too can undergo a profound spiritual transformation that shapes our identity and purpose.

May we embrace the message of redemption, walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, and boldly testify to the world of the life-changing grace found in Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Amen.

St. Agnes of Rome Feast Day: January 21

St. Agnes of Rome was born in 291 AD and raised in a Christian family. Agnes was very beautiful and belonged to a wealthy family. Her hand in marriage was highly sought after, and she had many high-ranking men chasing after her. However, Agnes made a promise to God never to stain her purity. Her love for the Lord was great and she hated sin even more than death!



Her high-ranking suitors, slighted by her resolute devotion to religious purity, sought to persecute her for her beliefs. In one incident, Procop, the Governor's son, became very angry when she refused him. In great anger, Procop accused her of being a Christian and brought her to his father. The Governor promised Agnes wonderful gifts if she would deny God, but Agnes refused. He tried to change her mind by putting her in chains, but her lovely face shone with joy.

Next, he sent her to a place of sin, but an Angel protected her. At last, she was condemned to death. Even the pagans cried to see such a young and beautiful girl going to death. Yet, Agnes was as happy as a bride on her wedding day. She did not pay attention to those who begged her to save herself. "I would offend my Spouse," she said. Then she prayed and bowed her head for the death stroke of the sword.

A few days after her death, her foster sister, Emerentiana, was found praying by the tomb. Emerentiana claimed to be the daughter of Agnes's wet nurse. She was stoned to death after refusing to leave the place and reprimanding the people for killing her foster sister. Emerentiana was also later canonized.

Agnes of Rome is one of several virgin martyrs commemorated by name in the Canon of the Mass, and one of many Christians martyred during the reign of the Roman emperor Diocletian.

She died a virgin martyr at the age of 12 or 13 on 21 January 304.

LEO XIV
GENERAL AUDIENCE
Wednesday, 14 January 2026
Catechesis. The Documents of Vatican Council II. I. Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*.
1. God speaks to men as to friends (Reading: Jn 15:15)

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

We have started the cycle of catechesis on Vatican Council II. Today, we will begin to look more closely at the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*, on the divine Revelation. It is one of the most beautiful and important of the Council and, to introduce it, it may be helpful to recall the words of Jesus: “No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you”. This is a fundamental point of Christian faith, which *Dei Verbum* reminds us of: Jesus Christ radically transforms man’s relationship with God, which is henceforth a relationship of friendship. Therefore, the only condition of the new covenant is love.

Saint Augustine, commenting on this passage of the Fourth Gospel, insists on the perspective of grace, which alone can make us friends of God in his Son. Indeed, an ancient motto stated: “*Amicitia aut pares invenit, aut facit,*” “friendship is born between equals, or makes them so.” We are not equal to God, but God himself makes us like Him in His Son.

For this reason, as we can see in all the Scripture, in the Covenant there is a first moment of distance, in which the pact between God and mankind always remains asymmetrical: God is God, and we are creatures. However, with the coming of the Son in human flesh, the Covenant opens to its final purpose: in Jesus, God makes us sons and daughters, and calls us to become like Him, albeit in our fragile humanity. Our resemblance to God, then, is not reached through transgression and sin, as the serpent suggests to Eve, but in our relationship with the Son made man.

The words of the Lord Jesus that we have recalled – “I have called you friends” – are reprised in the Constitution *Dei Verbum*, which affirms: “Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends and lives among them, so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself.” The God of *Genesis* already conversed with our first parents, engaging in dialogue with them; and when this dialogue was interrupted by sin, the Creator did not cease to seek an encounter with his creatures and to establish a covenant with them. In the Christian Revelation, that is, when God became man in his Son in order to seek us out, the dialogue that had been interrupted is restored in a definitive manner: the Covenant is new and eternal, nothing can separate us from his love. The Revelation of God, then, has a dialogical nature like friendship and, as in the experience of human friendship, does not tolerate silence but is nurtured by the exchange of true words.

The Constitution *Dei Verbum* also reminds us of this: God speaks to us. It is important to recognize the difference between words and chatter: this latter stops at the surface and does not achieve communion between people, whereas in authentic relationships, the word serves not only to exchange information and news, but to reveal who we are. The word possesses a revelatory dimension that creates a relationship with the other. In this way, by speaking to us, God reveals himself to us as an Ally who invites us into friendship with Him.

From this perspective, the first attitude to cultivate is listening, so that the divine Word may penetrate our minds and our hearts; at the same time, we are required to speak with God, not to communicate to him what He already knows, but to reveal ourselves to ourselves.

Hence the need for prayer, in which we are called to live and to cultivate friendship with the Lord. This is achieved first in liturgical and community prayer, in which we do not decide what to hear from the Word of God; it is He Himself who speaks to us through the Church. It is then achieved in personal prayer, which takes place in the interiority of the heart and mind. Time dedicated to prayer, meditation, and reflection cannot be lacking in the Christian’s day and week. Only when we speak *with* God can we also speak *about* Him.

Our experience tells us that friendships can end through a dramatic gesture of rupture or through a series of daily acts of neglect that erode the relationship until it is lost. If Jesus calls us to be friends, let us not ignore this call. Let us welcome it, let us take care of this relationship, and we will discover that friendship with God is our salvation.

