



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.

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time *August 17, 2025*

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:

Jer 38:4-6,8-10; Ps 40:2,3,4,18; Heb 12:1-4; Lk 12:49-53

Monday:

Jud 2:11-19; Ps 106:34-35,36-37,39-40,43ab &44; Mt 19:16-22

Tuesday:

Jud 6:11-24a, Ps 85:9,11-12,13-14; Mt 19:23-30

Wednesday: St Bernaede, Abbot & Doctor of the Church

Jud 9:6-15; Ps 27:2-3,4-5,6-7; Mt 20:1-16

Thursday: St Pius X, Pope

Jud 11:29-39a; Ps 40:5,7-8a,8b-9,10; Mt 22:1-14

Friday: The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Ruth 1:1,3-6,14b-16,22; Ps 146:5-6ab, 6c-7,8-9a,9bc-10; Mt 22:34-40

Saturday:

Ruth 2:1-3,8-11;4:13-17; Ps 128:1b-2,3,4,5; Mt 23:1-12

Mass Intentions

Saturday, August 16

4:00 PM - Gerry DeMeo

Sunday, August 17

8:00 AM - For our Parish

10:00 AM - Jean Schodowski (L)

Tuesday, August 19 - For our Parish

Thursday, August 21 - Kris Heath, Birthday

Friday, August 22 - For our Parish

Ministers

<u>August 23</u>	<u>August 24</u>	<u>August 24</u>
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Diane Begic	Peter Srednicki	Chioma Nwoga
Joe Begic	Jack Kline	Wayman Johnson
Joan Hesik	Betsy Kenney	

Pray for our sick

Rosa Johnson, Paula Thurston, Ellen Heim, Rich Borst, Betty Hyslop, Jeffrey Hesik, Angelo Perrino, John Burke, Krystal Ortiz, Mary Rose, Michell Novotny, Nancy Gardzina, Jean Schodowski, Joan Lacombe, Casey Bay

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

There are no Bible Study classes during the summer months. Classes will resume on September 5.

Weekly Collection 8/9-8/10/25

Budget	\$3,162.00
Collected	\$3,561.00
Short/Over	+\$399.00
YTD+-	+\$2,561.15

Tabernacle Candle

A special candle should be kept alight near the tabernacle to indicate and honor the presence of Christ. If you would like to make a donation in honor or in memory of a loved one, please call the Parish Office. The donation is \$25. The candle offering is for one month. The August candle is for the birthdays of Connor James Brady (7 yrs.), George Heim, and Kristine Heath.

Monthly After Mass Social

The Monthly After Mass Social is the first Saturday of the month after the 4:00 p.m. Mass. The hosts for September 6 are the Beckert and Welsh families. If you would like to host a social, contact the office: 803-649-3203.

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 August 16-17 is: Muffin Mixes.

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.

Faith, Fun & Fellowship

The St Clare of Assisi Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order gathers together on the third Monday of each month at 6:30 PM at St Michael Hall, 138 Fairfield St., Aiken. Following in the footsteps of Francis; The Gospel of Life and Lite to the Gospel: For information contact Tony, Email Doctony.47@gmail.com

Finance Council Meeting

5:00 PM Wednesday, August 20

Liturgy Committee Meeting

10:00 AM Friday, August 22

Deacon Chuck;s Corner

Reflection: Divine Heart of Jesus - Luke 12:49-53

Being divisive is not something that sits comfortably with us when we think about the Reign of God or Christianity - even to ponder divisions in Christianity is sad. Think of your life at this moment in time - where do you find that your values or faith cause others to feel uncomfortable or may even bring division?

It is not that Jesus came to bring division, but his message – some would accept it, and others would reject it. Jesus was passionate about his mission. He knew it would mean his death, which made him show an even greater sense of urgency. Fire is the image Jesus uses to speak of this great desire in his heart.

Our mission as Christians needs to mirror Jesus' mission, bringing fire on earth. Jesus came to baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Being baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire is to live caring deeply for yourself, for others, and for the world God created. In the 17th century, Jean Pierre Médaille, a Jesuit spiritual director, advised people, *"Never go ahead of grace by an imprudent eagerness, but quietly await its movements, and when it comes to you, go along with it with great gentleness, fidelity, and courage"*.

Some things to ponder:

- Are we claiming his baptism of fire for ourselves?
- Are we living our lives finding brave and creative ways to embody that caring, which is a spark lit from the blazing fire of God's all-consuming love?
- Do we believe that the business of a Christian is everywhere and always to increase one's fire and let it give light to everyone we meet?
- Are we letting the fire and the light of God's presence fill us with unquenchable love of life and passionate desire to serve God with joy?

Prayer: I ask for the grace to have more clarity about what God is calling me to do, and to do it for Jesus, with passion and energy. I especially pray for my family and friends that Jesus can be for us the source of unity rather than division. Amen.

St. Pius X

Feast day: August 21

Pope Pius X, born Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto on June 2, 1835, was head of the Catholic Church from 4 August 1903 until his death in August 1914. Pius X is known for vigorously opposing modernist interpretations of Catholic doctrine and for promoting liturgical reforms and Thomist scholastic theology.

Pius X was known for his firm demeanor and sense of personal poverty, reflected by his membership in the Third Order of Saint Francis. He regularly gave



sermons from the pulpit, a rare practice at the time. After the 1908 Messina earthquake, he filled the Apostolic Palace with refugees, long before the Italian government acted. He rejected any favors for his family, and his close relatives chose to remain in poverty, living near Rome. He was well known for reducing papal ceremonies. He also abolished the custom of the Pope dining alone, since the time of Pope Urban VIII, and invited

his friends to eat with him.

Pope Pius X also lowered the age for young people to first receive the Eucharist and fought against "modernism," a theological teaching that he viewed as heresy and atheism. He preached forcefully against war and violence and had visions that a war would break out in 1914, killing many innocent people, which turned out to accurately describe World War I. He did not live to see the long-term effects of the war, but his prophecies live on. Pope Pius X supported immigrants from Europe who fled to North and South America. He created many new dioceses and appointed new bishops in the Americas.

In the last year of his life, he granted many private audiences to the poor and sick. Rumors of miraculous cures began to spread throughout Rome after people visited him. Two religious sisters who were cured through his prayers confirmed the healings after his death and endorsed his canonization to sainthood. Pope Pius X died on August 20, 1914. He was beatified in 1951 and canonized in 1954 by Pope Pius XII.

LEO XIV
GENERAL AUDIENCE
Wednesday, 13 August 2025

Cycle of Catechesis – Jubilee 2025. Jesus Christ our Hope. III. The Passover of Jesus.
2. The betrayal. “Surely it is not I?” (Mk 14,19)

Dear brothers and sisters,

Let us continue our journey with Jesus in the final days of his life. We will pause at an intimate, dramatic, scene: the moment at which, during the Passover supper, Jesus reveals that one of the Twelve is about to betray him: “Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me” (Mk 14:18).

Strong words. Jesus does not utter them to condemn, but to show how love, when it is true, cannot do without the truth. The room fills with a painful silence, made up of questions, suspicions, and vulnerability. How Jesus speaks about what is about to happen is surprising. He does not raise his voice, nor point his finger, nor utter the name of Judas. He speaks in a way that each one can ask himself the question. Saint Mark tells us: “They began to be distressed and to say to him, one by one, ‘Surely it is not I?’

This question – “Surely it is not I?” – is perhaps among the sincerest that we can ask ourselves. It is not the question of the innocent, but of the disciple who discovers himself to be fragile. It is not the cry of the guilty, but the whisper of him who, while wanting to love, is aware of being able to harm. It is in this awareness that the journey of salvation begins.

Jesus does not denounce to humiliate. He tells the truth because he wants to save. And to be saved, it is necessary to feel: to feel that one is involved, to feel that one is beloved despite everything, to feel that evil is real, but it does not have the last word. Only those who have known the truth of a deep love can accept the wound of betrayal. The disciples’ reaction is not anger, but sadness. They are not indignant, they are sorrowful. It is a pain that arises from the possibility of being involved. And this sorrow, if welcomed with sincerity, becomes a place for conversion. The Gospel does not teach us to deny evil, but to recognize it as a painful opportunity for rebirth.

Jesus then adds a phrase that troubles us and makes us think. “But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born.” They are harsh words, but they must be understood well: it is not a curse, but rather a cry of pain. In Greek, that “woe” sounds like a lamentation, an “alas,” an exclamation of sincere and deep compassion.

We are used to judging. Instead, God accepts suffering. When he sees evil, he does not avenge it, but grieves. And that “better if he had never been born” is not a condemnation, but a truth that any of us can recognize: if we deny the love that has generated us, if by betraying we become unfaithful to ourselves, then we truly lose the meaning of our coming into the world, and we exclude ourselves from salvation.

And yet, at the darkest point, the light is not extinguished. On the contrary, it starts to shine. If we recognize our limit, if we let ourselves be touched by the pain of Christ, then we can be born again. Faith does not spare us from the possibility of sin, but it always offers us a way out of it: that of mercy.

Our fragility does not scandalize Jesus. He knows that no friendship is immune from the risk of betrayal. But Jesus continues to trust. He continues to sit at the table with his followers. He does not give up breaking bread, even for those who will betray him. This is the silent power of God: he never abandons the table of love, even when he knows he will be left alone.

Dear brothers and sisters, we too can ask ourselves today, with sincerity: “Surely it is not I?” Not to feel accused, but to open a space for truth in our hearts. Salvation begins here: with the awareness that we may be the ones who break our trust in God, but that we can also be the ones who gather it, protect it, and renew it. This is hope: knowing that even if we fail, God will never fail us. Even if we betray him, he never stops loving us. And if we allow ourselves to be touched by this love – humble, wounded, but always faithful – then we can truly be reborn. And we can begin to live no longer as traitors, but as children who are always loved.