



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 First Sunday of Advent *November 30, 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:

Isa 2:1-5; Ps 122:1-2,3-4,4-5,6-7,8-9; Rom 13:11-14; Mt 24:37-44

Monday

Isa 4:2-6; Ps 122:1-2,3-4b,4cd-5,6-7,8-9; Mt 8:5-11

Tuesday:

Isa 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2,7-8,12-13,17; Lk 10:21-24

Wednesday: St. Francis Xavier, Priest

Isa 25:6-10a; Ps 23:1-3a,3b-4,5,6; Mt 15:29-37

Thursday:

Isa 26:1-6; Ps 118:1 & 8-9,19-21,25-27a; Mt 7:21,24-27

Friday:

Isa 29:17-24; Ps 27:1,4,13-14; Mt 9:27-31

Saturday:

Isa 30:19-21,23-26; Ps 147:1-2,3-4,5-6; Mt 9:35-10:1,5a,6-8

Mass Intentions

Saturday, November 29

4:00 PM - Alice Dorthalina (D)

Sunday, November 30

8:00 AM - For our Parish

10:00 AM - James & Gloria Wright (D)

Tuesday, December 2

8:15 AM - Jennifer Hewitt & Felipe Gaitan

Thursday December 4

8:15 AM - Souls in Purgatory

Friday, December 5

8:15 AM - Souls in Purgatory

Benediction & Divine Chaplet of Mercy following Mass

Ministers

<u>December 6</u>	<u>December 7</u>	<u>December 7</u>
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Linda Cooper	Denise Gelinas	Pat Hayes
Cindy McHale	Betsy Kenney	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, Joan Lacombe, 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

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.

Flower Memorials

Christmas Flower Memorials \$25
Please submit NLT December 21st

Weekly Collection 11/22-11/23/25

Budget	\$3,799.00
Collected	\$2,789.00
Short/Over	-\$1,010.00
YTD+-	-\$6,282.84

Second Collection December 14

Retirement Fund for Religious

Bible Study

Acts of the Apostles study and discussion will begin on Friday, December 5th. If you've been wanting to visit our Bible Study or do something extra for Advent, this is a great opportunity. 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 be kept alight near the tabernacle to indicate and honor the presence of Christ. 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 December is in memory of Margaret Hadlock, Jeanne N Cooper, and George Heim.

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 host for December 6th is Kari Dawson-Ekeland.

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.

Our Lady of the Valley Food Pantry

Our collection for the OLV food pantry for Thanksgiving week was 1,064 lbs. Thanks to the generosity of our parishioners. Thank you to the youth of St. Gerard for loading and unloading the truck and several cars.

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Pope's Intention for December

For Christians in areas of conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

Deacon Chuck's Corner

Reflection: Christ's Second Coming Matthew 24:37-44

The liturgical season of Advent is an annual reminder of the importance of faithfully doing what Jesus taught. Advent calls us to remember our state of watchfulness. It reminds us that we are the people of God living in what many theologians call the "now and not yet." The "now" of Christ's decisive victory and defeat of death. The "not yet" of the final collapse of evil and sin. We remember that Christ has come. Now we keep watch for that day when Christ will come again.

In the season of Advent, we anticipate the arrival of the Messiah on two levels. First, we seek to place ourselves in the historical shoes of Israel as they waited for centuries for the arrival of the Messiah. On the second level, we anticipate Christ's Second Coming and his emphasis on the importance of staying vigilant and faithful amid trials and tribulations. In the midst of Jesus' teachings on the end times and His second coming, He draws a striking parallel between the days of Noah and the days leading up to His return. Just as people were going about their daily routines before the flood came unexpectedly, so too will His return catch many unaware. Today's reading reinforces the idea that the community must "be ready" to continue doing what Jesus taught, by living and witnessing as Jesus instructed. His message serves as a poignant reminder of the normalcy and routine that can lull us into spiritual complacency.

When Christ returns to earth as the Son of Man, the King, He will bring judgment with Him. Even though the signs of His coming will be evident to anyone who is paying attention, apparently, few will be looking. We need a sense of urgency, even if these prophesied events don't begin to happen in our lifetime, we should strive to make the most of the time He has given us to be vigilant in our Christian lives and always be in a state of readiness for His inevitable arrival.

May we keep watch in this season of Advent and remember that the God Who brings justice is the same God Who Saves. May we embrace this message with sincerity and commitment, remaining watchful, prepared, and eagerly anticipating the glorious return of our Savior.

What Is the Advent Wreath?

The Advent wreath is a circular garland of evergreen branches representing eternity. On that wreath, four candles are typically arranged. Each candle represents an aspect of the spiritual preparation for the coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Prophecy Candle

On the first Sunday of Advent, the first purple candle is lit. This candle is typically called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, primarily Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ: Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14) This first candle represents hope or expectation in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

Bethlehem Candle

On the second Sunday of Advent, the second purple candle is lit. This candle typically represents love. Some traditions call this the "Bethlehem Candle," symbolizing Christ's manger: "This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:12, NIV)

Shepherds Candle

On the third Sunday of Advent, the pink, or rose-colored candle, is lit. This pink candle is customarily called the "Shepherds' Candle," and it represents joy: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. (Luke 2:8-11, NIV)

Angels Candle

The fourth and last purple candle, often called the "Angel's Candle," represents peace and is lit on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:13-14, NIV)

LEO XIV
GENERAL AUDIENCE
Wednesday, 26 November 2025
Catechesis Cycle – Jubilee 2025: Jesus Christ Our Hope.
IV. The Resurrection of Christ and the Challenges of today's world.
6. *Hoping in life in order to beget life.*

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

The Pasch of Christ illuminates the mystery of life and allows us to look at it with hope. This is not always easy or obvious. Many lives, in every part of the world, appear laborious, painful, filled with problems and obstacles to be overcome. Yet human beings receive life as a gift: they do not ask for it, they do not choose it, they experience it in its mystery from the first to the last day. Life has its own extraordinary specificity: it is offered to us, we cannot give it to ourselves, but it must be constantly nurtured: it needs care to maintain, energize, protect, and revive it.

Indeed, living invokes meaning, direction, and hope. Hope acts as the deep-seated drive that keeps us walking in difficulty, that prevents us from giving up in the fatigue of the journey, that makes us sure that the pilgrimage of existence will lead us home. Without hope, life risks appearing to be a parenthesis between two eternal nights, a brief pause between the before and the after of our journey on earth. To hope in life means instead to anticipate the destination, to believe as certain what we still cannot see or touch, to trust and to entrust ourselves to the love of a Father who created us because he wanted us with love, and wants us to be happy.

Dear friends, there is a widespread sickness in the world: the lack of confidence in life. It is as if we have resigned ourselves to a negative, fatalistic renunciation. Life risks no longer represent a gift but an unknown, almost a threat, from which to protect ourselves so as not to end up disappointed. For this reason, the courage to live and to generate life, to bear witness that God is the quintessential “*lover of life*”, as the *Book of Wisdom* (11:26) affirms, is today a more urgent call than ever.

In the Gospel, Jesus constantly confirms his concern for healing the sick, restoring wounded bodies and spirits, and giving life back to the dead. By doing so, the incarnate Son reveals the Father: he restores dignity to sinners, grants the forgiveness of sins, and includes everyone, especially the desperate, the excluded, those who are far from his promise of salvation.

Begotten by the Father, Christ is life and has generated life without reserve, to the point of giving his own, and he invites us too to give our lives. To generate means to bring someone else to life. The universe of the living has expanded via this law, which in the symphony of creatures experiences a wonderful “*crescendo*” culminating in the duet of man and woman: God created them in his own image and entrusted them with the mission of generating in his image, that is, for love and in love.

From the beginning, Sacred Scripture reveals to us that life, precisely in its highest form, the human form, receives the gift of freedom and becomes a tragedy. In this way, human relationships are also marked by contradiction, even to the point of fratricide. Cain perceives his brother Abel as a rival, a threat, and in his frustration, he feels unable to love him and respect him. Here we see jealousy, envy, and bloodshed (*Gen 4:1-16*). God’s logic, instead, is completely different. God always stays faithful to his plan of love and life; he does not tire of supporting humanity even when, following in Cain’s footsteps, it obeys the blind instinct of violence in war, discrimination, racism, and the many forms of slavery.

To generate, then, means to trust in the God of life and to promote humanity in all its expressions: first and foremost, in the wonderful adventure of motherhood and fatherhood, even in social contexts in which families struggle to bear the burden of daily life, and are often held back in their plans and dreams. According to this same logic, to generate is to be committed to an economy based on solidarity, striving for a common good equally enjoyed by all, respecting and caring for creation, offering comfort through listening, presence, and concrete and selfless help.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the strength that supports us in this challenge, even when the darkness of evil obscures the heart and the mind. When life seems to have been extinguished, obstructed, the Risen Lord still passes by, until the end of time, and walks with us and for us. He is our hope.