



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.

Divine Mercy Sunday

April 12, 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 2:42-47; Ps 118:2-4,13-15,22-24; 1 Ptr 1:3-9; Jn 20:19-31

Monday:

Acts 4:23-31; Ps 2:1-3,4-7a,7b-9; Jn 3:1-8

Tuesday:

Acts 4:32-37; Ps 93:1ab,1cd-2,5; Jn 3:7b-15

Wednesday:

Acts 5:17-26; Ps 34:2-3,4-5,6-7,8-9; Jn 3:16-21

Thursday:

Acts 5:27-33; Ps 34:2 & 9, 17-18,19-20; Jn 3:31-36

Friday:

Acts 5:34-42; Ps 27:1,4,13-14; Jn 6:1-15

Saturday

Acts 6:1-7; Ps 119:23-24,26-27,29-30; Jn 6:22-29

Mass Intentions

Saturday Vigil April 11

8:00 PM - For our Parish

Sunday, April 12

8:00 AM - Betty Hyslop (D)

10:00 AM - For our Parish

Tuesday, April 14

8:15 AM - Felipe & Jennifer Hewitt-Gaitan (L)

Thursday, April 16

8:15 AM - Souls in Purgatory

Friday, April 17

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Saturday, April 18

11:00 AM - Paula Thurston Funeral Mass

Ministers

<u>April 18</u>	<u>April 19</u>	<u>April 19</u>
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Joel Southwick	Peter Srednicki	Youth
Cindy McHale	Jack Kline	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

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 4/4-4/5/26

Budget	\$3,799.00
Collected	N/A
Short/Over	
YTD+-	

Second Collection

April 26 - Catholic Home Mission Appeal

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

The candle for April: Viola E Beckert, Jimmy Cooper, & Edith M. Cassidy, birthday memorials, George Heim, Eddie Lopez

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 April 18-19 is Granola Bars.

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.

Monthly After Mass Social

The Monthly After Mass Social is the first Saturday of the month after the 4:00 p.m. Mass. The host for April 11th is The Coopers. If you would like to host a social, contact the office:803-649-3203.

Sunday After Mass Social

The Sunday After Mass social is April 19, after the 10 a.m. Mass. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the back entrance to the social hall.

Annual Garden Cleanup

Thanks to the volunteers and those who contributed financially for making this year's cleanup a great success. With all the able volunteers, we completed our goals in just over two hours! A very big thank you to all from the Garden Committee: Jackie, Kari, and Chuck

Deacon Chuck's Corner

A Reflection on the Doubting Disciple

John 20: 19-31

In today's Gospel, we hear the story of Thomas, not unlike many of us today, finding faith is hard. Thomas was an ordinary person, caught up in his own fears and doubts. He was let down by the others who ran away, the leader denied Jesus, his trust in the group of apostles had been abused. He wanted to believe but needed some sort of proof.

Perhaps we all carry something of Thomas' DNA? Here we are shown the transforming impact which his personal encounter with Jesus has on him.

Thomas places his hands in the wounds of Jesus, and the experience draws from him the first ringing affirmation of Christ's divinity: "My Lord and my God!" Pope Francis says: 'I invite all Christians to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them. I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day.'

Are the doors of my heart locked? Am I afraid that my well-ordered ways of thinking and doing things might be turned upside down if I let Jesus in?

Here we are shown twice how Jesus breaks into the lives of his friends. Can he break in on me? Or am I hesitant like Thomas?

Prayer: Lord - you see what is in my heart. Help me listen for your voice and know your presence. Jesus, soften my unyielding heart and break down my defenses, and come in. I lay aside my demands to receive what it is you offer to me. Lord, remind us that we are all important to the plans of God and the world will be better if we carry out His mission. Amen.

Divine Mercy Prayer

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion — inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.

History of Divine Mercy Sunday

The story of Divine Mercy Sunday is thousands of years old. However, the day was officially recognized in 2000, when Pope John Paul II declared the Sunday after Easter "Divine Mercy Sunday." The significance of the day is attributed to St. Faustina Kowalska, a Polish nun who received visions from Christ himself. Born in 1905, she served her parish well and communed with Jesus on several occasions, during which he told her that he wished to be "a refuge and a shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners."

Divine Mercy Sunday is a feast designated for those who feel unworthy of God's love and Jesus's acceptance. In a vision, he told St. Faustina, "I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who



approach the fount of My mercy." Divine Mercy Sunday has been a source of reconciliation through faith and God's mercy. It provides a specific day when people can humble themselves

before God and ask for his mercy, love, and forgiveness, which he grants to all who are willing to ask. It is also about forgiveness and mercy, how Jesus offered his to us, and how we should act in kind throughout our lives.

Summary of the Holy Father's words:

In today's catechesis on the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, we turn our attention to the universal call to holiness. Every baptized person is called to be holy: to live in God's grace, to practice virtue and to become like Christ. At its heart is love for both God and neighbor, and its greatest expression is martyrdom, the supreme witness of faith and charity. For this reason, the Church teaches that believers should be ready to confess Christ to the point of shedding blood. However, the interior transformation that conforms us to Christ is not possible without the aid of the Sacraments, most especially the Eucharist. In this regard, I would like to make mention of those men and women who consecrate their lives to God through the evangelical counsels: poverty, chastity and obedience which express their complete trust in God's providence, modeled on Christ's gift of himself to the Father with a pure heart. By their lives, consecrated persons radically witness to the fullness of life in Christ, even to the cross.

LEO XIV

Wednesday, 8 April 2026

Catechesis. The Documents of Vatican Council II.

II. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium*

7. *Holiness and evangelical counsels in the Church*

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

The Constitution of the Second Vatican Council, *Lumen gentium* on the Church, dedicates an entire chapter, the fifth, to the universal vocation to holiness of all the faithful: every one of us is called to live in the grace of God, practicing the virtues and imitating Christ. Holiness, according to the Conciliar Constitution, is not a privilege for the few, but a gift that requires every baptized person to strive for the perfection of charity, that is, the fullness of love towards God and towards one's neighbor. Charity is, in fact, the heart of the holiness to which all believers are called: infused by the Father, through the Son Jesus, this virtue "rules over all the means of attaining holiness and gives life to these same means". The highest level of holiness, as in the early days of the Church, is martyrdom, the "supreme witness of faith and charity": for this reason, the Council text teaches that every believer must be ready to confess Christ even unto blood, as has always been the case and continues to be so today. This readiness to bear witness is realized every time Christians leave signs of faith and love in society and commit themselves to justice.

All the Sacraments, and in a pre-eminent way the Eucharist, are nourishment that fosters a holy life, assimilating every person to Christ, the model and measure of holiness. He sanctifies the Church, of which He is the Head and Shepherd: holiness is, from this point of view, His gift, which is manifested in our daily life every time we receive it with joy and respond to it with commitment. In this regard, Saint Paul VI, in the General Audience of 20 October 1965, recalled that the Church, to be authentic, requires that all the baptized must "be holy, that is, truly worthy, strong and faithful children of hers". This is realized as an inner transformation, whereby the life of every person is conformed to Christ by virtue of the Holy Spirit.

Lumen gentium describes the holiness of the Catholic Church as one of her constitutive characteristics, to receive in faith, inasmuch as she is believed to be "indefectibly holy": this does not mean that she is so in a full and perfect sense, but that she is called to confirm this divine gift during her pilgrimage towards the eternal destination, walking "amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God". The sad reality of sin in the Church, that is, in all of us, invites each person to carry out a serious change of life, entrusting ourselves to the Lord, who renews us in charity. It is precisely this infinite grace, which sanctifies the Church, that entrusts us with a mission to fulfill day after day: that of our conversion. Therefore, holiness is not merely a practical matter, as if it were reducible to an ethical commitment, however great, but concerns the very essence of Christian life, both personal and communal.

From this perspective, consecrated life plays a decisive role, which the Conciliar Constitution addresses in the sixth chapter. In the holy People of God, it constitutes a prophetic sign of the new world, experienced here and now in history. Indeed, signs of the Kingdom of God, already present in the mystery of the Church, are those evangelical counsels that shape every experience of consecrated life: poverty, chastity, and obedience. These three virtues are not rules that shackle freedom, but liberating gifts of the Holy Spirit, through which some of the faithful are wholly consecrated to God. Poverty expresses complete trust in Providence, freeing one from calculation and self-interest; obedience takes as its model the self-giving that Christ offered to the Father, freeing one from suspicion and domination; chastity is the gift of a heart that is whole and pure in love, at the service of God and the Church.

By conforming to this style of life, consecrated persons bear witness to the universal vocation of holiness of the entire Church, in the form of radical discipleship. The evangelical counsels manifest full participation in the life of Christ, unto the Cross: it is precisely by the sacrifice of the Crucified One that we are all redeemed and sanctified! By contemplating this event, we know that there is no human experience that God does not redeem: even suffering, lived in union with the passion of the Lord, becomes a path of holiness. The grace that converts and transforms life thus strengthens us in every trial, pointing us not towards a distant ideal, but towards the encounter with God, who became man out of love. May the Virgin Mary, the all-holy Mother of the Incarnate Word, always sustain and protect our journey.