



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 Twenty Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time October 18, 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

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:

Eze 47: 1-2, 8-9, 12; Ps 122: 1-2, 3-4, 8-9; Eph 2: 19-22; Mat 16: 13-19

Monday: Sts. John de Brebeuf & Isaac Jogues, Priests & Companions, Martyrs

Eph 2:1-10; Ps 100:1b-2,3,4ab, 4c-5; Lk 12:13-21

Tuesday:

Eph 2:12-22; Ps 85:9ab-10,11-12,13-14; Lk 12:35-38

Wednesday:

Eph 3:2-12; Ps 122:2-3,4bcd, 5-6; Lk 12:39-48

Thursday:

Eph 3:14-21; Ps 33:1-2,4-5,11-12,18-19; Lk 12:49-53

Friday:

Eph 4:1-6; Ps 24:1-2,3-4ab,5-6; Lk 12:54-59

Saturday:

Eph 4:7-16; Ps 122:1-2,3-4ab,4cd-5; Lk 13:1-9

Mass Intentions

Saturday Vigil October 17

4:00 PM - For our Parish

Sunday, October 18

10:00 AM - **80th Anniversary Mass**

Tuesday, October 20

8:15 Mass - For our Parish

Thursday - October 22

8:15 AM - Warren Wilson (D)

Friday, October 23

8:15 AM - For our Parish

	Ministers	
October 24	October 25	October 25
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Joel Southwick	Peter Srednicki	Erin Kramer
Cindy McHale	Jack Kline	Gregg Wright
Joan Hesik	Betsy Kenney	Gregg Wright

Pray for our Sick

Rosa Johnson, Rich Borst, John Burke, Krystal Ortiz, Michell Novotny, Casey Bay, Jeff Hesik, Dennis HooChung, Joe Monahan, Michelle Bullington, Janet Menefee, Joan Lacombe

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 10/10-10/11/26

Budget	\$4,325.00
Collected	\$5,175.00
Short/Over	+\$850.00
YTD+-	-\$3,695.19

Second Collection

October 18 - World Mission Sunday

Tabernacle Candle

In accordance with tradition, a special lamp fueled by oil or wax should be kept alight near the tabernacle to indicate and honor the presence of Christ. The candle for October Nowell Solenberger 4th 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 October 17-18 is Cold Cereal. The pantry is also in need of canned chicken and canned tuna.

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 hosts for November 7th are the Beckerts and Welshes. If you would like to host a social, contact the parish office: 803-649-3203.

Priest Retreat

Father will be on retreat from Monday, October 26, through Friday, October 30. **There will be NO morning Mass that week and NO Bible Study on Friday.**

Bible Study

Bible Study classes are held on Fridays at 10:00 AM in the church hall. If you can't attend in person, you can participate by teleconference. The phone number is 1-978-990-5273, and the Access Code is 236101#. **There is NO Bible Study on Friday, October 30.**

Celebrating 80 Years

Again we gather in the garden
In our Cathedral of the Great Outdoors.
This time to celebrate 80 years of service to the Lord
Under the guidance of our patron Saint Gerard.

From a tiny seed planted
by a Franciscan Friar 80 years ago,
The seed grew and blossomed into this
Vibrant Community of Faith
Where ALL ARE WELCOME
People from the local area and many
Who moved here from far away
(Places from Way Up North—Michigan, New York,
Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New Jersey)
Who joined us in worship
Bringing their customs with them.

We grew together in prayer and in faith.
Music has always been a vital part of our worship,
Everyone is encouraged to join us in song
For when we sing, we pray twice.

We offer our thanksgiving for 80 fruitful years
Here under a bright blue azure sky.
Ours not to worry about how, or when, or why
For ours is the NOW—the fruit of those dedicated
souls
Who worked to establish this little church.

Now is the time for Psalm 91
“The heavens declare the glory of God
And all creation is shouting for JOY!”
Here we are in Thanksgiving
For those forward-looking Pioneers in the faith.

Here we see the growth of those first steps
To create this parish—and so
How Can We Keep From Singing?
Thank you, Lord!
We are One prayer, One family

Joan M. Lacombe
Aiken's Poet Laureate
October 18, 2026

St. John Paul II Feast day: October 22

Pope John Paul II (born **Karol Józef Wojtyła** on May 18, 1920) was head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of the Vatican City State from October 1978 until his death in 2005. He was the first non-Italian pope since Adrian VI in the 16th century and the third-longest-serving pope in history, after Pius IX and St. Peter.



In his youth, Wojtyła dabbled in stage acting. He graduated from an all-boys high school in Wadowice, Poland, in 1938. In 1942, aware of his call to the priesthood, he began courses in the clandestine seminary of Krakow, run by Cardinal Adam Stefan Sapieha, archbishop of Krakow. Eventually, Wojtyła rose to the position of Archbishop of Kraków and then a cardinal.

Wojtyła was elected pope on the third day of the October 1978 conclave, becoming one of the youngest popes in history. The conclave was called after the death of John Paul I, who served only 33 days as pope. Wojtyła adopted the name of his predecessor in tribute to him.

John Paul II attempted to improve the catholic Church's relations with Judaism, Islam, and the Eastern Orthodox Church in the spirit of ecumenism, holding atheism as the greatest threat. He maintained the Church's previous positions on such matters as abortion, artificial contraception, the ordination of women, and a celibate clergy. Although he supported the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, he was seen as generally conservative in their interpretation. He emphasized family and identity, while questioning consumerism, hedonism, and the pursuit of wealth. He was one of the most-traveled world leaders in history, visiting 129 countries during his pontificate.

John Paul II died on April 2, 2005, and was succeeded by Benedict XVI. On December 19, 2009, he was proclaimed venerable by Benedict XVI, and on May 1, 2011 (Divine Mercy Sunday), he was beatified. On April 27, 2014, John Paul II was canonized by Francis, alongside John XXIII.

THE FOUNDING OF ST. GERARD'S

This is how St. Gerard Parish started. In 1942 Bishop Emmet Walsh of Charleston visited the Provincial Superior of the Redemptorist Fathers in Brooklyn, N. Y. and expressed a need for a priest to work for the Black community in Aiken, S.C. Father Eugene Helldorfer was then officially assigned to the Redemptorist community in Orangeburg with a special assignment to serve as assistant pastor to Msgr. George Lewis Smith at St. Mary's Parish in Aiken and to engage in the Black apostolate. An abandoned theater across the street from the First Baptist Church on York St. was purchased by the Redemptorist Fathers as the site of their new mission endeavor and named after the holy, miracle-working Redemptorist lay brother, St. Gerard Majella who, because of a healing he worked during a difficult delivery, is invoked as the patron saint of expectant mothers.

Early in 1943, Fr. John Kappel replaced Fr. Helldorfer. In addition to his ministry of evangelization and outreach in the Black community, Fr. Kappel also served foreign soldiers in five German prisoner-of-war camps. Still officially stationed in Orangeburg, he lived in the old theater building in Aiken. A completely new second floor was constructed and this served as a church. This was done so that plans could be made to use the first floor as a school. After Fr. Kappel instructed and received the first converts into the Church, Oblate Sisters of Providence began making the 56-mile trip every week from Orangeburg to teach religion to thirty children.

In 1945, Fr. Kappel suffered a severe heart attack. The superior of the Orangeburg community filled in until Fr. Joseph Gredler was assigned to continue Fr. Kappel's work in Aiken. Fr. Gredler was appointed to the care of St. Gerard's in March of 1946 and in time purchased a house for a rectory on York St. and Barnwell Ave. During the renovations, however, Fr. Gredler lived in the theater as had Fr. Kappel. The work in Aiken officially ended as an out-mission of Orangeburg on November 15, 1946.

In the summers of 1948 and 1949, Fr. Gredler scheduled the Redemptorist trailer-chapel to visit Aiken and the outlying communities. Fr. Gredler and Fr. De Fazio assisted four other priests in their evening programs and instructions. In September of 1949 three Oblate Sisters of Providence opened St. Gerard's School in the old theater building on York Street across the street from First Baptist Church.

In 1950, a year after three Oblate Sisters of Providence opened St. Gerard's School on York Street, Fr. Gredler was replaced by Fr. Joseph Himighaus as superior of the Redemptorist community and Fr. Thomas Egan replaced Fr. Golden. The Fathers began helping out at Fort Gordon in Augusta, which came as a welcome apostolate for souls, as well as a much-needed source of income for the Sunday collections at St. Gerard's, at that time, averaged but a few dollars. The Fathers also served as regular chaplains for the Sisters at St. Angela Academy and for the Sisters of Christian Doctrine in Horse Creek Valley.

In the summer of 1952, the Dominican Fathers' motor-chapel conducted an outdoor mission in Aiken. Fr. Patrick Walsh, O.P. was assisted by Frs. Hemighaus and De Fazio along with three diocesan seminarians. Although at this time there were only 70 Black Catholics in Aiken, the nightly attendance averaged about 500. Later in the summer, Fr. Hemighaus and Fr. De Fazio taught a Summer Bible School for 55 children.

During 1954 and 1955, school enrollment and Mass attendance increased at St. Gerard's. However, since the number of communicants seemed to be remaining static at 45, it was felt that the total number of Catholics in Aiken did not warrant the services of five priests, there being also three at St. Mary's. The Redemptorist superiors delayed almost three years, though, before reaching a decision to withdraw from the work in Aiken and entrust their little congregation to the care of the Fathers at St. Mary's only two blocks away. So, after seventeen years of loving, evangelizing and pasturing their little flock, the Redemptorist Father left Aiken on August 28, 1959. Oblate Sisters of Providence (Baltimore, MD) continued to run the school.