



## The Pruning Process

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**T**he common myth is that we receive a new body every seven years as cells die and are replaced. However, stomach cells are renewed every two days or so because of acids and enzymes. Skin cells are replaced every two to three weeks. Bone cells last about ten years, and our brain cells stay with us for our entire lives. In a sense, then, we might say that our bodies are pruned, part of us remaining long-term to nurture and sustain like the trunk of a tree, and part of us severed so that life may be renewed and continue on.

If so with our bodies, are not our spirits also pruned? There is a core part of who we are that wends its way throughout our lives. Yet that “who” has rough edges in need of being smoothed; barbs need to be dulled; and certain inclinations simply need to be severed. Spouses tend to prune one another, the grace of a loving marriage. Children sometimes keep parents honest. Life events may grind down our independence and self-sufficiency. Illnesses, aging, job loss, the death of loved ones—all forcing us to recognize that we are not in control of life. We are thus pruned, forced to surrender much of what we once thought we could control.

Where is God in all of this? If God is woven into the warp and woof of all life, then all the events and rhythms of life can draw us closer to God, pruning us into goodness and fruitfulness. ●

### Reflect

***How have you been pruned and has this pruning led to new growth, new life?***



[Jesus said,] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.

JOHN 15:1–2

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

905 Chestnut Street, Douglassville, PA 19518 [www.icbvm.org](http://www.icbvm.org) [secretary@icbvm.org](mailto:secretary@icbvm.org) [ccd@icbvm.org](mailto:ccd@icbvm.org)

Rev. Msgr. John B. McCann .....Pastor  
 Deacon Paul J. Hiryak, Deacon James A. Bardi  
 Parish Office .....610 582-2411  
 Parish Religious Education/CCD ....610 582-3880  
 Parish Preschool .....610 404-8645  
 Parish Website.....[www.icbvm.org](http://www.icbvm.org)

Immaculate Conception Academy.....610 404-8645.....[www.icaberks.org](http://www.icaberks.org)  
 Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator: Wendy S. Krisak, M.A. NC, LPC, 800-791-9209  
 Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator: Pamela Russo, MSW, MS, 610-871-5200, Ext 2204  
 Diocese of Allentown website.....[www.allentowndiocese.org](http://www.allentowndiocese.org)  
 Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service: If you have an allegation of abuse against a bishop,  
 please contact the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service at [www.ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org) or  
 by calling 800-276-1562

## **FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – APRIL 28, 2024**

***The Sanctuary Lamp Burns in Memory of Sister Daniel Marie Liddy, IHM***

### **★★MASS INTENTIONS★★**

<b>SAT</b>	<b>5:15 PM</b>	<b>Leonard Kulikosky</b>	<b>THUR</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>The Kubovcsak Family</b>
<b>SUN</b>	<b>7:30 AM</b>	<b>Rev Francis Straka, Rev Stephen Wetzel &amp; Rev. William Campbell</b>	<b>FRI</b>	<b>7:30 AM</b>	<b>Dorothy Lange</b>
	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>Frances Bambrick</b>	<b>SAT</b>	<b>5:15PM</b>	<b>John Hughes</b>
	<b>11:00AM</b>	<b>Our Living &amp; Deceased Parishioners</b>	<b>SUN</b>	<b>7:30AM</b>	<b>Jake Maccarone</b>
<b>MON</b>	<b>7:30AM</b>	<b>No Mass</b>		<b>9:00AM</b>	<b>Roger Wolf</b>
<b>TUES</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Doris Murtagh</b>		<b>11:00AM</b>	<b>Our Living &amp; Deceased Parishioners</b>
<b>WED</b>	<b>7:30 AM</b>	<b>Deceased Members of the Harbach Family</b>			

**The Second Collection Next Week is the Church Building & Parish Maintenance Collection**

**WE LOVE HAVING YOU AS  
a part of our  
Flock!**



Keep in touch with us via email and text!



**TEXT  
ICBVM  
TO 84576**



or connect with us online at

[immaculateconceptionbvmc.flocknote.com](http://immaculateconceptionbvmc.flocknote.com)

Text STOP to 84576 to stop text notifications at any time. Text HELP for help. There is no charge for this service, but your carrier message and data rates may apply. View full privacy policy & terms at [flocknote.com/txt](http://flocknote.com/txt).

**Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish:** Madge Butto, Deb Petras, Pat Fessler, Rita Ferry, Sunny Motta, Curt Miller, Loretta Hitchens, Dante Stefina, Barbara Ruby, Kara Morrison, Arlene Shirley, George Ruby, Harriet Yeager, Marjorie Hansen, Jason Leman, Ann Washko, Geri Barth, Dominic Strock, Anthony Scaglione, Aaron Gulla, Maryanne Emery, Pam Amos, Miriam Leman, Marianne Sutton, John Mingione, Henry J. Wade, Lois Muldowney, Terry Swisher, Arlene Schaeffer, Shelly Weiler, Joe Nowotarski, Steven Blanyar, Jennifer Gazda Gruber, Adele Nieckoski, Shawn Kaeser, Catherine Mueller, Regina Marie Brown, Ralph Rapposelli, Joe Dantas, Debbie Watson Simcock, Judy Jones, Wanda Palmieri, Msgr. Nevin Klinger, Barbara Wright, Charlotte Glacken, Beppy McGee, David Mollura, Mary Louise Myers, Mary Ann Uivary, Michael Bobb, John Kusznir, Joseph Ondo, Rose White, Karl Husbands, Magdalene Babiarz, Dante LaScala, Michael Gulla, Alex Lopacki, Angelina Swisher, Geraldine Christ, Rachel DiFrancesco, Millie Mattassa, Bill Pribanick & Rosemary Williamson.

**Our parish church is open each day of the week from 8am to 3pm for private prayer and visits to the Blessed Sacrament.**

**Each Sunday, the 11am Mass is live-streamed on our Facebook page for those who are sick and homebound. Access the live-streaming Mass from our parish website at**

[www.icbvm.org](http://www.icbvm.org)



OUR PARISH OFFICE IS OPEN WEDNESDAY,  
THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, 11AM-3PM. IF YOU CALL  
THE PARISH OFFICE AND NO ONE ANSWERS YOUR  
CALL, PLEASE LEAVE A DETAILED MESSAGE AND YOUR  
CALL WILL BE RETURNED 610-582-2411

**Daily Mass Schedule: Please be advised  
that there will be no daily Mass on  
Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your  
kind understanding in this regard.**

The Women's Society is sponsoring a  
raffle, \$1500 in cash prizes. Tickets are \$5  
each or 5 for \$20. The drawing will be held  
on Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. The Women's Society  
thanks all the bakers, as well as all those who  
supported us by purchasing our baked goods,  
last weekend. It was a great success with  
profits going directly to the church

The ICC Men's Group, Esto Vir, will meet in the  
meeting room in the lower level of the office bldg.  
on Saturday May 4th at 8:30 am. The presentation  
will be the 12<sup>th</sup> in a series of 12 from the St Paul  
Center for Biblical Theology on the Bible from  
Genesis the Jesus. Coffee and donuts will be  
available starting at 8 am. The meeting will start at  
8:30 am and will end at 10 am.

Our parish **GRIEF SHARING GROUP** is here to help  
you through those times of loss—trying to cope with  
the death of a loved one. The next meeting will be  
Tuesday, May 7, 7-8pm. If planning to attend just  
call/text Toni at 610 404-1389.

**Immediate Help Needed at John Paul II  
Center**

**for Special Learning, Shillington**

Substitute Nurse The John Paul II Center for Special  
Learning is in immediate need of a substitute nurse  
to assist with school related responsibilities and to  
administer daily medications. This is a part time  
position three to four days per week from 9 to  
2:30. Looking for an immediate start date and  
continue through June 6, 2024. LPN or RN with time,  
dates and salary negotiable

Direct Support Professionals The John Paul II Center  
for Special Learning is looking for individuals to join  
our staff as Direct Support Professionals for the  
Center's Adult Program. This is a perfect job for  
retired teachers, empty nesters and recent graduates  
looking for a vocation to serve the Lord through  
service to others. Hours are 8:00 to 3:00, Monday  
Through Friday, year round.

Speech and Language Therapist  
needed for 2024-2025 school year. John Paul II is  
looking to hire a full or part time Speech Language  
Therapist to provide speech/language therapy for our  
school age students with Intellectual  
Disabilities. Perfect opportunity for retired SLP,  
recent graduates or an SLP looking for a fresh start in  
a small, family oriented, caring, Christian  
community. For more info or to request an interview  
call 610-777-0605

Parish  Giving.

**SIGN UP FOR ELECTRONIC GIVING**

Through Parish Giving, you are able to make  
your Sunday Offering, along with special  
diocesan and other contributions online!

*Thank you for your commitment to our parish  
family and its Mission to proclaim the good news  
of the Gospel!*

Won't you join us? It's easy, safe and secure. And  
YOU have control over your online account. How?

- † You determine a monthly or weekly withdrawal
  - † Use your Credit/Debit card or your checking account
  - † See your year-to-date contributions at any time
  - † Best of all, you don't have to worry about missing a  
Sunday Collection even if you are away for any reason!
- Go to [www.icbvm.org](http://www.icbvm.org) and click the Parish Giving  
link on the lower left-hand side of the home page.  
*Your generosity to Immaculate Conception is greatly appreciated!*

Join us for 18 holes of fundraising fun,  
with all proceeds going  
to support Immaculate Conception Academy!

When: **June 24**

Golf Scramble starts at 9am

Dinner Starts at 5pm

Where: French Creek Golf Club  
4500 Conestoga Rd, Elverson, PA 19520

For more info contact

[debra.petras@icaknights.org](mailto:debra.petras@icaknights.org)

**MARRIED COUPLES**

When's the last time you gave your marriage a  
tune-up? Keep your engines running by getting  
away together on a Worldwide Marriage  
Encounter Weekend! The next in-person  
experiences are July 12-14 at Our Lady of  
Czestochowa, Doylestown. For more information  
visit: <https://www.wvme-philly.org>

Join the St. Raymond Nonnatus Foundation for a  
half-day retreat at the Daylesford Abbey in Paoli,  
for a special retreat for Catholics wounded by  
divorce/separation. Sat, June 15, 2024,

<https://www.nonnatus.org/divorce-retreat.html>

Questions: email [director.srnf@gmail.com](mailto:director.srnf@gmail.com)

**Thursday, May 2, 2024 at Noon**

**Event:** Commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Beatification of Padre Pio & the Opening of  
Our Lady of Grace Chapel and Padre Pio  
Spirituality Centre. The day includes recitation of  
the Rosary, the celebration of Mass with Bishop  
Keith Chylinski, veneration of the relic glove of  
Padre Pio. Location: National Centre for Padre  
Pio - 111 Barto Road - Barto, PA More  
Information: Contact: [angela@padrepio.org](mailto:angela@padrepio.org)

# Dear Padre,

**Several months ago my son died in a tragic car accident. Life, work, family, and even religion seem so meaningless now. How can I find my way back?**



You have suffered a great loss. When you are able, you can choose to live in a way that will respect both your son's memory and your own ongoing life. Here are a few gentle steps that might help.

- Expect to feel numb at first. This is nature's way of helping you deal with your loss. Keep following the normal patterns of your life and, eventually, meaning will return.
- Allow your friends to help. "Sorrows shared are sorrows lessened."
- If you are sad, let the tears come! Even Jesus cried at the death of his friend Lazarus (John 11:32-35).
- If you are angry, look for a healthy release. Focus the energy of your anger into productive work, even if it's just doing dishes or yard work.
- Use your experience to help others. While helping others, the Lord often reveals to us the meaning of our own losses.
- Don't be afraid to seek professional help. A therapist has the expertise to help you talk about your loss and cope with your grief.
- Pray for yourself, for your son, for all whose lives he touched, for all those who are grieving.
- After you have done everything you can, leave your loss in God's hands. The Lord will do for you what you cannot do for yourself. ●

**The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org**

<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>SUNDAY</b>
April 29	April 30	May 1	May 2	May 3	May 4	May 5
<i>St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church</i>	<i>Easter Weekday</i>	<i>Easter Weekday</i>	<i>St. Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church</i>	<i>Sts. Philip and James, Apostles</i>	<i>Easter Weekday</i>	<i>Sixth Sunday of Easter</i>
Acts 14:5-18 Jn 14:21-26	Acts 14:19-28 Jn 14:27-31a	Acts 15:1-6 Jn 15:1-8	Acts 15:7-21 Jn 15:9-11	1 Cor 15:1-8 Jn 14:6-14	Acts 16:1-10 Jn 15:18-21	Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48 1 Jn 4:7-10 Jn 15:9-17



## **A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS**

**Jesus needs us, like the vine with the branches. Perhaps to say this may seem bold to us, and so let us ask ourselves: in what sense does Jesus need us? He needs our witness. The fruit that as branches we must bear, is the witness of our lives as Christians.**

**REGINA CAELI, ROME, MAY 2, 2021**

# Spring Raffle 2024

Sponsored by the Immaculate Conception Women's Society

## Cash Prizes

1 <sup>st</sup> Prize	\$500
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	\$350
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	\$250
4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Prize	\$100
6 <sup>th</sup> – 9 <sup>th</sup> Prize	\$50

Why not take a chance?

**\$5.00 each or 5 for \$20**

Cash or checks made out to ICC Women's Society

Tickets will be available in the narthex (Saturday & Sunday), in the church office (Wednesday – Friday during regular business hours), or by contacting Gina Maicher @ 610-223-5088.

Drawing to be held on Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Good Luck!

Winners need not be present to be eligible.  
Thank you for supporting our fundraising efforts.  
100% of the proceeds go back to our church.

**The ICC Women's Society**  
**will be sponsoring a**  
**Spring Garden Geranium Sale**  
**4" pot for \$5**



All orders **must** be in NO later than May 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Pick up will be in the **Social Hall** on **Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**between 9AM - 12 noon.**

Please return the below order form with your payment (made out to ICC Women's Society) in an envelope marked Women's Society in the **collection basket** or give it to any member of the **Women's Society**.

Any questions call Gina Maicher at (610) 223-5088

Cut here

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**Name:**

**Phone:**

We will be offering the following colors (please check all that apply with the quantity of each:

#\_\_\_\_\_ RED

#\_\_\_\_\_ PINK

#\_\_\_\_\_ White