

REFLECTIONS FROM FATHER CLARK

FREDERICK DOUGLASS AND THE FOURTH OF JULY

On July 5, 1852, Frederick Douglass, the great American abolitionist and orator, gave a keynote address at an Independence Day ceremony in Rochester, New York. The name of the speech was, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" Douglass gave a brutally honest reflection on the meaning of the holiday to enslaved men and women. He praised the ideals of the Founding Fathers and their commitment to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But he condemned their hypocrisy for not seeing the contradiction between the ideals and the reality of slavery in the United States. He said, "What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer: a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim."

Douglass acknowledged the Founding Fathers for their bravery but noted a stark divide between the free and the enslaved. He told his audience, "This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice; I must mourn." He condemned the nation's religious and political celebrations, calling them "sham" and "hollow mockery" in the face of the brutal realities of human bondage. Unlike some abolitionists who rejected the U.S. Constitution entirely, Douglass famously argued that, when interpreted correctly, it was a "glorious, liberty document."

Douglass stressed that Whites and Blacks share the same human nature. The enslaved who were fighting for their freedom were no different than the White founding fathers who fought for independence from England so that they could be free. If people honestly believed that Black were equal, then they should treat them as such. He criticized the internal slave trade in the United States. The international slave trade had been abolished and everyone agreed that it was barbaric, but they ignore the inhumanity of the buying and selling of slaves in their own country. He spared no words on the Christian churches who were complacent and silent in the face of slavery as well as some who profited by the buying and selling of slaves. He called upon churches to oppose slavery and to rediscover the true teachings of the Bible.

Nonetheless, Douglass did not give up hope for the abolition of slavery. He believed that the days of slavery were numbered and that a change was coming. He concluded, "Allow me to say, in conclusion, notwithstanding the dark picture I have this day presented, of the state of the nation, I do not despair of this country. There are forces in operation, which must inevitably, work the downfall of slavery. "The arm of the Lord is not shortened," and the doom of slavery is certain...God speed the year of jubilee The wide world o'er!

If you would like to listen to Douglass' speech, read by Mr. James Earl Jones, you will find it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZDcB1NhMfo> or google: Frederick Douglass Fourth of July Speech read by James Earl Jones.

Anyone who gives one of my most humble followers
a cup of cool water, just because that person is
my follower, will surely be rewarded.

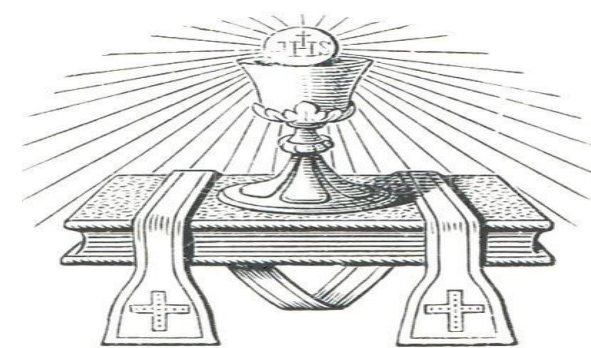


Matthew 10:42

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ~ June 28, 2026

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
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*Immaculate Conception Church is a Black Catholic Church
serving the family of God and feeding the soul of the Community.*

PASTOR: Father Thomas F. Clark, S.J.(225) 775-7067/(225) 773-2036
IN RESIDENCE: Father Fred Kammer, S.J.(504) 343-9195
SECRETARY: Renae Welsh/John Edwards.....(225) 775-7067
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION:
• COORDINATOR: Gloria DeRouen(225) 936-8162
• ASSISTANT TO COORDINATOR: Stephanie Yearby(214) 881-5663
OCIA COORDINATOR: Cathy Glover(225) 772-6099
MLK/SU CATHOLIC STUDENT CENTER:
• Joyce Johnson - Wilfred Johnson(225) 775-8691



Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 PM
Sunday Mass: 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM

Weekday Masses: MLK Chapel
12:10 PM
Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs., Fri.



INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY ON JULY 3

The Independence Day holiday will be observed on Friday, July 3. The parish office will be closed. However, Mass will be celebrated at the MLK Chapel at 12:10 PM. We wish everyone a safe and restful July 4th weekend.

WELCOME TO GUESTS FROM THE DESCENDANTS’ FOUNDATION

We welcome to the 8:00 AM Mass Monique Tresclair Maddox, the President and CEO of the Descendants’ Truth and Reconciliation Foundation, Fr. Jim Kesicki, SJ, and descendant scholars, and Jesuit scholastics participating in a Dialogue on Race. You will see some familiar faces, Scott McKillup, Jose Lopez, Cory Jackson, and Jack McLinden.

FATHER CLARK WILL BE AWAY IN JULY

Father Clark will be away from July 1-20 for vacation and retreat. While he is gone, Father Juan Ruiz, SJ and Father Sean Toole, SJ, will be filling in for him, celebrating the Masses, and available for all pastoral needs.

KPC/KPCLA SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

The Knights of Peter Claver Knights and Ladies Auxiliary, Council and Court invite you to support the School Supply Drive benefiting Crestworth Elementary School, Progress Elementary School, and Baton Rouge Alternative School. Donations may be made before or after Mass in the church foyer by cash, check, or Cash App (\$jedwards820) through Sunday, July 5. Thank you for your generosity and for helping our students start the school year prepared for success!

THANK YOU TO JERRELL WORTHY AND WORTHY’S BARBER SHOP



In addition to all who made our Father’s Day Breakfast, a special shout out to Jerrell Worthy for offering free haircuts. That was a very generous and considerate act of service. Thank you for providing this service.



TYLER	WELSH	7/1
DAYATRA	LAPHAND	7/1
COURTNEY	URBINA	7/1
DERRICK	BARNES	7/2
ROBINSON	JONES	7/2
STEPHEN	EASTON	7/2
AARON	MARTIN	7/2
DESIREE	CHAMBERS	7/3
SHERMAN	DUGAS, SR.	7/3
IMELDA	GOINS	7/3
GEOFFREY	GRIFFIN	7/3
TERRADYS	BONNEY	7/4
JUNE	DURIO	7/4
KERMIT	PATTY	7/5
JUANITA	PAUL	7/5



BEWARE OF EMAIL AND TEXTING SCAMS

There is a new scam via email that everyone needs to watch out for. You may receive an email with a fake party invitation disguised as Evite, Punchbowl, or Google Calendar link. When you attempt to open the invitation, you are diverted to a fake log in page designed to mimic Gmail. When you enter your credentials, scammers can access your password.

Do not open any suspicious emails or texts. Do not agree to buy any gift cards no matter who it is asking you. A red flag is pressure to act quickly, share personal information, send money, or grant access to your devices or accounts. Ask yourself would a family member, a friend, or a pastor really make this kind of request? Talk with the trusted person in person or on phone by a number or email that you usually use to communicate with them. Do not use a link or a phone number contained in the suspect email or text.

**Weekly Mass Readings
June 28th– July 5th**

Sunday
Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
2 Kings 4: 8-11, 14-16a
Romans 6: 3-4, 8-11
Matthew 10: 37-42

Monday
Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles
Acts 12: 1-11
2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 17-18
Matthew 16: 13-19

Tuesday
Amos 3: 1-8; 4: 11-12
Matthew 8: 23-27

Wednesday
Amos 5: 14-15, 21-24
Matthew 8: 28-34

Thursday
Amos 7: 10-17
Matthew 9: 1-8

Friday
Feast of Saint Thomas, Apostle
Ephesians 2: 19-22
John 20: 24-29

Saturday
Amos 9: 11-15
Matthew 9:14-17

Sunday
Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Zechariah 9: 9-10
Romans 8: 9, 11-13
Matthew 11: 25-30