

# REFLECTIONS FROM FATHER CLARK

## HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

The Supreme Court decision, Louisiana v. Callais, bears resemblance to the events concerning members of congress at the end of Reconstruction and the beginning of the era of Jim Crow. Black men were elected to Congress beginning in 1870, almost immediately after the abolition of slavery. Hiram Revels of Mississippi was the first Black Senator in 1870, and Joseph Rainey (South Carolina) was the first Black Representative to be seated in 1870. However, in 1868, John Willis Menard of Louisiana was elected to the US House in a special election that was contested by the white man whom he beat by a large margin. The entire House of Representative considered his case. In the process, he became the first African American to address the House. The House voted to deny him his seat. Representative and future President Garfield is said to have stated that it was too early for an African American to be seated in Congress. Pinckney Benton Stewart (P. B. S.) Pinchback was elected to the Senate in 1873 but was denied his seat due to political maneuvering and racial animosity. He later served for a brief time as the acting governor of Louisiana. Representatives from Louisiana who actually served were Charles E. Nash (1875-1877) and Samuel Peters (1872). The refusal to let duly elected officials take office is the same as the current case of Calvin Duncan, who was falsely incarcerated for thirty years in prison, and is blocked from serving as Orleans Parish criminal court clerk. The governor says it is to modernize the office, but others charge that it is racially motivated.

A notable accomplishment of the Black members of Congress was the passing of a Civil Rights Act in 1875 which would prohibit discrimination based on race in hotels, theaters, and railway cars. A Black South Carolina Congressman Robert Brown Elliot debated the leader of the bill's opponents, Georgia Congressman Alexander Stephens, who had been the Vice President of the Confederacy. The bill passed and was signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant. The bill was struck down as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court by 1877. Sound familiar?

At the end of Reconstruction in 1877, the number of Black members of Congress went from 16 Black men during the 1870s to no Black representatives by 1901. The reason for this was violent white supremacist campaigns, laws disenfranchising black voters, and the removal of federal troops by 1901. In the presidential election of 1876, no candidate received the required electoral votes. A deal was struck with Southern Democrats to back Republican Rutherford B. Hayes in exchange for federal troops to withdraw from the South. Without the protection of federal troops Black voting rights were stripped away and Black representation in Congress ended until Oscar De Priest of Illinois was elected in 1929.

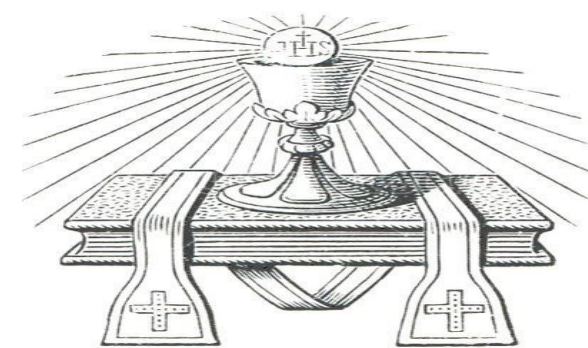
If we do not learn history lessons, we are doomed to repeat them. Although some would ignore history so that they can repeat it with impunity. Just as slavery was followed by the Reconstruction, so the age of segregation was followed by the gains of the Civil Rights Movement. Just as Reconstruction was followed by the repression of Jim Crow, now the Trump era is attempting to dismantle the gains of the 1960s and 70s and restrict the voting rights and representation of African Americans.



## Sixth Sunday of Easter ~ May 10, 2026

*Immaculate Conception Catholic Church*  
1565 Curtis Street - Baton Rouge, LA 70807  
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Web Site Address: www.immaculateconceptionbr.org  
*Immaculate Conception Church is a Black Catholic Church*  
*servicing 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  
**RCIA 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**



**Weekly Announcements**

**HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!**



We wish all our mothers and those who have been like a mother a happy Mother's Day and families. We thank you for your selflessness, sacrificial love, and your continual service to your children. May God bless you with good health, peace of mind, freedom of worry, and joy and satisfaction with the work you have done. May we show our appreciation not only on Mother's Day but every day.

**MOTHER'S DAY BREAKFAST BETWEEN THE MASSES**

The Knights of Peter Claver will honor our mothers by serving breakfast for everyone in the Parish Activity Center between the 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Masses. All are invited to join us as we celebrate and honor our mothers on this special occasion.

**THANK YOU FOR THE FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATION**

Thank you to all who made our celebration of First Holy Communion so beautiful on Saturday morning, May 9. Our deep appreciation to Gloria DeRouen and Stephanie Yearby for their preparations for the celebration. Thank you to our catechists Cholanda Thomas, Belva Robertson, and Linda Ross. Thank you to our Beautification Committee, music ministry, liturgical ministries, and hospitality volunteers who made the celebration so special. Thanks to the parents and families of our First Communicants who helped prepare them for this important day.

**BE SURE TO VOTE ON SAINT GEORGE SCHOOL DISTRICT ON SATURDAY MAY 16th**

This Election Day is crucial. If you have not already voted, be sure to vote on May 16. We need an historic voter turnout to demonstrate the voter power of the community. The vote on the establishment of an independent school district in Saint George is especially important because of its impact on EBR schools. Remember, for it to pass, it must have the approval of the state AND East Baton Rouge Parish. This is a closed primary which means that you must vote on a Democratic or Republican ballot according to your party affiliation. If you are independent, you must choose a ballot. The recommendation is that you vote for the entire ballot including the votes for congress.

**PARISH COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES MEETING ON TUESDAY MAY 19th**

There will be a meeting of the Parish Council of Ministries on **May 19** at 6:30 PM in the Parish Activity Center. The minutes of the last meeting and the agenda for this meeting will be sent out as the date approaches. Chairpersons of parish ministries and organization are asked to make this meeting a priority.

**AARP Smart Driver Course**

The AARP Smart Driver Course will be held on **Saturday, May 23** at 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Church Activity Center. The cost is \$20.00 for AARP members and \$25.00 for non-members. Payment may be made by cash or check at the door. For more information, please contact **Ms. Bea Leonard at 225-355-5027.**

**Scholarship Opportunity**

The Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary, Wilfred B. Ricard Court 116, will provide Education Assistance Awards to **two (2) female students of the Catholic faith that attend Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. Deadline is May 15. Contact Lady Dunbar at (225)266-3354.**



LATARA	DEHON	5/10
KELLY	EAGLIN	5/10
ALYSSA	JOHNSON	5/10
EMILY	MONTGOMERY	5/10
RON	CEASAR	5/11
JORDAN	SAMPSON	5/11
TY	WALKER	5/11
LILY	VEAL	5/12
ANN	WASHINGTON	5/12
CORI	BODLEY	5/13
CHRISTOPHER	BURLS	5/13
MATTHEW	CRUMP, SR.	5/13
SHAWANDA	HAYES	5/13
MILING	WASHINGTON	5/13
WAYNE	DUPRE	5/14
STELLA	JACKSON	5/14
DELANA	JARRETT	5/14
ERIKA	JOHNSON	5/14
ANGELICA	LACEY	5/14
MELANIE	THIERRY	5/14
KENYON	JOHNSON	5/15
KIM	WALKER	5/15
KENNETH	WASHINGTON	5/15
CURTIS	BOWIE, JR.	5/16
TRAVIS	CYPRIEN	5/16
PAMELA	JACKSON	5/16
WILBERT	THOMAS	5/16
PAUL	BROUSSARD	5/17
MARION	DAVIS	5/17
KEITH	JACKSON	5/17
SHAWN	JONES	5/17
RHONDA	LEWIS	5/17
ISIAH	MILLER, JR.	5/17



**Graduate Recognition May 24th**

On Sunday, May 24, at the 10:30 AM Mass we will recognize and celebrate our graduates from graduate school, college, and high school for Summer and Fall, 2025, and Spring, 2026. Please provide name, school, degree, and future plans for these graduates who are members of Immaculate Conception Church. We want to congratulate and celebrate the success of our graduates.

**Weekly Mass Readings  
May 10th- May 17**

**Sunday  
Sixth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 8: 5-8, 14-17  
1 Peter 3: 15-18  
John 14: 15-21

**Monday**

Acts 16: 11-15  
John 15: 26-16: 4a

**Tuesday**

Acts 16: 22-34  
John 16: 5-11

**Wednesday**

Acts 17: 15, 22-18: 1  
John 16: 12-15

**Thursday**

**Feast of Saint Matthias,  
Apostle**

Acts 1: 15-17, 20-26  
John 15: 9-17

**Friday**

Acts 18: 9-18  
John 16: 20-23

**Saturday**

Acts 18: 23-28  
John 16: 23b-28

**Sunday**

**Ascension**

Acts 1: 1-11  
Ephesians 1: 17-23  
Matthew 28: 16-20