

# REFLECTIONS FROM FATHER CLARK

## THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION TO MEMORIAL DAY

During the final year of the Civil War, the Washington Race Course and Jockey Club in Charleston, South Carolina became a prisoner of war camp for Union soldiers captured by the Confederacy. The prisoners were kept in the open air without shelter in brutal conditions. Over 250 Union soldiers died because of exposure and disease. They were buried in a mass grave without any dignity or respect. After the war, the newly emancipated African American citizens exhumed the bodies and buried them in individual graves and markers. They enclosed the cemetery with a fence and a plaque reading, "Martyrs of the Race Course."

On May 1, 1865, 10,000 people, mostly African Americans, gathered for a parade and ceremony with invited Black Union regiments like the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts whose story is told in the movie, *Glory*. Thousands of Black children carried flowers and recited Scripture verses. Black Americans continued the tradition of honoring the Union war dead by placing flowers on graves each year. Frederick Douglass used the Memorial Day or Decoration Day events to remind listeners that the Civil War was fought to liberate the country from slavery and to fight against the treason of the Confederacy. He refused to let the moral reasons of the war be forgotten.

This history is a reminder of the solemnity that should accompany our observance of Memorial Day. Although it has become just another holiday and associated with the beginning of summer, we must not forget the ultimate sacrifice of men and women to defend our country. War leaves scars on memory and spirit that last a lifetime. We cannot forget the many veterans who continue to fight the wars in their minds, dreams, and spirit. It is estimated that seventeen veterans commit suicide each day. In addition, how many battle PTSD each day. Many veterans of the Vietnam War and the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars deal with cancer diagnoses related to the toxic conditions they encountered. We honor them and their struggles along with their fallen brothers and sisters. Include some quiet time of reflection and prayer into your observance of Memorial Day.

### POPE LEO'S PRAY FOR PEACE

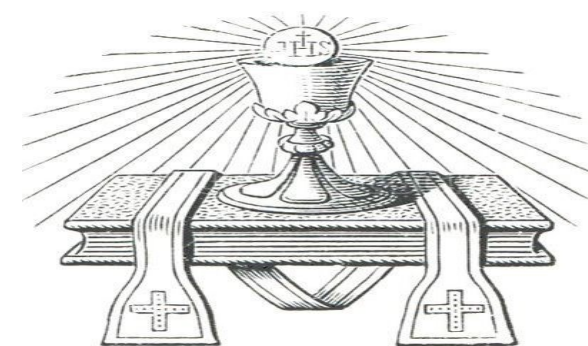
*Lord Jesus,  
you conquered death without weapons or violence:  
you shattered its power with the strength of peace.  
Grant us your peace,  
as you did to the women filled with doubt on Easter morning,  
as you did to the disciples who were hiding in fear.  
Send forth your Spirit,  
the breath that gives life and reconciles,  
that turns adversaries and enemies into brothers and sisters.  
Inspire in us to trust in Mary, your mother,  
who stood at the foot of your cross with a broken heart,  
firm in the faith that you would rise again.  
May the madness of war cease  
and the Earth be cared for and cultivated by those who still  
know how to bring forth, protect and love life. Hear us, Lord of life!*



## PENTECOST SUNDAY ~ MAY 24, 2026

*Immaculate Conception Catholic Church*  
1565 Curtis Street - Baton Rouge, LA 70807  
Office Phone: (225) 775-7067 - Information: (225) 775-7062  
Fax: (225) 775-0775 - Email: clarktf2002@yahoo.com  
Web Site Address: www.immaculateconceptionbr.org  
*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  
**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**



**Vacation Bible School (VBS)**

Vacation Bible School will be held on June 16, 17, and 18, 2026, from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM in the Parish Activity Center. Registration is open to Church members with children ages 4 through 12. Registration forms are available in the foyer of the Church and can be completed after each Mass or at home. Please return the completed form by June 8, 2026.

Registration is also available online at <http://www.immaculateconceptionbr.org>. There is no cost to families for participation. For additional information, please contact Gloria DeRouen at (225) 936-8162 or 225-775-7067.

**MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVATION**

On Monday, May 25, we celebrate Memorial Day, a federal holiday in the United States for mourning persons who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces. Because it is a day of remembrance, never wish a veteran “Happy Memorial Day,” because the memory of a lost loved one is never happy. Instead, it is appropriate to simply say, “Thank you for your service.” Support the memory of fallen soldiers by participating in local observances throughout our region. For more information about local military support organizations, contact Georgia Jenkins at 225-933-7271.

On Monday, the Parish Office will be closed in observance of Memorial Day. Mass will be celebrated at 12:10 PM in the chapel at the MLK Catholic Student Center. Mass will be offered for all who gave their life in service of our country.

**PARISH COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES MINUTES MAY 19, 2026**

On Tuesday, May 19, at 6:30 PM, 16 chairpersons of parish ministries and organizations attended the meeting. After an opening prayer and a review and acceptance of the January 20 minutes, Father Clark consulted with the council on the finishing of the surface of the lot at 1526 Curtis Street which was purchased by the church. The lot will become a driveway and pedestrian walkway into the Harding parking lot. We hope that having a visual sight line and an open walking space will make the parking lot more inviting for parking. The council expressed its preference that the lot be finished in cement and not a combination of cement and gravel. We also considered offering a monthly gathering with lunch and an activity for those who are grieving, serving as caregivers, or in any way looking to get out and socialize. The gathering would offer lunch, and an activity, e.g., a game, a craft, or a speaker. We welcome input from those interested in this offer. The federal money has been released for the Community Lighthouse. Immaculate Conception Church will be the second lighthouse in Baton Rouge. Installation will begin in June. In the event of an extended power outage, our Activity Center will serve as a respite center for the neighborhood. We are developing a team of Lighthouse keepers who will volunteer to staff the activity center. We will benefit from the solar power through all the year. We will have the opportunity to deepen our relationship with the neighborhood and community through this service. Georgia Jenkins offered an observation about Memorial Day. It is not appropriate to wish a veteran “Happy Memorial Day”, rather say, “Thank you for your service.” Memorial Day is a day of mourning, not celebration.

The following were commended by the council.: Renae Welsh and John Edwards for their work in the office, Gloria DeRouen for coordinating First Communion and Confirmation, Kevin Walker and Reggie Berry for preparing the newly confirmed, Betty Wells and the St. Vincent de Paul volunteers for the Food Pantry, Walterine Whitfield and the Beautification committee for their decorating the sanctuary through Holy Week and Easter season.



|           |                 |      |
|-----------|-----------------|------|
| JOHN      | EDWARDS         | 5/25 |
| THOMAS    | SCOTT, JR.      | 5/25 |
| ANTHONY   | OLIVER          | 5/26 |
| SHAWN     | CHAMBERS        | 5/26 |
| KACI      | THOMAS          | 5/26 |
| MARCUS    | COX             | 5/27 |
| EDWARD    | LEE             | 5/27 |
| ANGENETTE | WELTON          | 5/28 |
| MILTON    | WILLIAMS        | 5/28 |
| RETTA     | LOCKMAN -BARBER | 5/29 |
| JOYCE     | BROUSSARD       | 5/29 |
| DANIEL    | FRAZIER, III    | 5/29 |
| ALTHEA    | LACEY           | 5/29 |
| VIRGINIA  | LISTACH         | 5/29 |
| TYRA      | MCGHEE          | 5/29 |
| MYRA      | MITCHELL        | 5/29 |
| KENDRICK  | SLAN, JR.       | 5/29 |
| GENE      | MCGOWEN         | 5/30 |
| CIARRA    | ROBERSON        | 5/30 |
| JAYDE     | CLEMENT         | 5/31 |
| ELENA     | HERRING         | 5/31 |
| BRANDI    | HODGE           | 5/31 |
| DANIKA    | READO           | 5/31 |
| LORETTA   | TOUSSANT        | 5/31 |
| RENEE     | WALKER          | 5/31 |



Join us on Saturday, June 13, 2026, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at the MLK Center for “Jazz on the Bluff” as we celebrate Juneteenth with live music, dancing, fellowship, and light refreshments.

**Tickets on sale now and can be purchased after all Masses while supplies last.**

Tickets are \$20.00 per person, and light refreshments will be served. Come dressed in your favorite Juneteenth T-shirt or festive attire and celebrate with us in style! on this exciting event—we look forward to seeing you there!

**Weekly Mass Readings  
May 24th - May 31st**

**Sunday  
Pentecost Sunday**

Acts 2: 1-11  
1 Corinthians 12: 3b-7, 12-13  
John 20: 19-23

**Monday  
Memorial of the Blessed**

**Virgin Mary,  
Mother of the Church**  
Genesis 3: 9-15, 20  
John 19: 25-34

**Tuesday  
Memorial of Saint Philip Neri,  
Priest**

1 Peter 1: 10-16  
Mark 10: 28-31

**Wednesday  
Eight Week in Ordinary Time**

1 Peter 1: 18-25  
Mark 10: 32-45

**Thursday**  
1 Peter 2: 2-5, 9-12  
Mark 10: 46-52

**Friday**  
1 Peter 4: 7-13  
Mark 11: 11-26

**Saturday**  
Jude 17: 20b-25  
Mark 11: 27-33

**Sunday  
The Solemnity of the  
Most Holy Trinity**

Exodus 34: 4b-6, 8-9  
2 Corinthians 13: 11-13  
John 3: 16-18