

From Father Kirby...

January 10, 2021

Happy Sunday, Team Grace! Today, we celebrate the Baptism of Our Lord. In his thirtieth year, the Lord Jesus traveled from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John the Baptist. In this event, he inaugurated his public ministry.

Today, we hear Saint Mark's account of the Lord's baptism. Each gospel writer emphasizes different aspects of the event. Saint Mark's account is brief and to the point. The message is clear: Jesus is the beloved Son of the Father and his messianic mission has begun. Get to work!

Once again, thank you to everyone who generously sent me cards, gifts, and desserts for Christmas! It's a tremendous joy to serve as your pastor, and your various acts of kindness are deeply appreciated! *Thank you!*

With the new vaccines coming out for COVID-19, many people are asking about the ethical status of these inoculations. Here is an additional resource from the US Bishops: [*Answers to Key Ethical Questions About COVID-19 Vaccines*](#).

Some things happening around the parish:

Every Tuesday afternoon, I make rotating pastoral visits to our homebound parishioners. Our Homebound EM's visit in between my visits, so that every homebound parishioner can receive Holy Communion every week. If you know of a Catholic in need of such an outreach, please contact Mary Ann Mervak, our Coordinator of Homebound Care: mmervak@charlestandiocese.org.

Please note that every Monday evening, we have a Parish Holy Hour and Confessions from 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM. All are welcome!

Our weekly Bible Study continues this Wednesday. This week we'll talk about the Tower of Babel found in Genesis 11:1-9. Previous lessons can be found on our [Grace Lily](#) page.

After this weekend, I'll be starting a five-week homily series on the biblical notion of mercy and our call to be a People of Mercy. I'm grateful to our parish Mercy Committee for their suggestions and guidance for these homilies.

As an additional opportunity to go to Confession, the parish will now have Confessions after all the weekend Masses on the third weekend of every month.

We're going to do this until March. After that, we'll review whether the opportunity serves a legitimate need.

With that in mind, next weekend (which is the third weekend of January), we'll have Confessions after all the weekend Masses. Please note that these Confessions are for *after* the Mass. Please do not come early and "jump into" the line for the previous Mass. The small time between the last penitent and the next Mass is an important window for me to clear my mind, check with staff, use the restroom, etc.

As announced in the Daily Briefing, Our Sunday Visitor has published my recent devotional, [*Way of the Cross for Loved Ones Who Have Left the Faith*](#). The devotional is meant to be a help to anyone who is praying for the conversion and return of a loved one to the Faith.

Please read and review our [Security/Safety Protocols for Parishioners](#) and [Church/Holy Communion Pandemic Protocols](#).

More updates next week! Oremus pro invicem (let's pray for one another)!