

*From Father Kirby...*

**December 18, 2022**

Happy Sunday, Team Grace!

This weekend marks the conclusion of the Advent season. As we immediately prepare for the celebration of the Lord's first coming at Bethlehem, and the inauguration of our redemption, I encourage you to keep your focus on the Lord Jesus. Many things will compete for your attention. Be sure to make the Lord your first priority.

We welcome Deacon Peter Rusciollelli to our parish this weekend. The Deacon is a transitional deacon, who will be ordained a priest for the Diocese of Charlotte on June 17. Please remember him in your prayers. *Welcome, Deacon Rusciollelli!*

Here are some things happening at the parish this week:

My meeting with the Bishop this past week went very well. In our consultation, the Bishop realized that our deanery consists overwhelmingly of Oratorian priests. As such, it makes sense that the Dean of this area be an Oratorian Father. And so, I am not the Dean. The position will now be given to a local Oratorian Father.

I ask for your prayers this weekend, as my family and I observe the first anniversary of my father's passing. As Catholics, the first anniversary of a loved one's death is an important spiritual moment. I thank you in advance for your prayers.

Our annual Live Nativity will be held this Wednesday, December 21, at 7:00 PM. The children of the parish are hosting the event and all are welcome! Hot chocolate and cookies will follow the performance!

As a reminder, our Faith Formation on Wednesday evenings is on hiatus until January 4.

The parish campus is closed this Thursday, December 22. There is no daily Mass or Confessions. All other events are suspended. We give this day to our staff, since many of them will need to work during the Christmas Masses.

The Solemnity of the Lord's Nativity, "Christmas," is next Sunday, December 25. Come, let us adore him! Our Mass schedule for the parish is: December 24 at 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM, and 10 PM; and, December 25 at 10:00 AM. ***Please note: this schedule replaces our regular weekend Mass schedule.***

As is our custom here at Our Lady of Grace, the parish campus is closed the week after Christmas, December 26 - December 30. There are no public Masses on these days. All other activities are suspended.

Please note our new [calendar for the program year 2022/2023](#) is now posted on our parish website. The calendar describes all of our events and programs for the coming year.

I'd like to encourage every household of the parish to register for [FORMED](#). This is a free digital platform with family friendly content.

Some other future events I'd like to highlight:

If you are taking required minimum distributions (RMD) from your IRA, are you taking advantage of the qualified charitable distribution (QCD)? Please consider doing so and remembering your parish in your charitable giving. If you're not sure what this is, or how to give to the parish, please contact Angie Letourneau, a member of our parish Finance Council, at [aletourneau@carolina.rr.com](mailto:aletourneau@carolina.rr.com) to get information on how to structure your cash contributions to get a tax break.

Since the fourth Saturday of December falls on Christmas Eve this year, we will not have a prayer outreach at the local abortion facility. We will have our next prayer outreach on Saturday, January 28.

January 6 – 7 is our next first weekend. Please plan on being a part of our Nocturnal Adoration.

On the weekend of January 14-15, the parish will host a Diaper Drive. All parishioners are asked to bring diapers to Mass. The diapers will then be distributed to local outreaches in support of unwed or low-income mothers.

On Sunday, January 15, the parish will host a blood bus. All parishioners are encouraged to give blood. As a pro-life people, we serve life however we can. Blood is in great need in our area. Please sign up! *Please note: sign-ups are required.* Here is [the link to sign up](#).

I want to encourage parishioners to please pre-plan their funerals with the parish. Monty Bennett, our Director of Sacred Music, is happy to meet with any parishioner

and go through the pre-planning process. Monty can be reached at [mbennett@charlestandioocese.org](mailto:mbennett@charlestandioocese.org).

Be sure to read and review our revised and updated [Security/Safety Protocols for Parishioners](#) and [Church/Holy Communion Pandemic Protocols](#).

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

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