

From Father Kirby...

February 19, 2023

Happy Sunday, Team Grace! This weekend, we conclude this portion of Ordinary Time as we enter into the penitential season of Lent. Each of the Church's seasons are a help to us in our discipleship. As we move into Lent, the Church focuses on penance and an active participation in the Lord's Paschal Mystery.

This weekend, Monsignor Karl Chimiak continues to assist with our parish Masses. It's a blessing to have a retired priest helping us here at the parish!

This Sunday afternoon, after our 11:00 AM Mass, we'll have our annual parish Mardi Gras. We'll have some food, bouncy houses, desserts, and a lot of fun. The event is free. *All are invited to join us!*

Here are some things happening at the parish this week:

Our landscaping efforts continue to move forward. As the project nears its completion, we'll see even more beautification of our campus.

This past week, the leadership team of the parish was able to visit the [Women's Enrichment Center](#). It was a joy to renew our partnership with them as we mutually seek to defend and serve the gift of life. As previously announced, the parish gave the center a \$10,000 charitable grant. We are very happy to support the center and their important work among unwed mothers.

This Monday, February 20, the parish will observe Presidents' Day. There will be no public Mass or Confessions on that day. All other events are suspended. We ask God's continued blessings upon the United States of America!

Deacon Doc is starting a new book in the parish Book Club. The group meets on Tuesdays at 1:00 PM. This Tuesday, February 21, the group is starting [Under the Mantle: Marian Thoughts from a 21st Century Priest](#).

Ash Wednesday is this Wednesday, February 22. Our Mass schedule here at the parish is 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM and 7:00 PM. Confessions will follow all the Masses.

As a reminder, here are the fast and abstinence norms for Lent:

- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.
- For members of the Latin Catholic Church, the norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Latin Catholic Church from age 14 onwards.

On Thursday, February 23, our parish will participate in the [Worldwide Virtual Rosary](#). The rosary will be prayed at 12 Noon that day. Our daily Mass will follow the rosary (around 12:30 PM).

Our next prayer outreach at the local abortion facility is this coming Saturday, February 25, at 8:30 AM. The facility is located at 3220 Latrobe Drive, Charlotte, NC. All parishioners are encouraged to come and join in this peaceful, prayerful protest against the horror of abortion. A free bus is available.

Our Stations of the Cross for Lent will be held on Mondays at 7:00 PM. The Stations will begin on Monday, February 27. All are welcome!

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:

As we prepare for Lent, I'd like to make you aware of a Lenten program I did with the Catholic Company. Entitled, "[How to Read the Bible](#)," the program dives into the specifics of how the Church approaches and reads the Bible. While there are many programs about *what* to read in the Bible, this program focuses on *how* to read the Bible. If you register and use the promo code "OLG20," you'll receive a 20% discount.

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@charlestdioocese.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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