

From Father Kirby...

March 19, 2023

Happy Sunday, Team Grace!

Today, we continue our solemn observance of Lent. The season is an opportunity for us to die to ourselves, so that we can live more fully for Jesus Christ! We are half-way through Lent, and so Mother Church calls us to “rejoice” as we draw closer to the celebration of the Paschal Mystery. For this Laetare “Rejoice” Sunday, the Church tempers her penitential violet for a festive rose. She also allows flowers and more festive music on this Rejoice Sunday.

In my homily this weekend, I’ll reference the prayer, the Act of Contrition. This is a prayer that Catholics are encouraged to pray every night before going to bed. I strongly encourage you to know and make this prayer daily. There are many versions of this prayer, but the one I favor is:

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most especially because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.

Here are some things happening at the parish this week:

Thank you to everyone who participated in our parish personal hygiene items collection. I’m especially grateful to the members of our Helping Hands ministry who are facilitating the drive. All of the items will go to the [Women’s Enrichment Center](#).

Thank you also to everyone who volunteered to give blood this Sunday. Your kindness will save lives.

This Sunday at our 11:00 AM Mass, we’ll have a bagpiper in honor of Laetare “Rejoice” Sunday.

This Saturday, March 25, is our next parish Prayer Outreach at the local abortion facility. All parishioners are encouraged to come at 8:30 AM for this peaceful, prayerful protest against abortion. The facility is located at 3220 Latrobe Drive. Charlotte, NC.

Our parish Administrator and his wife are expecting their fourth child in May! Congratulations, Ryan and Margaret! At my request, they've made a baby registry. If any parishioners would like to bless this family with a gift on the occasion of their new baby, [please visit the registry here](#).

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:

Due to the timing of Holy Week this year, our next First Friday and First Saturday celebrations will be March 31 – April 1. Please plan on participating in our parish Nocturnal Adoration.

On Sunday, April 2, the Solemn Procession of Palms will be held at the beginning of our 11:00 AM Mass. Our annual Spring Festival will be after the Mass. For the festival, we'll have some BBQ, a petting zoo, pony rides, and a lot of other activities. All are welcome!

Please note we will not have Confessions or daily Mass on Monday and Tuesday, April 3-4. I'll be in Charleston for the annual Chrism Mass with the Bishop. The campus and parish office will be opened on Monday (April 3), but closed on Tuesday (April 4).

The Bishop will be here on Tuesday, May 2, for Confirmation. Any baptized person in seventh grade or above can petition to receive Confirmation. Please reach out to John Paul Rusciollelli for more information: jrusciollelli@charlestandiocese.org.

This coming October, 2023, I'll be hosting a pilgrimage to Fatima, Spain, and Lourdes. Here's the [link to the travel agency website](#) with more information. Please note this is not a parish pilgrimage. I am taking this pilgrimage on vacation time and inviting others to join me. Other friends and supporters will come from other parts of the country and be a part of the pilgrimage.

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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