

*From Father Kirby...*

**October 1, 2023**

Happy Sunday, Team Grace! As Ordinary Time continues, we are encouraged by the Church to assess our discipleship and honestly evaluate where we stand in our relationship with the Lord Jesus.

Next weekend, October 7-8, and the following weekend, October 14-15, I'll be giving a review of ways to observe Advent. Since our secular world starts its "Christmas" in October, I figured we should review Advent and be ready for that season so that we can withstand the pressures and influences of the secular Christmas as we walk through Advent and prepare for the real Christmas, the celebration of our Lord's sacred Nativity.

This weekend, September 30 - October 1, in honor of the Guardian Angels, we will give a special blessing to all babies and toddlers (up to two years old) during all our Masses, except 5:30 PM Mass.

This Sunday, October 1, at 2:00 PM, we'll have our annual Blessing of Pets in honor of Saint Francis of Assisi. The blessing will be near the pavilion. We'll have an ice cream truck with us after the blessing. All ice cream is free. Bring your pets, however large or small!

In the narthex this weekend, we have sign-ups for Nocturnal Adoration this coming Friday- Saturday, October 6-7. Please be generous with your time and give the Lord and your parish family an hour of prayer!

Some things happening at the parish that I'd like to highlight this week:

Thank you to everyone who came to our Town Hall sessions. We had about 320 people attend. The feedback, comments, and ideas were extremely helpful. Within the next couple of weeks, we'll post the presentation on our parish website. I'll announce when it's available on the website.

This past week, Mary Ann Mervak concluded her service as our parish Coordinator of Homebound Care. She served in this capacity for over a decade. Mary Ann has a tremendous love for the sick and suffering. While Mary Ann is retiring from her professional duties, she will remain here at the parish and still serve in volunteer capacities. *Thank you, Mary Ann!*

With Mary Ann's retirement, I'm happy to announce that Suzanna Allen has joined our staff as the Coordinator of Pastoral Care. In this position, Suzanna will facilitate our homebound ministry and our outreach to those in care facilities. *Welcome, Suzanna!*

Congratulations to our six parishioners who are now professed Secular Franciscans! We wish them all God's blessings as they start a new journey with the Lord Jesus in the spirit of Saint Francis of Assisi.

This Friday, October 6, we have our monthly Mass of the Sacred Heart at 7:00 PM. Confessions will follow the Mass and continue until Midnight.

This Saturday, October 7, Confessions are from 9:00 – 10:30 AM, the rosary is at 10:30 AM, our monthly Healing Mass with the Anointing of the Sick is at 11:00 AM, and then our parish Prayer Teams and brunch will follow the Mass. The brunch is free. All are welcome!

Next Sunday, October 8, we'll have a Rosary Procession before our 11:00 AM Mass. All parishioners are invited to come and honor Our Lady during the month of the Rosary. Please come around 10:45 AM, park your cars, and meet down by the flags at the entrance of our campus.

Please note our new [calendar for the program year 2023/2024](#) is now posted on our parish website. The calendar describes all of our events and programs for the coming year.

Some other future events I'd like to highlight:

I'd like to start highlighting our senior staff and letting you know their major areas of responsibility. Ryan Kubic is the Lay Administrator of the parish. He manages the day-to-day operations of the parish, supervises our parish staff, is the comptroller of our budget, our projects manager, our liaison to the diocese, among other duties. As needed, Ryan can be reached at: [rkubic@charlestdiocese.org](mailto:rkubic@charlestdiocese.org).

As we near the observance of All Souls (November 2), we are asking for the names of your loved ones who have died within the past liturgical year (November 2, 2022 – November 1, 2023). The names will be included in the Reading of Names at our All Souls 7:00 PM Mass. Please send names to Monty Bennett: [mbennett@charlestdiocese.org](mailto:mbennett@charlestdiocese.org).

On Monday, October 9, at 7:00 PM, we'll have our monthly Stations of the Cross for all those who have left the Faith. All are welcome to come and walk the Stations for this special intention!

On the weekend on October 14-15, the parish will host a Food Drive. The three items we're collecting are: canned meat, canned pasta meals (ie, Chef Boyardee), and any canned vegetables. Please bring these items to the pavilion before Mass. Members of our Helping Hands ministry will be there to assist you.

On Sunday, October 15, the parish will once again host two blood buses. [Please sign up to give blood here.](#)

Please note that EWTN host and noted author, Raymond Arroyo, will be visiting our parish on Sunday afternoon, October 29. More details will follow as the event gets closer.

Some general announcements for the good of the parish:

I'd like to encourage every household of the parish to register for [FORMED](#). This is a free digital platform with good Catholic, family-friendly content. I also want to strongly encourage every household to join [EWTN OnDemand](#), which is another free digital platform whose content is supportive of our faith.

As a reminder, our parish staff can be readily reached via email. [Here is the staff directory.](#)

The Bishop would like to invite all medical doctors and nurses to spend October 21 with him in prayer and formation. [Here's the information.](#)

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

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Podcast: *Truth be Bold*: On [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcast](#), and [Good Catholic](#)

Radio Show: *Of First Importance*, [RadioMariaUS](#)

Weekly spirituality column: <https://cruxnow.com/author/fr-jeff-kirby>

Daily Reflections available through [MorningOffering.com](#).