

**December 24, 2023**

*From Father Kirby...*

Merry Christmas, Team Grace! Our long-awaited Messiah has come to us! Our Savior is with us! Alleluia! Let us rejoice and give thanks! *Merry Christmas!*

This weekend, I'll be addressing the recent Vatican document on blessings. It's my hope to clarify what has been done (and what has not been done). As a help, [here's a column](#) I wrote for the *National Catholic Register*.

Our Christmas Mass schedule is Sunday evening, December 24, at 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 8:00 PM, and 10:00 PM, and Monday morning, December 25, at 10:00 AM.

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

As is our custom, the parish campus and church will be closed for the few days after Christmas Day. There is no public Mass, and all events are suspended from December 26-28.

*The work has begun on our Holy Angels Columbarium and the Front Hill! We've been waiting for a while, and now it's time! It is very exciting! Please be cautious since various construction equipment and building materials will be stationed around our campus. The anticipated conclusion of the work is sometime in March.*

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, January 1, falls on Monday this year and the Church has suspended it as a Holy Day of Obligation. There is no obligation for Mass on January 1. The parish campus will be closed. There is no public Mass. All events are suspended.

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

Some other future events I'd like to highlight:

On Wednesday, January 3, our Wednesday formation nights pick back up. All the sessions begin at 6:30 PM. Confessions will be heard beforehand at 6:00 PM. Our Parish Office will be opened before and after the sessions in case anyone is in need of administrative assistance.

Our first weekend in January is Friday-Saturday, January 5-6. Please plan on joining your parish family in our all-night prayer vigil.

On Sunday, January 7 at 12:15 PM, in honor of the Epiphany, the parish is hosting an Epiphany Stocking Fellowship. At the fellowship, each person will receive a small stocking and be invited to walk through various candy stations and fill their stocking with holy day goodies! All are welcome!

On January 10, Father Robert Morey, a retired priest of our diocese, will be hearing daily Confessions and celebrating our Noon Mass. *Welcome back, Father Morey!*

On the weekend of January 13-14, the parish is hosting a Diaper Drive. All parishioners are asked to bring children's diapers to Mass with them. Parishioners can drop off the diapers before Mass at the pavilion. Members of our Helping Hands ministry will be on site to assist you.

On Sunday, January 14, we'll host two blood buses on our campus. There is a dire need for blood in our area and so I encourage all parishioners to consider giving blood. [Here's the link to sign up.](#)

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.](#)

I was hoping to host a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Rome this coming June. With the situation in the Middle East, such a pilgrimage is not possible. In its place, however, I'll be hosting a pilgrimage to the [Great Shrines of France](#). The tour will include Lourdes, Lisieux (Saint Therese the Little Flower), the holy places of Paris, Nevers (Saint Bernadette), Paray-le-Monial (Sacred Heart Apparitions), Lyon, LaSalette, Ars (Saint John Vianney), and the Beaches of Normandy with a Mass at the US Foreign Cemetery. This is not a parish pilgrimage, but I wanted to make the parish family aware of the opportunity. The pilgrimage is a personal pilgrimage of mine and many people from different parts of the United States will be participating in it. All are welcome!

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

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

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