

December 8, 2024

From Father Kirby...

Happy Sunday, Team Grace! We continue to hope in the Lord and prepare for his coming! The Church's focus during this first part of Advent is the Lord's Second Coming. In our lives, are we waiting in joyful hope for the return of our Savior?

I'm happy to announce that on December 15, my daily reflections are starting back up. Through the generosity and resources of some unexpected Catholic leaders from outside the parish, the videos are being produced and distributed again! Please visit www.DailyDiscipleship.org and sign-up to have these free, 3-4 minute reflections sent right to your in-box every morning.

For Advent, I'm continuing the homily series on the Universal Call to Holiness. As a reminder, I'm mainly using Vatican II's *[Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium](#)*, Chapter V (#39-42). I encourage you to read the document, or at least Chapter V.

This year, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception falls on a Sunday of Advent. When this happens, the solemnity is moved to Monday, December 9. For the last several decades, when this transfer has occurred, the obligation is dispensed. The Church has clarified this practice, however, and has now explained that the obligation is still binding. *And so, the Immaculate Conception on Monday, December 9, is a Holy Day of Obligation.* Our Mass schedule here will be 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM, and 7:00 PM.

Some things happening at the parish this week:

This past week, the work on the area of our old columbarium was completed. It's now fully graded and completely landscaped and a beautiful lawn! Yes, Team Grace, we finally have a yard! Thank you to all the men of the parish who initiated this project. I look forward to brainstorming on how we can use our new yard in the future!

Our contractors have begun work on our Marian Grotto. If you look at our front hill, you'll see massive boulders that are being set and arranged for the future Grotto. When it's completed, the Grotto will be a peaceful area for parishioners to pray and light candles to Our Lady. Like many of you, I'm very excited to see this project completed!

We were recently informed that HOPE in Lancaster has named our parish the 2024 Community Impact Champion! We're grateful for the kind award and consider it a blessing to work with HOPE in serving and caring for those in need.

Personal Consecrations to Jesus through Mary will be made before each Holy Day Mass tomorrow, December 9. Please be early to Mass if you plan to make (or renew) your Consecration.

Confessions will be heard after the 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, and 11:00 AM Mass on the Holy Day.

The 7:00 PM Mass on Monday, December 9, is also our Anniversary Mass as a parish. We'll be eight years old as a parish! After the Mass, we'll have a candlelight procession and crowning of Our Lady's statue at the entrance of our campus. After the crowning, we'll have a fellowship at the statue. *All are invited!*

On Tuesday, December 10, the parish staff will have an on-site training day. The church building will still be open, and our schedule of events remains the same. The staff, however, will be in training sessions throughout the day. Please remember them in your prayers.

Please note that we have Morning Prayer (Lauds) prayed publicly Tuesdays – Thursdays at 10:00 AM and Solemn Vespers on Saturday evenings at 4:00 PM. All are welcome!

The parish is happy to host a pilgrimage to the holy places of Saint Augustine, Florida, from January 14-16. [Here's a flyer](#) with more information.

The third anniversary of my father's passing is Tuesday, December 17, and so I'll be in Columbia that day with my mother and siblings. There are no Confessions or daily Mass that day, but all other devotions will still be offered.

Everyone is invited to come and watch the children of the parish in the Live Nativity on Wednesday, December 18, at 7:00 PM. The children will reenact the birth of the Lord Jesus and sing some Christmas songs for us. A fellowship with cookies and hot chocolate will follow the event.

The [calendar for the program year 2024/2025](#) is posted on our parish website. The calendar describes all our events and programs for the year. This is posted for your reference and information.

Some other future events I'd like to highlight:

I'm very happy to announce again that we've launched our new website! Please visit www.gracewepray.org and check it out! Thank you to Ryan Kubic and the staff who worked so diligently to facilitate the design and structure of the new website!

I'm happy to announce that our Bishop will be visiting the parish on March 1, 2025. The Bishop will be visiting to confer Confirmation on the young people of our parish. Any young adult, who is in the 7th grade and above, can petition for Confirmation. The petition is made to me as your pastor. As a help in this process, I ask that anyone who wishes to petition for Confirmation, please reach out to Carrie Scibelli, our Liturgy Coordinator. Carrie will walk you through the paperwork and process. She can be reached at: cscibelli@charlestandiocese.org. Please note: *If a young person is not regularly attending Sunday Mass, and if they are not living the Christian way of life, then they are not yet ready for Confirmation.*

I'm happy to announce that the parish has its own YouTube channel. [Here's the link](#) to the channel. I encourage all parishioners to subscribe to the channel and keep up to date on parish Bible studies, homilies, and other spiritual resources.

Some general announcements for the good of the parish:

The Holy Father, Pope Francis, has called for a Jubilee of Hope in the year 2025. The Ordinary Jubilees are held every twenty-five years. The last Jubilee was in the year 2000. The next one after 2025 will be in 2050. Many of us may not be around here for that one! For the Jubilee of 2025, I'll be hosting a pilgrimage to Rome and the holy places of Italy in March. [Here's some information on the pilgrimage](#). If you're able, and you think it can help your discipleship, please consider coming on this pilgrimage!

I'm also happy to host a [pilgrimage in the footsteps of Saint Paul](#) (Greece and Turkey) in June. I'll post more information on this pilgrimage in the months to come.

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

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

Email: Jeffrey.Kirby@charlestdiocese.org

Website: www.frkirby.com

Twitter: [@fatherkirby](https://twitter.com/fatherkirby)

Daily Reflections: www.DailyDiscipleship.org

[Weekly spirituality Column](#)

[Monthly Newsletter](#)