

October 12, 2025

From Father Kirby...

Happy Sunday, Team Grace! During this season of Ordinary Time, we are invited to go deeper in our relationship with Jesus Christ. Where can we do better? What is the Lord asking of us?

The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary of Our Lady. *All believers are encouraged to pray the Rosary!* As a reminder, the holy Rosary is prayed publicly here at the parish on Mondays at 11:00 AM at the Holy Angels Columbarium and on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 11:30 AM in the church.

This Sunday, October 12, the parish will once again sponsor two blood buses. As Christians, giving blood is one of the many ways we cherish and serve life. Please sign up to give blood! [Here is the link for sign-ups](#). Prior sign-ups are required.

Also today, Sunday, October 12, the parish is hosting one of its annual Food Drives. The parish is collecting three specific items: canned corn; canned peas; and Chef Boyardee pasta (not spaghetti or lasagna). Parishioners are asked to bring these items with them to church and drop them off at the pavilion before Mass. Members of our Helping Hands ministry will be on-site to help you.

This Sunday in the narthex, we have sign-ups for our Children's Christmas Choir and Live Nativity. All children of the parish are invited to sign up!

Some things happening at the parish this week:

The content of the Town Halls is now posted on our parish website. [Here is the link](#).

The contract for the handrails on Mary's Grotto is signed. We are told that work will begin on October 20!

As the years have gone by, our flower donations (Sundays, Christmas, and Easter) have accrued a surplus. The surplus is periodically used to purchase extra flowers for large feast days or special occasions. Even with these events, however, the surplus is still pretty substantial. And so, we're going to use a large portion of the surplus to purchase flowers, foliage, and bushes for Mary's Grotto. This will be a creative way to honor those who make flower donations and use the surplus monies

to beautify Mary's Grotto. If any donor has concerns or objections to this classification, please email me directly.

The Young Theologians is a program for high school students who are serious about their discipleship and have a strong foundation in the faith. The group has seasonal gatherings that are marked by a deep dive into a specific area of the Church's life and doctrine. For this Fall, the Young Theologians will have three sessions (November 10, November 17, and November 24 from 4:30 PM – 5:45 PM). The sessions will focus on the biblical roots of Purgatory and prayers for the dead. If a high school student is interested, their parent should email me directly.

This Monday, October 13, we'll have our seasonal Pastoral Care Training for our homebound and care facility Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and their Pastoral Companions. I look forward to my time with this great group of men and women.

This Tuesday, October 14, our Pastoral Associate, MJ Wallace, and I will be attending the annual *State of the Community*. The event is hosted by Lancaster County and the Sheriff's Department. It reviews local successes, challenges, and plans for the future. The event also allows us to network and meet other community leaders.

This Thursday, October 16, from 10:30 AM – 11:45AM, we will have the first meeting of our monthly Gianna Caregiver Support Group. The group is for spouses who provide direct care or who manage care for their spouse and adult children or other family members who are full time, part-time (or in any way involved) in providing care support to an aging parent(s) or relative. The group is a faith-based, sacred place, for prayer, open conversation and encouragement. It will be facilitated by parishioner Ellen Belk, who founded and runs [Keep in Mind](#), which provides dementia expertise, education, and advising. For more information on the Gianna Group, please reach out to Ellen Belk at: keepinmindinc@gmail.com.

Next Saturday morning, October 18, from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, we'll have our first meeting of the Saint Joseph Men's Fellowship. This newly formed group has been established specifically for the men of the parish who have a desire to grow in faith through prayer, insightful lectures and discussions, male fellowship, and some good food and fun. All men of the parish are invited! For more information, please reach out to Pete McCadden at pmcc582@gmail.com.

The [calendar for the program year](#) 2025/2026 is now 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 events I'd like to highlight:

On a personal note, today is my last column with [Crux Now](#). I've been writing weekly spirituality columns for them for the past nine years. John Allen started *Crux Now* when I was a doctoral student in Rome and he invited me to write columns. For the first year, I was a guest writer. Over time, I became a regular contributor, and a few years ago, I was promoted to a Senior Contributor. It's been a great ride! Recently, I finished a huge series on Part IV of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and decided - with parish duties increasing – that it was time to wrap things up.

Our next Prayer Outreach is on Saturday, October 25, at 8:30 AM. All parishioners are invited and encouraged to participate in this peaceful, prayerful protest against the horror of abortion. The abortion facility is located at 3220 Latrobe Drive, Charlotte, NC.

Our next Fellowship Sunday is October 26 at 12:15 PM. All are welcome!

I am very happy to announce that starting Monday, October 27, our parish will begin to host weekly meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous. Meetings will be Mondays from 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM. For more information, please contact: Hwy75group@gmail.com.

This year, the Solemnity of All Saints, November 1, is not a Holy Day of Obligation. Since the feast day falls on Saturday, the US Bishops have dispensed the obligation.

For the Solemnity of All Saints, we will have an Anticipated Mass on Friday, October 31, at 5:30 PM. All children of the parish are invited to come to the Mass dressed as saints or other holy people.

On Friday evening, October 31, our Secular Franciscans are hosting their annual "Franciscan Trick or Treat" at 6:30 PM. The group members will be dressed up as Franciscan saints. They will give out candy and talk about various saints. All families are invited to come!

As we near the observance of All Souls Day, November 2, I'd like to clarify some of our Catholic customs:

- The All Souls envelopes are for you to formally ask your local pastor to prayerfully remember your beloved dead through the next year. It is very important that you write the names of your loved ones on the envelopes. The names can be anyone who has died at any time. Please note: the All Souls collection goes directly to the priest. This is the only time in which collected funds go directly to the priest. However, checks should still be made out to the parish. *Please do not make any checks payable to me.* The parish will issue me a check on your behalf.
- The Book of the Dead will be placed by the baptismal font on October 31. Any and all of your beloved dead can be written in the book. It does not matter when your loved ones passed away. Anyone can be written in the book.
- The Reading of Names at our 11:00 AM Mass on All Souls is only for those who have died within the past liturgical year (November 2, 2024 – November 1, 2025). Please send your names to Noah Rusciolelli, our Liturgy Coordinator: [nruscolelli@charlestdiocese.org](mailto:nrusciolelli@charlestdiocese.org).

This May, I'll be hosting a five-day pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Honestly, the shrine was not on my short list of places to visit, but I had a strong movement in prayer that has summoned me to go and visit the Patroness of the Americas. I look forward to offering Mass at the shrine, as well as to visiting the other holy places in the area, especially those associated with the [Cristero martyrs](#). Everyone is invited! [Here is more information.](#)

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
[Monthly Newsletter](#)