

August 2, 2026

From Father Kirby...

Happy Sunday, Team Grace! The season of Ordinary Time is a time of extraordinary grace. The Lord Jesus calls us to himself and teaches us. He invites us to recommit ourselves to him. What does the Lord want to teach us? Are our hearts open and ready for him?

This Sunday, August 2, we'll offer our annual blessing of students to all those who are preparing to begin or continue their studies this Fall. May God grant our students a formative, fun, and safe academic year!

This Sunday, August 2, at 12:15 PM, we'll have a Farewell Fellowship for the three young men of our parish who are heading off to seminary. Please come and offer them your prayers and best wishes!

In the narthex this Sunday, we have signups for our Nocturnal Adoration this coming Friday and Saturday, August 7-8. Please be generous with your time and give an hour of prayer to the Lord Jesus and your parish family.

Some things happening at the parish this week:

Tomorrow, Monday, August 3, our daily Mass will be at 9:15 AM (and not Noon). I'll be in Lancaster for county meetings. Our Prayers for the Poor Souls in Purgatory will be at Noon, and our afternoon Adoration will begin a little earlier. There are no afternoon Confessions.

This Tuesday, August 4, at 5:00 PM, we have another gathering of our Saint Paula Dinner for Widows. *All widows are invited to come!* For this gathering, we'll have a speaker from the Lancaster Counseling Services talk about the grieving process and how to cope with loneliness.

This Friday, August 7, at 7:00 PM, we have our First Friday Mass in honor of the Sacred Heart. The holy Rosary is prayed before the Mass at 6:30 PM. Confessions are heard after the Mass until Midnight. Adoration begins after the Mass and continues through the night until 10:20 AM on Saturday.

This Saturday morning, August 8, is our observance of the First Saturday in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Our First Saturday observances include:

Confessions from 9:00 AM – 10:20 AM; the holy Rosary at 10:30 AM; the Healing Mass with the Anointing of the Sick at 11:00 AM; and our intercessory prayer teams and monthly Parish Brunch after the Healing Mass. All are welcome!

Next Sunday, August 9, we'll have parish-wide School Supply Drive. All parishioners are asked to bring one (or more) of the following items with them to Mass: book bags, glue sticks, and dry erase markers. Parishioners can drop off the items at the pavilion before Mass. Members of our Helping Hands Ministry will be on-site to help you.

Next Sunday, August 9, we will also once again host two blood buses. Please sign-up now to give blood and save lives. [Here's the link to sign up.](#)

The [calendar for the program year](#) 2026/2027 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 Tuesday, August 11, at 7:00 PM, our SOAP Work Group will meet and wrap soap and/or make-up removers that will be placed in areas frequented by those in human trafficking.

Please note that the Solemnity of Our Lady's Assumption, August 15, is not a Holy Day of Obligation this year. Since the holy day falls on a Saturday, the US Bishops have dispensed the obligation.

I'm happy to announce that the parish is launching the new Guadalupe Discipleship Group this Fall. The group is for young women in 8th – 12th grade. It will meet monthly on Sundays from 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM. The first meeting of the group is Sunday, August 16. For more information, please reach out to Katie Jasinski at katie.jasinski08@gmail.com.

Starting this Fall, two nurses of our parish will be facilitating a new Calcutta Loved Ones Support Group for the loved ones of those who have addictions (alcoholism, drugs, pornography, gambling, shopping, etc.). The group will meet for thirteen consecutive sessions on Mondays at 2:00 PM starting September 14. All loved ones are invited. For more information, please reach out to Sue Garera at SGarera@charlestandiocese.org.

Team Grace, our nation is receiving a great birthday gift from the Holy Spirit! In the coming year, as we celebrate our 250th birthday as a nation, Venerable Fulton Sheen will be beatified on American soil in late September! Fulton Sheen was (and is) a noted preacher and teacher of our Faith. We need his message today!

Our Bishop has asked our parish to take the lead and organize the diocesan pilgrimage to Saint Louis for the Beatification Mass! In response to this summons, we have [this pilgrimage](#) planned. Everyone is invited! I hope many of you can come on the pilgrimage!

Grotto Update: Our Grotto Ad Hoc Committee, which consists of parishioners who are skilled in different areas of construction, met and are in the processing of selecting our proposed contractor for the grotto project. Once we've selected a contractor, we'll start the diocesan process to have the contractor approved. More updates will follow.

We are now at **\$730,000** for Phase II. Phase Two of Mary's Grotto will enlarge the size of the Grotto, extend its height, and add a large patio area with an outdoor altar in front of the Grotto. As we move forward, I ask for your continued support of our "Capital Projects." I would like for us to have additional funds in case we exceed the original cost projections of Mary's Grotto. If we don't use the collected funds, we'll roll the funds over to some of our other capital projects.

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)!

In Christ,

Father Jeffrey Kirby

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