

**July 19, 2026**

***From Father Kirby...***

*Happy Sunday, Team Grace!* The season of Ordinary Time is an opportunity to recommit ourselves to the Lord Jesus and seek to follow his way more faithfully. This Sunday, as I near the anniversary of my priestly Ordination, I'm going to preach on the priesthood and clarify some popular misconceptions.

Some things happening at the parish this week:

*Seminarian Review:* In this second of three installments on our parish seminarians, I'd like to highlight London Shirley. London comes from a large family and has five siblings. He graduated from Legion Charter School this past May and has served our parish altar since he was twelve years old. London enjoys fishing, mechanics and working on vehicles, and spending time with friends. London previously worked at Discount Tires before joining our parish staff this summer as a Maintenance Assistant/Master of Ceremonies. Please pray for London as he prepares to leave for seminary to actively discern God's will. The parish will host a Farewell Fellowship for London and our other seminarians on Sunday, August 2, at 12:15 PM.

On Wednesday evening, July 22, from 7:00 – 8:00 PM, there will be a Meet-and-Greet for our parish Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA). The OCIA is the process through which a person prepares for baptism or through which a non-Catholic baptized person prepares to enter into the fullness of the Church. The event is casual. No commitment is expected.

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

I'd like to invite all young adults (ages 18-35) to Solemn Vespers, Dinner, and a Question-and-Answer session this Saturday evening, July 25. Solemn Vespers begins at 4:00 PM, with dinner and the conversation to follow afterwards. I hope many of our young adults can come so that we can discuss what it's like to be a young disciple in today's world. All are welcome!

Next Sunday, July 26, in honor of Saints Joachim and Anne, we'll offer a special Blessing of Grandparents to all our grandparents.

The parish is offering three one-time \$5,000 Catholic Education Grants to assist parents in sending their children to a Catholic School, a Christian School (where no Catholic equivalent is available), or a school for special needs (i.e., deaf, autistic, etc.). Any active parishioner is qualified to apply for one of the grants. Grants will be given based on financial need and involvement in parish life. If you'd like to apply, please reach out to me directly: [Jeffrey.kirby@charlestandiocese.org](mailto:Jeffrey.kirby@charlestandiocese.org). Inquiries will be received until July 27.

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:

In considering some of the responses to our efforts to find a new Business Manager, we've decided to split the position. And so, we are currently looking for a part-time Parish Bookkeeper, who will need to have all the skills of a full-charge bookkeeper. And, we are looking for a full-time Operations Manager, who will need to have skills in operations and management. If anyone is interested in applying for one of these different positions, please send your resume directly to me: [Jeffrey.kirby@charlestandiocese.org](mailto:Jeffrey.kirby@charlestandiocese.org).

On Sunday, August 2, around 12:15 PM, we'll have a Farewell Fellowship for our three seminarians as they prepare to head off to seminary. Please come and offer prayers, encouragement, and support to our seminarians!

Please note that the actual first Saturday in August is August 1, and so – as is our custom – we'll move our First Saturday observances to the following week, August 7-8, so that our First Friday and First Saturday are together.

On 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.

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.

Team Grace, our nation is receiving a great birthday gift from the Holy Spirit! In the coming year, as we celebrate our 250<sup>th</sup> 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

Very Rev. Jeffrey F. Kirby, STD, VF  
Pastor/Dean of Rock Hill Deanery  
[www.frkirby.com](http://www.frkirby.com)