

October 18, 2026

From Father Kirby...

Happy Sunday, Team Grace! In this liturgical season of Ordinary Time, we are invited to hear the Gospel of the Lord Jesus and renew our commitment to him. Are we living as faithful disciples? What more is the Lord asking of us?

During this month of the holy Rosary, I encourage everyone to pick up the rosary and pray it often! [Here's a link](#) on how to pray the rosary.

This Sunday, October 18, we'll once again host two blood buses on campus. As Christians, we honor and serve life. Please sign up to give blood. [Here's the link](#).

This Sunday, October 18, we'll have a parish Food Drive. All parishioners are encouraged to bring one (or some) of the following items with them to Mass: Jiffy corn bread mix; canned tuna; or 64oz juice (in plastic bottles). Please drop off the items at the pavilion before Mass. Members of our Helping Hands ministry will be there to help you.

In the narthex this weekend, we have sign-ups for our Live Nativity and Children's Christmas Choir. All children are invited to sign-up!

Some things happening at the parish this week:

This Monday, October 19, from 9:30 AM -11:30 AM, our Pastoral Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will meet for their annual training. I'm deeply grateful for these believers who take Holy Communion to those who are homebound and in a care facility. Thank you!

This Tuesday afternoon, October 20, our staff and some of our ministry leaders will be undergoing Basic First Aid and CPR training. This training is done as a part of our overall effort to keep our parish safe and secure.

This Saturday morning, October 24, at 8:30 AM we have our next Prayer Outreach at the local abortion facility. All parishioners are invited and encouraged to come and join in this peaceful, prayerful protest against the horror of abortion. The facility is located at 3220 Latrobe Drive, Charlotte, NC.

Next Sunday, October 25, we have Fellowship Sunday after our 11:00 AM Mass. Everyone is invited to come and share donuts and fellowship!

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:

From Monday evening, October 26, through Thursday afternoon, October 29, the priests of the diocese are away with the Bishop on retreat. And so, while I'm away from the parish, there will be no Confessions or Mass on Tuesday – Thursday, October 27-29. All other events are still in effect. Please note, however, that our afternoon Novenas are moved to 12 Noon and our afternoon Adoration begins a little earlier than usual. Please check [the parish calendar](#) if you have any questions.

On Saturday morning, October 31, from 9:00 AM – 12 Noon, we'll have our next gathering of the Saint Joseph Men's Fellowship. All men of the parish are invited to come for prayer, formation, and fellowship. Breakfast will also be available. For this session, I've been invited to give a talk on "Standing Firm and Speaking Truth: Living and Defending the Faith in a Secular World." Men, come be refreshed in faith and brotherhood!

On Saturday evening, October 31, at 4:00 PM, all young families are invited to come to Vespers and a special Trick or Treat by our Secular Franciscans. Children are encouraged to dress as saints for a blessing during Vespers. After Vespers, the Franciscans will give out candy in the Parish Hall and explain the holy lives of several different saints. All are welcome!

The Solemnity of All Saints, November 1, falls on a Sunday this year.

As we near November, the devotional month of the dead, I'd like to explain some of our Catholic traditions:

- The feast of All Souls is Monday, November 2. Our Mass schedule includes a 7:30 AM Quiet Mass in the church, a 12 Noon Mass at the Holy Angels Columbarium with the Blessing of Niches followed by the Meal of the Dead at the columbarium parking lot, and a 7:00 PM Mass with the Reading of Names in the church.

- Anyone who has lost a loved one within the past liturgical year (November 2 – November 1), is invited to send in the names of their loved ones for the Reading of Names at our 7:00 PM Mass on All Souls, November 2. Please send the names to Monty Bennett, our Director of Sacred Music, at mbennett@charlestdiocese.org.
- The Book of the Dead will be placed by the baptismal font on October 31. The faithful are invited to write the names of their deceased loved ones in the book. Those written in the Book of the Dead can be from any time period (and not just the past liturgical year).
- The collection on All Souls and the envelopes for All Souls go directly to the pastor. This is the only time a collection goes directly to the priest. The reason for this arrangement is because the pastor will offer prayers and private Masses for the names written on the All Souls envelopes throughout the coming liturgical year. Any checks should be made out to *Our Lady of Grace*. Please note that All Souls donations are not tax-deductible.

From November 4 – 8, [The Wall That Heals](#), which is the mobile version of the Vietnam Memorial, will be at the Springdale Recreation Complex in Lancaster. I want to encourage all parishioners and families to visit the wall while it's in our area. [Here is more information.](#)

On Sunday, November 8, at 1:00 PM, the parish is hosting a countywide Veterans Appreciation Meal. The event is free. The meal will be Thanksgiving-style with turkey and all the fixings. Please invite any veterans you know to come! Here's a [flyer for the event](#).

In light of recent national events, the parish is hosting a morning gathering of young mothers on Saturday, November 14, from 8:30 AM – 12 Noon. The event will start with breakfast and then consist of three round-table style conversations on postpartum depression, depressive mood, stress, anxiety, anger management, and any other topics that might come up. The conversations will be facilitated by a bilingual licensed counselor from [Guadalupe Counseling](#). All young moms are invited!

For the season of Advent, we're going to make the following changes to our liturgical and devotional life as a parish:

- Starting Saturday, November 28, we will have a Holy Hour of Adoration from 4:00 – 5:00 PM. Adoration will start with Solemn Vespers. Confessions will move to the Adoration time and be heard from 4:00 PM – 4:45 PM (and will

no longer be heard at 3:00 PM). Our Saturday evening Fellowships will be suspended.

In some other news: this coming year, I'll be hosting two different pilgrimages:

In March, Pope Leo XIV is meeting with all the Missionaries of Mercy in Rome. As a Missionary of Mercy, I plan to attend this gathering. But I've decided not to go by myself! I'll be hosting a pilgrimage to Rome and Malta around these gathering. If anyone would like to come to Rome and Malta, [please find the details here](#).

In June, I'll be taking some vacation time and going on pilgrimage to Ireland and Medjugorje. I've been wanting to go back to Ireland and offer Mass at the holy places there (especially at Knock and on one of the historic Mass Rocks), and I've always wanted to go to Medjugorje, but I didn't want to go until the Church endorsed pilgrimages there. This past year, that endorsement was given and so I look forward to visiting and offering Mass there. If you're also interested in a pilgrimage to Ireland and Medjugorje, [you can find the details here](#).

Grotto Update: We are now at **\$760,000** for Phase II. Two large gifts, however, are in transit. I hope to be able to announce these large gifts soon. Our committee has narrowed things down to one contractor and we have initiated the approval process with the diocese!

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

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Our parish is blessed to have three young men in the seminary. Please remember Noah Rusciolelli, London Shirley, and Zach Savage in your prayers. The seminarians can be reached via mail at: Saint Joseph's Seminary College, 75376 River Road, Saint Benedict, LA 70457