



Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church

3710 Augusta Rd. † Greenville, SC 29605

Church Office Phone
(864) 422-1648

Email: olr@charlestandioocese.org

Website: olr.church

Church Office Hours

9:00am -3:00pm Monday-Thursday
9:00am - 12:00pm, Friday

Fr. Dwight Longenecker

dlongenecker@charlestandioocese.org

Fr. Richard Ballard

rballard@charlestandioocese.org

School Office Hours

8:00 am - 3:00 pm, Monday-Friday
School Office Phone: 864-277-5350

WEEKEND MASS

Upper Church

Saturday 5:00 pm, Anticipated

Saturday, 8:00pm, *Neocatechumenal
Way Mass (Lower Church)*

Sunday 8:00 am, 10:30 am, 5:00 pm

WEEKEND CONFESSIONS

Saturday, 3:30-4:30 pm

Sunday, 9:00-10:00 am

DAILY MASS

Monday, 8:30 am, Lower Church

Tuesday, 12:00 pm, Lower Church

Wednesday, 6:00 pm Upper Church

Thursday, 10:00 am, Upper Church

Friday, 10:00 am, Lower Church

DAILY CONFESSIONS

Upper Church

Wednesday, 4:30-5:30 pm

Or by appointment

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

First Friday, 11am-5pm, Lower Church

Wednesday, 7am-5pm, Upper Church

Thursday, 7-8 pm, Lower Church

December 31, 2023

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At this time of year, it is popular for writers to explain that Christmas is "just an old Roman mid-winter holiday" that the Christians adopted and adapted for their own use. "Nobody knows" they claim "when or where Jesus Christ was really born. The Catholic Church is just the old pagan religion wearing new clothes."

This kind of anti-Catholic propaganda is commonplace, but those who propagate the untruths are ignorant of the facts. I've written elsewhere about how we know Jesus was born in late December, but while we're on the subject, there IS a winter festival that has pagan roots - its New Years Day, not Christmas.

The earliest records of a New Year celebration are from Mesopotamia around 2000 BC. Then the new year was heralded not in mid winter, but at the Spring equinox in mid-March. Following these already ancient customs, the first calendar of the Roman civilization had ten months and also recognized March as the beginning of the year. This is why September, October, November, and December have their names: from March they were the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth months. ("Sept" "Oct" "Nov" and "Dec" referring to the numbers 7,8,9 and 10) The second king of Rome, Numa Pompilius added January and February to front end of the calendar and in 153 BC we have the first record of January first being celebrated as New Years' Day.

When Julius Caesar replaced the old lunar based calendar in 46 BC with a solar calendar, he also formally established the beginning of January as New Year's Day. As the Empire fell and Europe transitioned to the new religion and rule of Christianity, the remains of pagan culture were purged. New Years' Day at the beginning of January was officially eliminated at the Council of Tours in 597, and across Europe the start of a new year was celebrated variously at Christmas, Easter or most significantly March 25.

The date of March 25, not only connected with the most ancient celebrations of the new year at the Spring equinox, but in the Christian calendar March 25, is the celebration of the Annunciation - the announcement by the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would bear a son.

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The date of March 25, was determined by the Jewish belief that great men were conceived on the same day of the year as their death. Jesus Christ died on March 25, (so the theory goes) which means he was conceived on March 25. Incidentally this is also the origin for the traditional date of Christmas - nine months from March 25.

Medieval Christians understood that the beginning of the life of the Son of God in the Virgin Mary's womb was the beginning of God's work among mankind, the restoration and redemption of the world and the beginning of a new creation. It was therefore theologically fitting that March 25, or Ladyday (in honor of the Virgin Mary) should be celebrated as New Years' Day. And so, it was for a thousand years.

Then in 1582 Pope Gregory XIII tinkered with Julius Caesar's ancient calendar. Because of imprecise calculations, the date of Easter had been drifting and the pope decided it needed fixing. Part of the reform was to re-establish January first as New Years' Day. Seeing this as papal presumption, the Eastern Orthodox rejected the reform. Seeing this as not only papal presumption, but paganism restored, the Protestants also rejected the new Gregorian calendar. The British did not adopt the new calendar until 1752. The Greeks held out until 1923.

Fans of the Catholic author J.R.R.Tolkien will be interested how this connects with Tolkien's great story *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien was very sly in the way he wove Christian symbolism into his epic myth. He records the dates of the great events in the cycle of the ring, and we discover that it is on March 25, that the ring of power is cast into the fires of Mount Doom, and so the destruction of Sauron heralds a new beginning for Middle Earth. Thus, Tolkien gives a nod to the medieval Christian tradition that March 25, is the true New Year's Day.

As you celebrate New Year's Day remember that for one thousand years the welcoming of a new year was not just a calendar event, but a culturally religious event which linked the renewal of nature with the redemption of the world, and January 1, as New Years' Day is a vestige of pagan Rome.

Your Pastor,
Fr. Longenecker

Pastoral Staff

Fr. Dwight Longenecker, Pastor
dlongenecker@charlestdioocese.org

Fr. Richard Ballard, Parochial Vicar
rballard@charlestdioocese.org

Deacon Mike Bannio
mbannio@charlestdioocese.org

Deacon Jerry Schiffer
jschiffer@charlestdioocese.org

Parish Office (864) 422-1648
OLR School (864) 277-5350

Organist and Choirmaster

Benjamin Phillips, bphillips@charlestdioocese.org

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Tommy Curtin, thomas.curtin@olrschool.net

Youth Ministry Coordinator

David Haggard, david.haggard@olrschool.net

Parish Operating Financials

Weekend Collections for Dec. 24, 2023

Not Yet Announced

Will be published in the Jan. 7, 2024 bulletin.

Needed:

Received:

Surplus:

Fiscal Year-to-Date Collections through Week
#26 in the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2023

Needed:

Received:

Deficit:

Capital Campaign-Land Acquisition

5.2 acres on Augusta Rd. \$1,230,439. Diocesan
Loan (total interest & principal to be paid)
2023-2028: 5-year term

Pledge Commitments Made:

Pledge Payments Received:

Needed:

PRAYER REQUESTS

Nancy Alibozek, Delores Almaraz, Barbara Andersen, Ruth Ballard, Laurie Bernard, Jim Bever, Glen Bishof, Sandra Brock, Will Busby, Martha Catel, Claudia Caldwell, Alex Camp, Carson Family, Kathleen Crawford, Margaret Culkin, Rose Cusumano, Christy Dias, Marian Eleazer, Sarah & Teresa Fuller, Larry & Cynthia Good, Bridget Gracon, Michael Granger, Phillip Greene, Ma'May Grimm, Ed Harden, Janet Hardy, Donald Hargis, Theresa Hargreaves, Kathy Hess, Kathy Illingworth, Ingrid Ireland, Bob Jackowski, Stephanie Kaufmann, Beth Kitchen, Kenneth Landgrover, Gerry Loesch, John Loesch, Katherine Lowry, Anna Lunn, Madeline McKiernan, Lisa Meyer, Dianne Morrison, Marjorie Munson, Mrs. That Nguyen, Kim Orr, Marlowe Pastor, Dcn. Ray & Nancy Perham, Thien Pham, Andres Prestoza, Jacob & Jaxson Rivera, David Rubardt, Sonam Sherpa, Nancy & Earl Smith, Frank Striplin, Peter Stryker, Tedrick Family, Justin Timbers, Cheryl Wallace, Mary Lou Whelan, Kayla Wiegand, Steve Wiltberger, Marcia Wolff, Jim Wood, Will Woodward, Mary Louise Worthy & family, and all who are sick.

PARISH CALENDAR

Saturday, December 30, through Sunday, January 7

(Mass Intentions are shown in italics)

All Masses are held in Upper Church unless otherwise noted.

| | |
|---|--|
| Saturday, 12/30 | 3:30 - 4:30 pm - Confessions (Upper Church) 5:00 pm - Mass, <i>For Gary Culbertson+</i> |
| Sunday, 12/31 Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph | 8:00 am - Mass, <i>For The People</i> 9:00 - 10:00 am - Confessions (Upper Church) 10:30 am - Mass 5:00 pm - Mass |
| Monday, 1/1 Lower Church | 10:00 am - Mass Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God (Not a Holy Day of Obligation) |
| Tuesday, 1/2 Lower Church | 12:00 pm - Mass, <i>For Special Intention</i> |
| Wednesday, 1/3 | 7:00 am - 5:00 pm - Eucharistic Adoration 4:30 - 5:30 pm - Confessions (Upper Church) 6:00 pm - Mass, <i>For Sr. Rose of St. Mary, O.P.</i> |
| Thursday, 1/4 | 10:00am - Mass, <i>For Miller Hutson</i> |
| Friday, 1/5 | 10:00am - Mass, <i>For Frank & Claire Howe+</i> |
| Saturday, 1/6 | 3:30 - 4:30 pm - Confessions (Upper Church) 5:00 pm - Mass, <i>For Ralph Lackey Hardin, III+</i> |
| Sunday, 1/7 Epiphany of the Lord | 8:00 am - Mass, <i>For Michael Menegay+</i> 9:00 - 10:00 am - Confessions (Upper Church) 10:30 am - Mass, <i>For the People</i> 5:00 pm - Mass, <i>For Jake & Riley Valente</i> |

**Fr. Longenecker, Fr. Richard, the Deacons
and parish staff wish to express their
thanks for the many cards and gifts
that they received this Christmas.
All were most appreciated!**

Please note the school and parish offices will be
closed for Christmas Break from Dec. 25 - January 2.

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

We will NOT have our regular Youth Group meeting this Sunday, Dec. 31. Our next regular meeting will be on Saturday night, January 6, the Epiphany Family Dance.



School News



- Dec. 17 - Jan. 2** Christmas Break
- Jan. 3** Classes Resume
- Jan. 3-9** Interim Semester for MS and US

MOTHER TERESA HOUSE

"To parents: It is very important that children learn from their fathers and mothers how to love one another – not in the school, not from the teacher, but from you. It is very important that you share with your children the joy of that smile. There will be misunderstandings; every family has its cross, its suffering. Always be the first to forgive with a smile. Be cheerful, be happy." **Mother Teresa**

This week we celebrate the Holy Family. The traditional family is under attack in this world. We see it every day at Mother Teresa House. Hold your family close and pray to the Holy Family.

Chris Loewer, Director of Outreach
cloewer@charlestondiocese.org

St. Vincent de Paul

Today is the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. During our New Year may our families "grow in wisdom and have the favor of God upon them."

This month, through your gifts, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was able to bring Christmas to the hearts of the poor, by providing food to 175 families, hats, gloves and scarves to 72 individuals and in November provided \$2,375.55 for utility and rent bill assistance. Thank you so much for your generosity.

Divine Mercy Ministry for the Dying

Perhaps you are not in a "holiday mood" because someone you love is gravely ill. Remember that the word "holiday" comes from "holy day" - and what days are holier than those of a loved one on the threshold of eternal life? OLR has a new parish ministry devoted to praying the powerful Divine Mercy Chaplet daily for one week (renewable) for those near the end of life.

Please reach out to the Divine Mercy Cenacle to request these prayers by contacting Martha Mahan in the parish office.

FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will be held in Lower Church on Friday, Jan. 5, from 11:00am-5:00pm.

Epiphany Family Dance

January 6th 6-10pm

The whole parish is invited! This will be a casual gathering with fellowship and fun music for dancing in the OLR gym after the 5pm Mass. We are keeping it simple after the holiday craziness, so bring a heavy appetizer or dessert to share.

Contact Devin Ascheman with any questions
aschemans@gmail.com
808-469-8436

RCIA



Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults

We will pause our December meetings for Christmas Break. Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday, January 10**, in Guadalupe Hall at 7pm, discussing "Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick".

St. Martha's Book Club invites you to join our discussions in Guadalupe Hall, 12:30-2:00 pm.

Tuesday, Jan. 2 - **Joy to the World** by Scott Hahn



Call Marianne at (864) 360-2406 for information.

Monday, January 1, 2024

Solemnity of Mary,
the Holy Mother of God

Daily Mass at 10:00am only

(NOT a Holy Day of Obligation)



First Thursday Adoration
January 4, 6-8pm, in Lower Church.



Please join the Respect Life Committee as we pray for further protections for the unborn and vulnerable among us, for our priests, deacons and religious, all who pray and counsel at the abortion clinic, as well as the volunteers and clients of OLR's Walking with Moms in Need program.

If you are the mother of a tween daughter, you know how precious and important these years are. Build a stronger bond by communicating and having fun together at the Arise and Shine Mother/Tween Daughter retreat at Heart Ridge.



Fri-Sat., FEBRUARY 2-3. We'll have some short talks about puberty and becoming a woman, as well as opportunities for hikes, games, and crafts. Like a slumber party, but with comfortable beds, healthier foods, and much more sleep!

For more information, see:
<http://www.HeartRidgeMinistries.com/MotherDaughter>



Marriage Troubles? If your marriage has become troubled and stressed, unloving or uncaring; if you might have grown cold and distant; or even if you are divorced or separated, or are thinking about it, Retrouvaille can help...as it has already helped tens of thousands of others.

Our next program begins **January 19-21, 2024**. For information, visit www.helpourmarriage.org, or call (727) 343-6701. Not counseling or group therapy. All contacts and names held in absolute confidence.

RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY NEWS

First Saturday Pro-Life Mass for the Protection of the Unborn and Pro-Life Warriors



OLR's next First Saturday Pro-Life Mass for Protection of the Unborn and Pro-Life Warriors will be on Saturday, January 6, at 9:30 am in Upper Church.

Sidewalk Advocates, 40 Days for Life and OLR's Respect Life Committee will provide updates on pro-life issues and all are encouraged to join us in praying the rosary at the abortion clinic afterwards located at 1142 Grove Road.

For info, call 864-772-9020. Thank you!



Providing comfort and assistance to Moms in Need.

Call or email for an appointment. 864-412-7101 or wwmin@proton.me

YOU COUNT, and we are here to help!

Please see the OLR websites at olr.church and olr.school for all the most recent news and announcements.