

St. Rita Catholic Church



3815 Russell Road | Alexandria, VA 22305
703-836-1640 (office) 703-706-0484 (fax)
Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 9 am - 9 pm
www.stritaalexandria.com / www.saintrita-school.org



December 22, 2024: Fourth Sunday of Advent

CLERGY AND STAFF

Pastor	Rev. Christopher P. Christensen frc41@gmail.com	Ext. 17
Parochial Vicar	Rev. Nicholas Schierer fatherschierer@gmail.com	Ext. 30
Permanent Deacon	Deacon Stephen J. Dixon deacondixon.strita@gmail.com	
In Residence	Rev. Paul Berghout ihmpadre@gmail.com	Ext. 15
Director of Sacred Music	Lawrence Bowie lbowie.strita@gmail.com	Ext. 29
Parish Secretary and Hispanic Liaison	Alma Ramirez aramirez.strita@gmail.com	Ext. 10
Business Manager	Debbie Beck dbeck.strita@gmail.com	Ext. 13
Director of Religious Education	Chloe Holloway cholloway.strita@gmail.com	Ext. 12
Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry	Maria Goitiandia mgoitiandia.strita@gmail.com	Ext. 38
Sacristan	Elizabeth Vail evail.strita@gmail.com	Ext. 11
Bulletin Editor	Elizabeth Vail bulletin.submit.strita@gmail.com	
Maintenance Manager	Adan Aguilar aaguilar.strita@gmail.com	

HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

(The Church is open for prayer every day from 6 am - 9 pm.)

Sunday: 7:00 am, 8:00 am, 9:15 am (2nd Sunday: Novus Ordo Latin), 11:00 am & 1:00 pm (en Español)

Monday: 7:00 am & 7:30 pm (preceded by Miraculous Medal Novena)

Tuesday: 7:00 am

Wednesday: 7:00 am & 7:30 pm

Thursday: 7:00 am

Friday: 7:00 am & 7:30 pm (Novus Ordo Latin)

Saturday: 8:00 am, 5:00 pm (Sunday Vigil Mass)

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

Monday - Friday: 6:30 pm

Saturday: 8:30 am, 4:00 pm, & 7:00 pm

Sunday: 12:30 pm (en Español)

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Monday - Thursday: 6:30 - 7:30 pm

Friday: 8:00 pm - 8:00 am (Saturday)

ST. RITA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

“The soul of education is the education of the soul”

<https://saintrita-school.org> | 703-548-1888

Principal

Malia Busekrus

Preschool Director

Caitlin Rockwell

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to St. Rita Church! Please join us, as together we worship God and grow in love for one another under the protection of our patroness, St. Rita of Cascia. Registration forms can be found in the Russell Road entrance of the church, or online at www.stritaalexandria.com/parish-registration/.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Please contact the Parish Office to make arrangements to attend a Baptism preparation class, scheduled individually with Fr. Schierer. Please note that it is possible for expectant parents to attend the preparation class before the birth of their child.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Please contact the Parish Office to obtain an application to begin marriage preparation. Diocesan regulations require 6 months of marriage preparation. Living together before marriage is sinful and harmful to future marriage. Couples who are living together will be asked to live separately during the marriage preparation time.

HOSPITALIZED AND HOMEBOUND PARISHIONERS

Please contact the Parish office so that the hospitalized and homebound may receive pastoral care from the priests and volunteers of St. Rita.

Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

Monday, December 23, 2024

Saint John of Kanty, Priest

7:00 am Austin and Veronica Simon
7:30 pm Mary Ann Blazevich

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 am Robert D'Sylva †
The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
5:00 pm William Hass †

Wednesday, December 25, 2024

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

12:00 am (Midnight) Sanctification of Priests
7:00 am Margaret Roberts †
8:00 am Frank and Alice Walsh †
11:00 am Missa Pro Populo
1:00 pm (en Español) Por todos los niños de nuestra comunidad

Thursday, December 26, 2024

Saint Stephen, the First Martyr

7:00 am Fr. Lukasz Duda

Friday, December 27, 2024

Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist

7:00 am Marilyn Ann Ungerleider †
7:30 pm Maurice Daly †

Saturday, December 28, 2024

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

8:00 am Joanne Robertson †
5:00 pm Alice Walsh †

Sunday, December 29, 2024

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

7:00 am Jay and Gina Austin
8:00 am Joan Minto †
11:00 am Missa Pro Populo
1:00 pm Nicolas y Vanessa Lopez

Additional Mass Intentions this Week:

Gianna Schmitz, Fr. Paul Scalia, Isaac Raile

Advent cum Augustine for Young Adults

All Young Adults (ages 19-35) are invited to join the Young Adults for "Advent cum Augustine," **every Sunday of Advent from 7:00-8:30 pm** in the St. Rita Convent. We will discuss St. Augustine's sermons on Advent, followed by the Recitation of the Rosary.



Gift for Life Giving Tree

Please consider giving a Gift for Life this Advent and Christmas season. The tags on our Giving Tree in the Russell Road vestibule will support the Gabriel Project Pregnancy

Assistance and Project Rachel After Abortion Care ministries. For more information or to donate online, please visit www.arlingtondiocese.org/giftforlife.

Bulletin Submissions

Please submit all announcements for the bulletin to Elizabeth Vail at bulletin.submit.strita@gmail.com by Wednesday, ten days before the desired bulletin date. Thank you!

*The Clergy and Staff of St. Rita Parish wish
you a very blessed Christmas!*

*Parish offices will be closed from Tuesday,
December 24 through Friday, December 27.*

Christmas Mass Schedule

CHRISTMAS EVE:

4:30 PM MUSICAL PRELUDE
5:00 PM VIGIL MASS (ENGLISH)
11:30 PM MUSICAL PRELUDE

CHRISTMAS DAY:

12:00 AM MIDNIGHT MASS
(ENGLISH)
7:00 AM (ENGLISH)
8:00 AM (ENGLISH)
11:00 AM (ENGLISH)
1:00 PM (SPANISH)

*THERE WILL BE NO ADORATION OR
CONFESSIONS ON CHRISTMAS EVE
OR CHRISTMAS DAY.*

Please call the parish office or see
the flyers in the vestibules for the
full schedule of Masses.



*And she gave birth to her firstborn son, and
wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in
a manger, because there was no room for them in
the inn. (Luke 2:7)*

This Week at St. Rita

Sunday, December 22, 2024

10:30 am St. Rita Young Adult Brunch
4:00 pm Las Posadas followed by Celebration
7:00 pm Young Adult Advent Series

Monday, December 23, 2024

No Religious Education Classes
5:30 pm Legión de María (en Español)

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

Parish Offices will be closed for the Christmas Holiday
No Confessions or Adoration
No scheduled events

Wednesday, December 25, 2024

Parish Offices will be closed for the Christmas Holiday
No Confessions or Adoration
No Religious Education or RICA Classes

Thursday, December 26, 2024

Parish Offices will be closed for the Christmas Holiday
No scheduled events

Friday, December 27, 2024

Parish Offices will be closed for the Christmas Holiday
7:00 pm Vespers

Saturday, December 28, 2024

9:15 am Legion of Mary

Sunday, December 29, 2024

6:00 pm Hispanic Prayer Group



DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON

Office of the Bishop

200 North Glebe Road, Suite 914 • Arlington, Virginia 22203 • Office (703) 841-2511 • Fax (703) 524-5028

Christmas 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christmas celebrates the reason for our hope, as Sacred Scripture proclaims: “For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord.” (Luke 2:11) The coming of the Lord offers us a sure hope no matter our challenges or circumstances. Our hope for true peace in the world, for unity rather than division, and for a better future for ourselves and our loved ones—we draw all these hopes from Christ and our union with him.

This Christmas, Pope Francis will inaugurate the opening of the Holy Year of 2025, a Jubilee Year in our Church, with the theme “pilgrims of hope” and strengthening us with the words of Saint Paul: “Hope does not disappoint” (Romans 5:5). As one family of faith, may our lives this Christmas and throughout the Holy Year be marked by the hope that does not fade, so that by God's grace, we may faithfully and lovingly journey with one another toward eternal happiness with our Father in Heaven.

May our Lord Jesus bless you and fill you with his peace at Christmas and always, and may the hope he inspires be shared with all those you encounter in the new year to come.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Arlington



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Navidad 2024

Queridos hermanos y hermanas en Cristo,

La Navidad celebra la razón de nuestra esperanza, como proclama la Sagrada Escritura: "Porque hoy, en la ciudad de David, os ha nacido un salvador, que es el Mesías y el Señor". (Lc 2, 11) La venida del Señor nos ofrece una esperanza segura, sean cuales sean nuestros retos o circunstancias. Nuestra esperanza de una paz verdadera en el mundo, de unidad en lugar de división, y de un futuro mejor para nosotros mismos y para nuestros seres queridos: todas estas esperanzas las extraemos de Cristo y de nuestra unión con Él.

Esta Navidad, el Papa Francisco inaugurará la apertura del Año Santo 2025, Año Jubilar en nuestra Iglesia, con el tema "peregrinos de la esperanza" y fortaleciéndonos con las palabras de San Pablo: "La esperanza no defrauda". (Romanos 5:5) Como una sola familia de fe, que nuestras vidas en esta Navidad y durante todo el Año Santo estén marcadas por la esperanza que no se desvanece, para que, por la gracia de Dios, podamos caminar fiel y amorosamente unos con otros hacia la felicidad eterna con nuestro Padre del Cielo.

Que nuestro Señor Jesús los bendiga y los llene de su paz en Navidad y siempre, y que la esperanza que Él inspira sea compartida con todos aquellos con quienes se encuentren en el nuevo año que comienza.

Sinceramente en Cristo,

Mons. Michael F. Burbidge
Obispo de Arlington

Advent
and
Christmas
Scripture Challenge



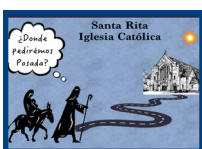
The living Word of God
will transform your life!

Advent and Christmas Scripture Challenge and Lectio Divina

The Advent and Christmas Scripture Challenge continues through Epiphany. You can find materials in both English and Spanish on our parish website at www.stritaalexandria.com. This challenge is a wonderful way to deepen our faith and come together as a community in anticipation of the joy and hope of Christmas. The Diocese has also created a series of lectio divina meditations for Advent in both English and Spanish. In these series, you will learn the basics of putting lectio divina into practice. Our diocesan priests will teach you what lectio is, but more importantly, how you can incorporate it into your life of prayer to draw closer to God. You can find these videos on the diocesan website at <https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/lectio>.

Las Posadas

Join the St. Rita Hispanic Community **this afternoon, Sunday, December 22 at 4:00 pm** for Las Posadas, followed by a celebration with food and drink. Las Posadas is an Advent tradition commemorating Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem looking for shelter. We will gather outside the church and in the vestibule to begin.



Únase a la comunidad hispana de Santa Rita **esta tarde, domingo 22 de diciembre a las 4:00 pm** para Las Posadas, seguidas de una celebración con comida y bebida. Las Posadas es una tradición de Adviento que conmemora la llegada de María y José a Belén en busca de refugio. Nos reuniremos afuera de la iglesia y en el vestíbulo para comenzar.

Upcoming Second Collections

- December 25: Christmas
- January 1, 2025: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
- January 5: Repairs and Replacements

Thank you for your continued generosity!

Please Pray for These St. Rita Parishioners

For all those discerning Religious Vocations:

Sr. Maria Josepha, Labor Mariae; Deacon William Manaker, Society of Jesus; Catherine Addington, Daughters of St. Paul; Sr. Giovanna Lamarra, Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles; Seminarians for the Diocese of Arlington, especially Deacon Joseph Connor, John Murphy, and Daniel Usewick

For the Sick in our Parish:

Renuka Carlitti, Karen Davidson, J.G., Constance Richardson

If you know of someone who should be on the list, please contact Elizabeth at bulletin.submit.strita@gmail.com. Names will remain on the above prayer list for 30 days from the time they are requested. At the end of that time, you may renew your request.

Thank you!

For the Deceased in our Parish:

John Abarre, Hessie Bannon, Bob D'Sylva, Lee Edwards, Mary Gleeson, William C. Haas, Aileen Price, Joanne Robertson, Laura Maitre Stevens, George Szele, Rafael Vasquez-Coubert, Raymond Williams, Angela Wilson

WorkCamp 2025

Registration is open for WorkCamp 2025! High School students, parents, and adult volunteers are invited to attend this sleep-away camp from **June 21-27, 2025**. WorkCamp is an opportunity for students to experience a community of faith, service, and fun! Find more information and complete our parish registration form at <https://stritaalexandria.com/workcamp/>. If you are interested in serving as an adult volunteer, please complete the interest form found at <https://stritaalexandria.com/workcamp-adult-volunteer-interest-form/>. Registration will close in early February and is first come, first served, so don't delay! Contact **Maria Goitiandia** at mgoitiandia.strita@gmail.com with any questions.



Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary is a lay apostolate whose members are dedicated to serving the Church through prayer and apostolic works, under the leadership of our Lady. The English Adult Legion group meets on **Saturdays at 9:15 am** in the Parish Center conference room.

Junior Legion

The Junior Legion of Mary, open to children in grade 3 and higher, meets on **Thursdays at 4:00 pm**. They visit Alexandria Rehab Center as their work.

For more information or if you are interested in joining in the work of the Legion of Mary, please contact **Vivian Moran** at vivian.b.moran@gmail.com or call or text her at **(703) 888-8196**.

Saint Rita School Open House



St. Rita School is hosting an Open House on **Thursday, January 9 at 9:00 am** for all prospective preschool and K-8 families. Our presentations and tours will highlight our Catholic, classical approach to education within a strong community. To RSVP, please visit our website at saintrita-school.org.

Together We Celebrate Life: March for Life 2025

The March for Life is an inspiring, peaceful, vibrant, and joy-filled rally of women, men, young people, and children from all across the country who gather every year to march on Capitol Hill near the anniversary of the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling which legalized abortion in all 50 states. We celebrate each and every life, from the moment of conception, and envision a world where every life is celebrated, valued, and protected. Please join other St. Rita parishioners for Mass at noon, a light lunch, and then a bus ride to the Mall for the March on **Friday, January 24, 2025**. We will return to St. Rita Church around **5:00 pm**. Look for a sign-up list in the vestibule. Please contact **Chris Durel** at **571-289-7228** if you have any questions.

News from the Diocese and Beyond

Vocations

"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." (Luke 1:45) Like Mary, you are called to trust in God's plan for your life. If you feel that God is asking you to serve as a priest or religious brother or sister, believe in His promise and follow with courage. Talk to your priest or reach out to the **Vocation Office** at **(703) 841-2514** or via email: vocations@arlingtondiocese.org.