



St. Rita Catholic Church

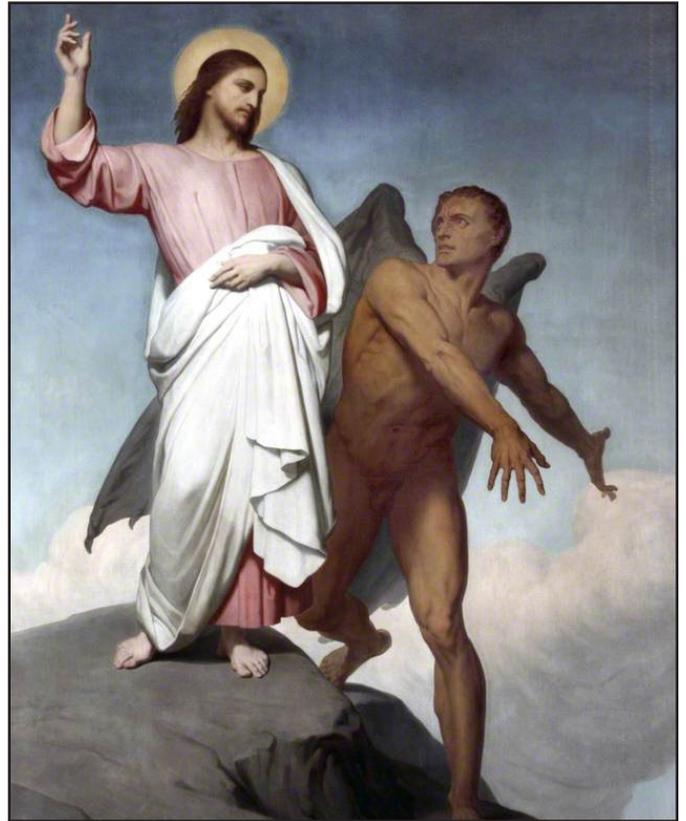
3815 Russell Road | Alexandria, VA 22305 | 703-836-1640 (office) 703-706-0484 (fax)

www.stritaalexandria.com | Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 9 am - 9 pm

February 22, 2026: First Sunday of Lent

CLERGY AND STAFF

Pastor	Rev. Christopher P. Christensen fccc41@gmail.com	Ext. 17
Parochial Vicar	Rev. Nicholas Schierer fatherschierer@gmail.com	Ext. 30
In Residence	Rev. Paul Berghout ihmpadre@gmail.com	Ext. 15
Permanent Deacon	Deacon Stephen J. Dixon deacondixon.strita@gmail.com	
Retired Permanent Deacon	Deacon Chris DiGrado cjdigrado@me.com	
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 and Bulletin Editor	Elizabeth Vail evail.strita@gmail.com	Ext. 11
Maintenance Manager	Adan Aguilar aaguilar.strita@gmail.com	



"Jesus said to him, 'Get away, Satan! It is written: The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'"
(Mt. 4:10)

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

(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

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)

Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

Monday, February 23, 2026

Monday of the First Week of Lent;

Saint Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr

7:00 am Victor Summers ☩

7:30 pm The Little Children of the Most High
Religious Community

Tuesday, February 24, 2026

Tuesday of the First Week of Lent

7:00 am Clelia Isaja ☩

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

Wednesday of the First Week of Lent

7:00 am Frank Walsh ☩

7:30 pm Margaret McLaughlin

Thursday, February 26, 2026

Thursday of the First Week of Lent

7:00 am Sean T. Cincotta ☩

Friday, February 27, 2026

Friday of the First Week of Lent

7:00 am Anthony Severdia

7:30 pm Tobias Elsworth Weaver

Saturday, February 28, 2026

Saturday of the First Week of Lent

8:00 am Dominick Aveni ☩

5:00 pm Kate Ford

Sunday, March 1, 2026

Second Sunday of Lent

7:00 am Fr. Nicholas Schierer

8:00 am Joseph Petersen

11:00 am Missa Pro Populo

1:00 pm Elena Esparza ☩

Additional Mass Intentions this Week:

Travis Renee Baldwin ☩, Jacinta King, Travis Renee Baldwin ☩, Rodney and Kimberly Wilson

Soup and Stations

Join us **every Friday in Lent at 5:30 pm** for a simple soup supper in the Parish Center followed by Stations of the Cross (**6:00pm en Español; 6:30pm in English**) in the Church.

Please bring a pot of meatless soup to share. Bread and water will be provided by the hosting group. The hosting group for this Friday will be the Young Adults.



January 2026 Collections

Regular Offertory:	\$27,902
Parish Giving Offertory:	\$80,255
Repairs & Replacements:	\$3,324
Parish Giving Repairs & Replacements:	\$19,734
Poor Box:	\$2,096
Parish Giving Poor Box:	\$5,890

Bulletin/Newsletter Submissions

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

Lenten Regulations for Fast and Abstinence

Abstinence from meat is to be observed by all Catholics 14 years old and older on **Ash Wednesday** and **all Fridays of Lent**. This obligation prohibits the eating of meat, but not eggs, milk products, or condiments of any kind (even those made from animal fat). Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 are obliged to **fast** on **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday**. On days of **fasting**, only one full meal may be taken. Two additional smaller meals are permitted to maintain strength, but the two smaller meals together may not equal one full meal.

Middle School Ministry

Calendar for Spring 2026

Wednesday, March 11th – Middle School Ministry Night

Thursday, April 2nd – Seven Churches Pilgrimage

Wednesday, April 8th – OFF for the Easter Octave

Saturday, April 25th – Diocesan BASH

Wednesday, May 13th – Middle School Ministry Night

All monthly Wednesday night Ministry events take place in the School Hall from 6:15-7:30pm and dinner will be provided!



For more information and to register your 6th - 8th graders contact Maria Goitandia at mgoitandia.strita@gmail.com

Upcoming Second Collections

February 22: Black and Indian Mission Collection

March 1: Repairs and Replacements

Thank you for your continued generosity!

This Week at St. Rita

Sunday, February 22, 2026

10:30 am St. Rita Young Adult Brunch

2:00 pm Spanish Baptism Class

6:00 pm Hispanic Prayer Group

Monday, February 23, 2026

5:30 pm Legión de María (en Español)

6:15 pm Religious Education Classes

7:00 pm Young Adult Bible Study

Tuesday, February 24, 2026

3:30 pm Homeschool Schola Practice

7:00 pm Hispanic Bible Study

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

2:30 pm Homeschool Holy Hour

6:15 pm Religious Education Classes

6:30 pm Legion of Mary

Thursday, February 26, 2026

4:00 pm Junior Legion of Mary

Friday, February 27, 2026

5:30 pm Lenten Soup Supper

6:00 pm Via Crucis en Español

6:30 pm Stations of the Cross

7:00 pm Vespers

Saturday, February 28, 2026

9:00 am OCIA

Sunday, March 1, 2026

5:30 pm Teams of our Lady

6:00 pm Hispanic Prayer Group



Saint Rita Catholic Church

3815 Russell Road | Alexandria, VA 22305 | 703.836.1640 | stritaalexandria.com

Ash Wednesday, 2026

Dear St. Rita Parishioners,

“I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, your spiritual worship” (Romans 12:1). We are entering upon the holy season of Lent, in which we prepare ourselves more intentionally for the celebration of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Our Lord. This time is privileged for us Catholics, because the whole focus of the Church is powerfully lifted from this earth to the heavenly realm. Our Lenten penances, which to outsiders seem archaic and, in a pejorative sense, medieval, are rather means of expressing our love for God, since by them we both acknowledge the futility of this life and share in the Passion of Christ on the Cross.

It was Christ’s Passion that not only witnessed God’s Love for the world, but also that brought about in truth the world’s salvation. When we share with Jesus the tiny portion of the Cross which He in His generous Love permits us to experience, He makes us co-redeemers with Himself. His Body, of which you are a member by your Baptism, has been given for the sake of the whole world, and so when you suffer with Christ by means of your crosses and penances, His Body is suffering still for the sake of the whole world!

Every culture under the sun offers (and has offered) sacrifice in hopes of obtaining God’s favor. Even persons that do not believe in God as we do make sacrifices for the sake of their respective highest goods, which we would call idols. St. Paul, quoted at the beginning of this message, has invited us to make of ourselves a sacrifice to God in union with and in imitation of Christ Himself. His One Sacrifice was eminently acceptable to God, since it was the first fruits – the best – of what humanity had to offer, reminiscent of the sacrifice of Abel. In addition, it was given freely and in total, selfless Love of God and of neighbor. When we offer our own sacrifices by the grace and power of Christ’s Sacrifice, we are conformed to that total, selfless Love.

This Lent, I invite you to embrace Christ’s Sacrifice in your penances. I invite you to enter into your penances wholeheartedly and with great love. I invite you to persevere in them without failing, all the way to Easter. Your Divine Redeemer longs for you, for your own sake, not His. Indeed, He longs for all of His children, especially those who are lost. In love of Him, then, offer your penances for the conversion of sinners, especially those who live in the boundaries of St. Rita. Make a concerted effort to drink deeply of the crosses that you are permitted, especially during this time of Lent. I am firmly convinced that if we, as a parish, offer ourselves for the conversion of souls by means of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, then by Easter we will see the fruits of our laboring in the vineyard of the Lord. All for Our Lord. All for the salvation of souls!

In Christ,

Fr. Christensen

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON

MEN'S CONFERENCE 2026

MARCH 7TH | 8AM - 2PM

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

750 PEACHTREE ST., HERNDON, VA

Men of the Diocese are invited to a day of fellowship, prayer and learning, centered around the historic election of the first American Pope, **Leo XIV**, and its coinciding with the 2026 celebration of the **250th** anniversary of our national founding.

For more info & to Register:

ARLINGTONDIOCESE.ORG/MEN



Office of Marriage, Family and Respect Life
703.841.2550 | familylife@arlingtondiocese.org | @arlingtonfamily

2026 Women's Conference

Faith, Hope & Courage

Catholic Women Helping to Form our Great Nation



Saturday, March 14

8 am - 2 pm | St. Joseph Catholic Church

For more info & to register go to:
arlingtondiocese.org/women



CAR RAFFLE

4 - 2026 VEHICLES plus 21 CASH Drawings

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE ST. RITA YOUTH MINISTRY

1 - \$5.00 Ticket

gives you a chance to win all 25 prizes, including:

2026 FORD BRONCO SPORT

2026 FORD MAVERICK TRUCK

2026 FORD MUSTANG

2026 FORD ESCAPE

plus 21 CASH Drawings totaling \$42,000



Drawings held April 25, 2025 Beginning at 1:00pm at
ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH

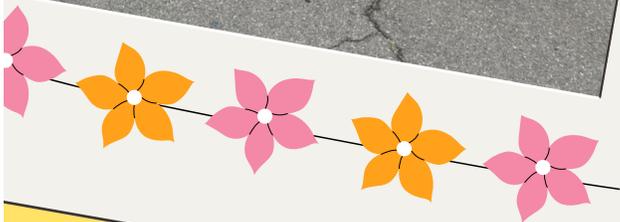
You do not need to be present at the drawing to win

Tickets have been mailed to all registered parishioners of St. Rita
Catholic Church for purchase!

Contact our St. Rita Car Raffle Coordinator
at strita.car.raffle@gmail.com

Sponsored by All Saints Catholic Church - 9300 Stonewall Road, Manassas, VA
20110 - 703-368-4500 - www.allsaintsva.org

Cars Provided By: Ourisman Ford of Manassas
Permit number G-25-01390-119504



2026

SAINT RITA SUMMER CAMP

CAMP SCHEDULE:

**WEEK 1: JUNE 29 – JULY 2
(NO CAMP JULY 3RD)**

WEEK 2: JULY 6 – JULY 10

WEEK 3: JULY 13 – JULY 17

REGISTER NOW



billy



Baptism Classes

The next Spanish Baptism class will take place on **Sunday, February 22** at **2:00 pm**. English Baptism classes are scheduled on an individual basis with Fr. Schierer. Please contact the parish office for more information or to sign up for a class.



Come and Adore the Lord!

In last week's weekly note (<https://stritaalexandria.com/february-15-2026/>), Fr. Christensen encouraged parishioners to commit to an hour of Adoration during our all night Adoration **Friday night from 8pm - Saturday, 8 am**. Our goal is to have two committed Adorers for each hour. Your commitment will be a source of grace for yourself, the parish, the Church, and the whole world. If you are interested in signing up to be a committed Adorer, please contact **Michael Cahill** at Cahill09@hotmail.com.



"The time you spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the best time that you will spend on earth." (St. Teresa of Calcutta)

Prayer of St. Polycarp (Feast Day: February 23)

O Lord God Almighty, the Father of your beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of You, the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and of the whole race of the righteous who live before you, I give You thanks that You have counted me, worthy of this day and this hour, that I should have a part in the number of Your martyrs, in the cup of your Christ, to the resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and body, through the incorruption [imparted] by the Holy Ghost. ... Wherefore also I praise You for all things, I bless You, I glorify You, along with the everlasting and heavenly Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, with whom, to You, and the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and to all coming ages. Amen.

Please Pray for These St. Rita Parishioners

For all those discerning Religious Vocations:

Catherine Addington, Daughters of St. Paul; Sr. Giovanna Lamma, Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles; Br. Nathaniel Labs, Order of Preachers; Mark Martinez, Archdiocese of Santa Fe; Seminarians for the Diocese of Arlington, especially John Murphy and Daniel Usewick

For the Sick in our Parish:

Judy Burke, Renuka Carlitti, Josephine Cunningham, Barry Foust, Julie Gunlock, Jennifer Jacobs, Kimberly Meredith, Constance Richardson, Hayden Ruffin, Susan Tracey, Col. Christie Walton

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:

Veronica Abarre, Daniel Lee Beiro, Celia Coletto, Mickey Kimball, David Langley, Oscar Merino, Catherine Elizabeth Nugent, Jane Rippy, Fermin L. Vilar

Food Donation Reminder

Thank you for your generous donations of non-perishable food in the food baskets in the vestibules. Please note that we can only accept *non-perishable* food. We are unable to accept expired food, bread or fresh vegetables, or already-opened bags or containers. We also do not accept clothing donations. The following local organizations will accept clothing donations:

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington (Christ House)

131 S. West St., Alexandria, VA 22314

(Tuesdays only - must call ahead)

Green Drop

7210 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA 22306

Look Again Resale Shop

900 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314

Pamphlet Racks

Please note that no materials may be placed in the vestibules or book/pamphlet racks without the permission of the parish office. Any unauthorized materials (books, pamphlets, holy cards, etc.) placed in the vestibules will be discarded.

Annual All Saints' Car Raffle

St. Rita will once again be participating in the annual car raffle conducted by All Saints' Catholic Church. Prizes include four cars and cash prizes up to \$42,000. All registered parish families will be receiving tickets in the coming weeks. Proceeds will in part benefit our parish, so we strongly encourage all parishioners to participate by purchasing or selling their tickets. Further instructions will be found in the letter enclosed with the tickets.

Sorteo Anual de Autos de Todos los Santos

St. Rita volverá a participar en la rifa anual de autos realizado por la Iglesia Católica de Todos los Santos. Los premios incluyen cuatro autos y premios en efectivo de hasta \$42,000. Todas las familias parroquiales registradas estarán recibiendo boletos en las próximas semanas. Los ingresos beneficiarán en parte a nuestra parroquia, por lo que animamos encarecidamente a todos los feligreses a participar mediante la compra o venta de sus entradas. Encontrará más instrucciones en la carta adjunta a los boletos.

Bishop's Lenten Appeal 2026

The theme for this Year's Bishop's Lenten Appeal (BLA) is *In Christ, We Are One*. Every family matters in helping our parish reach its goal. No gift is too small. Your participation supports vital ministries our parish depends on: seminarian formation, religious education, youth ministry, Catholic Charities, and more. Give today at arlingtondiocese.org/bla or by scanning the QR code.



Petición Cuaresmal del Obispo de 2026

El tema de la Petición Cuaresmal del Obispo de este año es *En Cristo, Somos Uno*. Cada familia es importante para que alcancemos nuestrameta. No hay donación pequeña. Su participación apoya ministerios vitales de los que depende nuestra parroquia: la formación de seminaristas, la educación religiosa, la pastoral juvenil, Caridades Católicas y muchos más. Done hoy mismo en arlingtondiocese.org/bla o escanee el código QR.

