



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

May 17, 2026: The Ascension of the Lord (observed)

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
Facilities Manager	Craig Webb cwebb.strita@gmail.com	



“When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight.” (Acts 1:9)

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, May 18, 2026

Saint John I, Pope and Martyr

7:00 am Fr. Paul Scalia
7:30 pm Fr. Ronald J. Gripshover, Jr.

Tuesday, May 19, 2026

Tuesday of the Seventh Week of Easter

7:00 am Fr. Denis Donahue

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

Saint Bernadine of Siena, Priest

7:00 am Fr. Daniel Gee
7:30 pm Br. Al Mascia, OFM

Thursday, May 21, 2026

Saint Christopher Magallanes, Priest, and Companions, Martyrs

7:00 am Ella Whiteman †

Friday, May 22, 2026

Saint Rita of Cascia, Religious

7:00 am Elaine Dawson †
7:30 pm Monica Fritchman †

Saturday, May 23, 2026

Saturday of the Seventh Week of Easter

8:00 am Mary Largent Byrne †
5:00 pm Don McGraw

Sunday, May 24, 2026

Pentecost Sunday

7:00 am Fr. Paul Scalia
8:00 am Fr. Raymond Machesney †
11:00 am Missa Pro Populo
1:00 pm Familia Alarcon Tasaico

Additional Mass Intentions this Week:

Adan Aguilar, Madelene Coito, Patricia McLaughlin, Jhon and Patricia Murray †

Coffee and Donuts Today

Join us for Coffee and Donuts in the School Hall on **Sunday, May 17**, after all Masses, starting after the 8:00 am Mass.



Knights of Columbus Monthly Meeting

Men of St. Rita age 18 and up are invited to attend the Knights of Columbus regular meeting on the third Wednesday of each month at **7:45 pm** in the Parish Center. The next meeting will be **May 20**. Join us in our quest to work for Charity, Unity, and Fraternity at our parish and in our families. We are a service organization of "Practical Catholic Gentlemen." For information, contact **Ray McGowan**, Deputy Grand Knight, at raymcgowan@gmail.com —or just stop by our meeting!



Upcoming Second Collections

May 17: Catholic Communications Campaign
June 7: Repairs and Replacements

Thank you for your continued generosity!

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!

Pentecost Vigil



On **Saturday, May 23**, the **5:00 pm Mass** will be celebrated as an extended Vigil for Pentecost, which will include several additional readings before the Gospel. It is a beautiful opportunity to enter more deeply into the prayer and longing for the coming of the Holy Spirit. There will also be a Baptism, Profession of Faith and Confirmation at this Mass.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.



Farewells and Welcome

Bishop Burbidge has announced the clergy changes for this year, and there will be some changes that affect St. Rita Parish. These changes take effect on **Thursday, June 25**. Fr. Nicholas Schierer has been assigned to St. William of York in Stafford, and we will be welcoming Fr. William Nyce as our new Parochial Vicar. Fr. Paul Berghout will change residence to St. Lawrence in Alexandria, and Fr. Noah Morey, Diocesan Director of Vocations will be in residence here at St. Rita. Please pray for all of our priests!



2026-2027 Homeschool Atrium Aides Needed

We are looking for aides for our Wednesday afternoon Homeschool Atrium (Catechesis of the Good Shepherd). Aides do not need to have prior experience, however, aides must have VIRTUS certification. For more information, or if you are interested in volunteering, please contact **Elizabeth Vail** at evail.strita@gmail.com.

This Week at St. Rita

Sunday, May 17, 2026

Coffee and Donuts after all Masses, starting after the 8am Mass

6:00 pm Hispanic Prayer Group

Monday, May 18, 2026

5:30 pm Legión de María (en Español)

7:00 pm Young Adult Bible Study

Tuesday, May 19, 2026

3:30 pm Homeschool Schola Practice

7:00 pm Hispanic Bible Study

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

2:30 pm Homeschool Holy Hour

6:00 pm Middle School Youth Ministry

6:30 pm Legion of Mary

8:15 pm Knights of Columbus Monthly Meeting

Thursday, May 21, 2026

4:00 pm Junior Legion of Mary

6:30 pm High School Youth Ministry

Friday, May 22, 2026

7:00 pm Vespers

Saturday, May 23, 2026

6:30 pm Hispanic Young Adult Group

6:00 pm Solemnity of St. Rita Dinner Dance

Sunday, May 24, 2026

6:00 pm Hispanic Prayer Group

CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF ST. RITA (FEAST DAY: MAY 22)



The **Novena to St. Rita** begins **Wednesday, May 13**. Novena prayer cards will be available in all vestibules.

May 13- May 22

The **relic of St. Rita** will be on our Lady's altar for veneration. Stop by and pray for St. Rita's intercession!

HOLY MASS FOR THE SOLEMNITY OF ST. RITA

Friday, May 22

7:00 am

English

7:30 pm

English (preceded by Sung Vespers at 7:00 pm)

SOLEMNITY OF ST. RITA DINNER DANCE

Saturday, May 23, 6:00 - 10:00 pm

Join us for an adults-only evening with dinner and dancing, including an open bar, dinner catered by Aldo's Italian Kitchen, live music performed by the Scotts Ragsdale Orchestra with guest vocalist Daniel Murray, Rita's Italian Ice, and ample opportunity for dancing. Tickets are \$30 each and \$50 for a couple. The dress code for the evening is dressy casual. This event will be taking place outdoors – rain or shine! Parking will be limited so please consider carpooling or using a ride-share service. Please purchase tickets by **Wednesday, May 20**, by scanning the QR Code or going to our website <https://stritaalexandria.com/>. We hope to see you there!



CELEBRACIÓN DE LA FIESTA DE SANTA RITA (22 DE MAYO)



La Novena a Santa Rita comienza **el miércoles 13 de Mayo**. Las tarjetas de oración de la Novena estarán disponibles en todos los vestíbulos.

13 de Mayo- 22 de Mayo
La reliquia de Santa Rita estará en el altar de la Virgen para su veneración. ¡Pase y ore por la intercesión de Santa Rita!

SANTA MISA POR LA SOLEMNIDAD DE SANTA RITA Viernes, 22 de Mayo

7:00 am en Inglés

7:30 pm en Inglés (precedido por las Vísperas cantadas a las 7:00 pm)

CENA Y BAILE POR LA SOLEMNIDAD DE SANTA RITA Sábado 24 de Mayo, 6:00 - 10:00 pm

Acompáñenos a una cena y baile (una noche solo para adultos), incluye bar abierto, cena a cargo de Aldo's Italian Kitchen, música en vivo a cargo de la Orquesta Scotts Ragsdale con el vocalista invitado Daniel Murray, Rita's Italian Ice y muchas oportunidades para bailar. Las entradas cuestan \$30 por persona y \$50 por pareja. El código de vestimenta es informal elegante. Este evento se celebrará al aire libre, ¡llueva o truene! El estacionamiento será limitado, así que considere compartir el auto o usar un servicio de transporte compartido. Compre sus entradas antes del **miércoles 20 de mayo** en <https://stritaalexandria.com/>. ¡Esperamos verlos allí!



SOLEMNITY OF ST. RITA
DINNER DANCE

Buona Festa!

Dinner & Dancing

Saturday, May 23, 2026

6pm – 10pm

Catered Dinner al Fresco

Open Bar

Rita's Italian Ice

Live Music

Dancing Under the Stars

Tickets: \$30 each or \$50 per couple

This event is for adults

*Live Music by the Scott Ragsdale Orchestra
with guest vocalist Daniel Murray*



Scan QR code to purchase tickets or visit
stritaalexandria.com/an-evening-in-cascia

CENA Y BAILE POR LA SOLEMNIDAD
DE ST. RITA

Felices Fiestas!

Cena y Baile

Sábado 23 de Mayo del 2026

6pm – 10pm

Cena fresca preparada

Bar abierto

Rita's Italian Ice

Musica en Vivo

Baile bajo las estrellas

Boletos: \$30 cada uno o \$50 por pareja

Este evento es solamente para adultos

*Música en vivo por la orquesta Scott Ragsdale
con el violinista Daniel Murray*



Los boletos estarán
disponibles pronto.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

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Wednesday, May 20th
6:00-7:30pm
St. Rita School Hall
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All Middle Schoolers (6-8th grade) are invited to a Middle School Ministry Game Night! Dinner will be provided and we ask that if not already, you please register your Middle Schooler using the form on the Parish Website under the Youth Ministry tab.

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PLEASE CONTACT MGOITIANDIA.STRITA@GMAIL.COM WITH ANY QUESTIONS

Offertory Counters Needed

The Offertory Counters have the important job of counting the weekly Sunday collections. Volunteering is low-commitment and only requires meeting once a month. If you are interested in volunteering as an offertory counter, please contact Jill Bender at nymeetsva@yahoo.com.



Ninth Annual Rogation Boundary Bike Ride

Join us in reviving the ancient tradition of marking the Rogation days here at St. Rita Parish! In earlier times, Rogation originated as a solemn procession on foot around the parish boundary to pray for God's protection against disasters and blessing of the fields.



As a pilgrimage in our own backyard, Father Christensen will lead a circuit of the parish boundaries by bike on **Saturday, May 23**, beginning at **6:00 am** with the Litany of Saints at the church and then proceeding to Four Mile Run Park to mark points along the boundary with blessed chalk. The loop is a mildly strenuous 7.5 miles and portions of the route are in the road, so keep this in mind as you consider the appropriate skill and comfort level. The ride takes around 2 hours. For more information, please contact **Joshua Bowman** at mrbeaujo@gmail.com.

INTO THE DEEP



Save the Date for Vacation Bible School

Monday - Friday, August 3rd-7th, 2026

8:45am - 12pm in the St. Rita School Hall

Open to all rising 1st to 6th graders

Registration opens Friday, May 1

Registration forms will be available in the vestibules and online at

<https://stritaalexandria.com/vacation-bible-school/>

Lost and Found



Are you looking for lost items? Please stop by the rectory office **weekdays** between **9:00 am - 9:00 pm** or call the office at **703-836-1640** to check the parish lost and found. Any lost items that are not claimed after 30 days are donated or discarded.

Please Pray for These St. Rita Parishioners

For all those discerning Religious Vocations:

Catherine Addington, Daughters of St. Paul; Sr. Giovanna Lamarra, 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, Brad Chester, 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, Gary Culpeper, Rosemary Guida, Mickey Kimball, David Langley, Oscar Merino, Catherine Elizabeth Nugent, Jane Rippy, Fermin L. Vilar

News from the Diocese and Beyond

Chesterton Academy of Christ the King

Chesterton Academy of Christ the King will be opening at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Alexandria this fall. Chesterton high schools have a strong Catholic identity anchored in daily school Mass, a rigorous classical curriculum, screen-free discussion-based learning, and affordable tuition. Our 2026-2027 tuition rate of \$13,900 will be locked in for our founding families, and need-based financial aid is available. Interested students and their families are invited to learn more about the school while enjoying afternoons of ice cream and fellowship on our campus at monthly "Sundaes on Sundays" events throughout the spring and summer. Visit Chesterton-ChristTheKing.org to learn more, RSVP for our next event, and to apply.