

March 01, 2026



ST. RITA IN THE DESERT

Catholic Church

CLERGY

Pastor:

Rev. Alonzo Garcia
fralonzo@stritainthedesert.org

Deacon:

Ron Desmarais
deaconron@stritainthedesert.org

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." (Matthew 17:5)

"Este es mi Hijo amado, en quien me complace; escúchenlo." (Mateo 17:5)

Reflection:

The Transfiguration of Jesus is a powerful moment where the disciples witness His divine glory. This revelation serves as a reminder of Jesus' true identity and His unique relationship with God the Father. The command to "listen to him" encourages us to open our hearts and minds to Jesus' teachings. During this Lenten season, let us deepen our commitment to listening to Jesus through prayer, reflection, and contemplation, allowing His words to transform our lives and strengthen our faith.

Socratic Question:

How can you make a greater effort to listen to Jesus' words and allow them to guide your actions during this Lenten journey?

Reflexión:

La Transfiguración de Jesús es un momento poderoso donde los discípulos presencian Su gloria divina. Esta revelación sirve como recordatorio de la verdadera identidad de Jesús y su relación única con Dios el Padre. El mandato de "escúchenlo" nos anima a abrir nuestros corazones y mentes a las enseñanzas de Jesús. Durante esta temporada de Cuaresma, profundicemos nuestro compromiso de escuchar a Jesús a través de la oración, la reflexión y la contemplación, permitiendo que sus palabras transformen nuestras vidas y fortalezcan nuestra fe.

Pregunta socrática:

¿Cómo puedes hacer un mayor esfuerzo por escuchar las palabras de Jesús y permitir que guíen tus acciones durante este camino cuaresmal?

Source: *Truthly App*

WEEKEND MASS

Horario de Misas

SATURDAY | Sábado

5:00 pm—English

SUNDAY | Domingo

8:00 am—English

10:00 am—English

12:00 pm—Spanish

CONFESSION

Confesiones

SATURDAY | Sábado

3:30 pm—4:30 pm

In the church or by appointment

En la iglesia o por cita

WEEKDAY MASS

IN SHRINE

Misa Diaria en el Santuario

MONDAY-FRIDAY |

De Lunes a Viernes

8:00 am —English

ADORATION

FRIDAY | Viernes

8:30 am—9:30 am

In the church or by appointment

En la iglesia o por cita



PARISH OFFICE

Horario de Oficina

MONDAY-WEDNESDAY | De

Lunes a Miércoles

8:30 am—4:00 pm

THURSDAY | Jueves

8:00 am—2:00 pm

FRIDAY | Viernes

9:00 am—1:00pm

*Office closed
12pm—1pm daily*

PARISH INFORMATION

COLLECTIONS | COLECTA



February 22, 2026

Offertory: \$7,963.00
Rectory Debt: \$4,122.00
Campus Maint: \$981.00
Mission Collection: \$824.79

Thank you for your support.
God bless you!

<https://www.stritainthedesert.org>
select "Giving" and then "Online Giving"

ST. RITA STAFF

(520) 762-9688

Administrative Assistant: Chris Metzger
adminassist@stritainthedesert.org

Secretary: Veronica Garcia
secretary@stritainthedesert.org

Business Manager: Louise Azzopardi
businessmgr@stritainthedesert.org

Compliance: Mary Morgan
compliance@stritainthedesert.org

Bulletin Editor: Kathy Lockard
bulletin@stritainthedesert.org

Facilities Manager: Rob King
rob@stritainthedesert.org

Maintenance: Bill Cline

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF

Director of Religious Education: Geraldine Durman
dre@stritainthedesert.org

Youth Ministry: Carolyn Reynolds
msyouth@stritainthedesert.org
hsyouth@stritainthedesert.org

OCIA Coordinator: Michelle Quinn Crowley
ocia@stritainthedesert.org

ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

Music Ministry: Nancy Campman Crofts
music@stritainthedesert.org

Catholic Brotherhood Group: Jayme Kahle
jkahle25@gmail.com

Women's Bible Study: Irene Toews
irenetoews@cox.net

Guild of St. Rita:
guild@stritainthedesert.org

BULLETIN DEADLINE & QUESTIONS

Email bulletin request(s) to:

bulletin@stritainthedesert.org.

By **10am** on the **Wednesday** before the *Sunday* you want it published.

HOMEBOUND EUCHARIST

If you have a family member or know of a parishioner in the St. Rita area in need of having the Eucharist brought to them regularly, please contact the Parish Office.

EMERGENCY ANOINTING OF THE SICK

520-543-8415

MASS INTENTIONS AVAILABLE

In accordance with Canon 948, if any faithful would like the Mass to be offered for their individual intention only, please make your request at the Parish Office.



ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

- Fridays following 8am Mass for 1hr
- 1st Sunday of each month at 3-4pm in the John XXIII



ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Every 1st Friday at 8am Mass

BAPTISMS

Visit stritainthedesert.org
[LITURGY](#) | [SACRAMENTS](#) | [BAPTISM](#)
and complete the *Intent to Baptize* Form



CONFIRMATION

Contact Youth Minister or OCIA director

MARRIAGE

Marriage arrangements must be made 4 months in advance. Visit <https://www.stritainthedesert.org/marriage> for more information.

OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

March 1, 2026

“Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.” (Psalm 33:22)

Dear Parish Family and Friends,

Today we celebrate Transfiguration Sunday as we begin our Lenten journey. What does this mean for us?

In the Book of Genesis, Abram is called to leave behind what is familiar and to trust in God’s promise, beginning a profound journey of faith. In a similar way, Lent invites each of us to step into our own spiritual journey. God calls us to respond—not only in thought, but in action, speech, and prayer.

To answer this call, consider dedicating regular time to prayer, reading Sacred Scripture daily, or intentionally practicing acts of kindness. Perhaps give up certain distractions or take up a new work of service so that your heart may become more attentive to God. Each of these steps is a concrete way to embrace Lent as a sacred season of spiritual growth and deeper communion with Him through daily commitment.

As we reflect on Abram’s journey of faith, we also turn to the Gospel account of the Transfiguration. On the mountain, Jesus is transfigured before Peter, James, and John. Yet even in that moment of glory, He is already on the path toward fulfilling His Father’s will. Most strikingly, He is seen conversing with Moses and Elijah—representing the Law and the Prophets. This powerful detail reveals that Jesus is their fulfillment.

After the Transfiguration, Jesus sets His face toward Jerusalem. This marks the beginning of His deliberate journey toward the Cross, where He will lay down His life for our salvation.

Our Lenten journey continues under the grace of a God who desires to transfigure us as well—reshaping us more fully into His sons and daughters, reflecting His light in the world. God has always willed this for us. The question remains: why do we sometimes resist such a precious gift?

May God be praised!

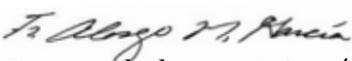
Turning now to parish news, I am happy to share that our parish parking lots have been completed. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Bates Paving Company for their professional and diligent work. I am also grateful to our maintenance supervisor for his dedication in securing the best company for this much-needed improvement.

On another note, Mr. Rob King has made the decision to conclude his employment with St. Rita in the Desert. We thank him for his service to our parish community. As a result, we will begin searching for a part-time maintenance supervisor to help ensure the continued care of our facilities. If you are interested, please contact me directly. Applications may be submitted through the Diocese of Tucson website at <https://diocesetucson.org/employment-opportunities>.

Lastly, this weekend we will present the Annual Catholic Appeal video. I ask you to prayerfully consider helping us reach our parish goal of \$48,524. Next weekend will be Commitment Sunday, when parishioners throughout the diocese will be invited to support this important effort.

This is the Hour for Love! Will you let your love be seen?

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Reverend Alonzo M. García, Pastor



OFICINA DE PASTOR

1 de marzo de 2026

“Que tu amor, Señor, nos acompañe, tal como esperamos de ti” (Salmo 32:22)

Estimada familia parroquial y amigos:

Hoy celebramos el Domingo de la Transfiguración. Al comenzar nuestro camino cuaresmal, ¿qué significa esto para nosotros? En el libro del Génesis, Abram fue llamado a dejar lo conocido y confiar en la promesa de Dios, iniciando así un camino de fe. De manera similar, durante la Cuaresma, somos llamados a emprender nuestro propio camino espiritual. Dios nos llama a responder con nuestras acciones, nuestras palabras y nuestra vida de oración. Para responder a este llamado, dediquemos tiempo regular a la oración, leamos la Sagrada Escritura diariamente o mostremos intencionalmente bondad hacia los demás. Consideremos renunciar a distracciones o asumir alguna obra de servicio para centrarnos más en Dios. Cada uno de estos pasos es una manera concreta de vivir la Cuaresma como un tiempo de crecimiento espiritual y de profundizar nuestra relación con Dios mediante un compromiso diario.

Así como reflexionamos sobre el camino de fe de Abram, ahora podemos mirar el relato de la Transfiguración de Jesús para comprender mejor nuestro propio itinerario espiritual. Vemos que mientras Jesús se transfiguraba ante los ojos de Pedro, Santiago y Juan, también estaba en camino hacia el cumplimiento del plan de su Padre celestial. Sin embargo, lo más impresionante es que Jesús fue visto conversando con Moisés y Elías. Este es un detalle muy importante porque muestra que Jesús es el cumplimiento de la Ley y de los Profetas. Después de su transfiguración, Jesús fija la mirada en Jerusalén. Es decir, comienza el camino del Señor hacia la cruz para entregar su vida por nosotros.

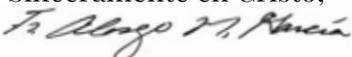
Nuestro camino cuaresmal continúa con la gracia del deseo de Dios de que nos transfiguremos en sus propios hijos, reflejando su luz. Dios siempre ha querido esto para nosotros, y la pregunta permanece: ¿por qué resistimos un don tan precioso? ¡Bendito sea Dios!

Pasando ahora a algunos acontecimientos en nuestra comunidad parroquial, ¡nuestros estacionamientos parroquiales han sido terminados! Quiero aprovechar esta oportunidad para agradecer a Bates Paving Company por su trabajo profesional y por el mantenimiento de nuestros estacionamientos. También deseo agradecer a nuestro supervisor de mantenimiento por su arduo trabajo al buscar la mejor empresa para llevar a cabo este proyecto tan necesario.

En otro asunto relacionado con las operaciones parroquiales, el Sr. Rob King ha decidido dejar su empleo en Sta. Rita en el Desierto. Como resultado, estaremos buscando un supervisor de mantenimiento a tiempo parcial para garantizar el buen cuidado de nuestras instalaciones parroquiales. Si está interesado, por favor comuníquese conmigo llamando o enviando un correo electrónico. Puede presentar su solicitud en <https://diocesetucson.org/employment-opportunities> y nos pondremos en contacto con usted lo antes posible. Gracias por su interés.

Por último, este fin de semana presentaremos el Video Anual de la Campaña Católica. Les pedimos que consideren en oración ayudarnos a alcanzar nuestra meta de \$48,524. La semana siguiente celebraremos el Domingo de Compromiso, durante el cual se invitará a nuestros generosos feligreses a colaborar en este esfuerzo a nivel diocesano. ¡Esta es la Hora del Amor! ¿Permitirá usted que su amor se manifieste?

Sinceramente en Cristo,



Reverendo Alonzo M. García, Pastor



GOSPEL MEDITATION

IN THE MATTHEW 17:1-9,

In the Gospel of Matthew, the Transfiguration is a moment when Jesus reveals His divine glory to Peter, James, and John. On the mountaintop, His face shines like the sun, and His clothes become as white as light. This awe-inspiring moment reassures the disciples of Jesus' divinity and foreshadows His resurrection. It's a glimpse of heaven on earth, strengthening their faith and preparing them for the trials to come. The voice from the cloud commands, "Listen to him," reminding us that spiritual transformation begins with attentive listening and obedience to Jesus' teachings. This Lent, we are called to ascend our own spiritual mountains, seeking to see Jesus in all His glory, allowing His light to guide us through the darkness of our lives.

Reflection Question:

How can you create opportunities in your daily life to "see" and "listen" to Jesus more clearly, allowing His presence to transform you?

EN MATEO 17:1-9,

En el Evangelio de Mateo, la Transfiguración es un momento donde Jesús revela su gloria divina a Pedro, Santiago y Juan. En la cima de la montaña, su rostro brilla como el sol y sus vestiduras se vuelven tan blancas como la luz. Este asombroso momento les asegura a los discípulos la divinidad de Jesús y prefigura su resurrección. Es un vistazo del cielo en la tierra, fortaleciendo su fe y preparándolos para las pruebas venideras. La voz desde la nube manda: "Escúchenlo", recordándonos que la transformación espiritual comienza con escuchar atentamente y obedecer las enseñanzas de Jesús. Esta Cuaresma, estamos llamados a ascender nuestras propias montañas espirituales, buscando ver a Jesús en toda su gloria, permitiendo que su luz nos guíe a través de la oscuridad de nuestras vidas.

Pregunta de reflexión:

¿Cómo puedes crear oportunidades en tu vida diaria para "ver" y "escuchar" a Jesús más claramente, permitiendo que su presencia te transforme?

DID YOU KNOW....

MARCH 1ST

St. David's Day:

March 1st is celebrated as St. David's Day, the feast day of Saint David, the patron saint of Wales. Saint David was a Welsh bishop born in the 6th century, known for his monastic work, his powerful preaching, and the many miracles attributed to him. One of the most famous stories about him is that during a large crowd gathering for one of his sermons, the ground rose up beneath him, forming a hill so that everyone could see and hear him clearly. St. David's Day is marked by parades, wearing daffodils or leeks (both symbols of Wales), and celebrations of Welsh culture and heritage. It's a day for the people of Wales to honor their history, language, and traditions.

Reflection Question:

How can celebrating cultural and spiritual traditions help strengthen your sense of identity and community?

Source: *Truthly App*

WEEKLY CALENDAR, INTENTIONS, OBSERVATIONS & READINGS

MASS INTENTIONS INTENCIONES DE MISA

Saturday February 28

5:00 pm

†Janet Poluga

†Deceased of Loscialpo
Family

SI Michael Desmarais

Sunday March 1

8:00 am St. Rita

10:00 am

†José Arteaga, María Peña

†Carmen, Victor, Armando
Cancino

12:00 pm

Living & Deceased of St. Rita

Monday March 2

8:00 am

† James W. Logan

† Jeffery Roberts

Tuesday March 3

8:00 am First Responders

Wednesday March 4

8:00 am

† Joan P. Miklochik

Thursday March 5

8:00 am

Men & Women in the
Military

Friday March 6

8:00 am

† Richard Gorsuch

†Louisa & Joe Moreno &
Family

THIS WEEK IN THE PARISH

Sunday, March 01

2nd Sunday of Lent

- *Pope St. Felix III*
- *St. Albinus of Angers*

8:00 am - Mass (English)

10:00 am - Mass (English)

12:00 noon - Mass (Spanish)

Monday, March 02

- *St. Angela of the Cross*

8:00 am Mass (English)

8:30 am Divine Mercy Chaplet

6:00 pm Men's Group (Oscar
Romero Room)

Tuesday, March 03

- *Saint Katharine Drexel*
- *Saint Cunegunde*

8:00 am Mass (English)

8:30 am Divine Mercy Chaplet

Wednesday, March 04

- *St. Casimir*
- *Bl. Humbert III of Savoy*

8:00 am - Mass (English)

8:30 am Divine Mercy Chaplet

9:00 am Women's Scripture
Study (Oscar Romero Room)

Thursday, March 05

- *Pope St. Lucius I*
- *St. Adrian of Caesarea*
- *St. John Joseph of the
Cross*

8:00 am - Mass (English)

8:30 am Divine Mercy Chaplet

Friday, March 06

- *St. Colette Boylet*

8:00 am Mass

8:30 am Eucharist Adoration

Saturday, March 07

- *Sts. Perpetua and Felicity*
- *St. Teresa Margaret of the
Sacred Heart*

5:00 pm - Mass (English)

READINGS & OBSERVANCES

FIRST READING:

"The LORD said to Abram:
Go forth from your land,
your relatives, and your
father's house to a land that I
will show you." (Gen 12:1)

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

"Lord, let your mercy be on
us, as we place our trust in
you." (Ps 33:22)

SECOND READING:

"He saved us and called us to
a holy life, not according to
our works but according to
his own design." (2 Tim 1:9)

GOSPEL:

"This is my beloved Son, with
whom I am well pleased;
listen to him." (Mt 17:5)

*Sunday, March 01
(Second Sunday of Lent)*

Gn 12:1-4a | Ps 33:4-5, 18-19, 20,
22 | 2 Tm 1:8b-10 | Mt 17:1-9

Monday, March 02

Dn 9:4b-10 | Ps 79:8, 9, 11, 13 | Lk
6:36-38

Tuesday, March 03

Is 1:10, 16-20 | Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-
17, 21, 23 | Mt 23:1-12

Wednesday, March 04

Jer 18:18-20 | Ps 31:5-6, 14, 15-16 |
Mt 20:17-28

Thursday, March 05

Jer 17:5-10 | Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4, 6 | Lk
16:19-31

Friday, March 06

Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a | Ps
105:16-17, 18-19, 20-21 | Mt 21:33-
43, 45-46

Saturday, March 07

Mi 7:14-15, 18-20 | Ps 103:1-2, 3-
4, 9-10, 11-12 | Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

source: young-catholics.com

PARISH MINISTRIES

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

Altar Server

If your boy would like to become an Altar Boy, please review the [Altar Server Manual](#) together and complete the [Altar Server Application](#) online or email: travis71durman@gmail.com

Altar Society

The St. Rita Altar Society is looking for volunteers to maintain the Altar in the Shrine and St. John XXIII. If you love to decorate or enjoy floral arrangements, we invite you to glorify the Lord by your creativity.

Eucharistic Ministry

Interested in learning more about the role of an Extraordinary Minister or would like to be part of this vital ministry, Submit your [EOMHC Sign-up](#) form online.

Lectors

Become a Lector. Submit your [Ministry Request form](#) online.

Music Ministry

Curious about our choirs? Love to sing sacred music? Join us, our rehearsals are open to everyone!

Adult choirs (18+): Tues at 6:30 pm

Youth choir (8-18): Wed at 4:30 pm

Spanish choir: Wed at 6:15 pm

Do you play piano, guitar, flute or clarinet? We want to meet you!

Coro español: ¡Queremos desarrollar nuestro coro!
¡Considere unirse a nosotros o volver a unirse a nosotros!
¡Voz, guitarra y bajo bienvenidos!

Ushers

Ushers play a pivotal role in our parish, not only aiding others but also serving as the welcoming face to newcomers. For our regular parishioners, they provide a sense of familiarity and continuity across all Masses. Submit your [Usher Sign-Up](#) form online.

PARISH MINISTRIES

Outreach Ministry

Join us as we provide support every week to our Meals to Grow Program, Food Bank and other critical human needs in our community. Email: outreach@stritainthedesert.org

Pastoral Council

Currently on hold, seeking someone to assist in leading it. Contact front office if interested.

Porter's of St. Joseph

Email: porters@stritainthedesert.org

Right to Life

Email: rtl@stritainthedesert.org

Family Faith Formation

www.watch.formed.org

Vocations

Contact Mr. Adam LaGuardia:
Vocations@stritainthedesert.org

Welcome Committee

If you are interested in joining the Welcoming Team, submit your [Welcoming Team request form](#) online.

Guild of St. Rita

Volunteers manage our beautiful Gift shop, plan our St. Rita's feast day celebration & host many other parish events as requested. Join us! Email: guild@stritainthedesert.org

Sewing Angels

All are welcome to join. Meet us in the church hall every Wednesday from 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Mujeres De Fe (Women of Faith)

Para mas Informacion
Coordinadora:
Gabriela Hrdlirka (915) 539-0985
gawoho@gmail.com

EXTERNAL MINISTRIES



Knights of Columbus®

Lead with Faith.
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Serve Others.
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Catholic Men 18+

visit our website:
<https://www.kofc14230.org> or
contact John Cuddy at:
john.cuddy@yahoo.com or
(978)382-0742



El praesidium de St.Rita se llama "Maria Puerta del Cielo" y se reúne los Martes a las 6:00 de la tarde en el salon Oscar Romero, o puedes contactar a Sandra (520)395-7225 or email: legiondemaria@stritainthedesert.org



Rachel's VINEYARD

Healing the pain of abortion - one weekend at a time

If you are interested in getting more information and/or registering for a Retreat Weekend, please call (520) 743-6777 or visit RachelsVineyard.org



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

If you need assistance from St Vincent de Paul or want to join the ministry to help others, contact James Mahaffey at (520) 307-3411

Marian Book Club

Every Thursday
4:30-6pm
Oscar Romero

All are welcome to join!

Women's Scripture Study

Wednesday mornings
9 am
Oscar Romero Room
All women are welcome
irenetoews@cox.net

Rectory Debt Payoff Update

As of Sunday, February 15, 2026

\$92,278

\$345,000
GOAL

75

500
FAMILY PLEDGED/DONATED GOAL

We need your help! Until this phase is complete, we cannot seek Diocesan approval for a new church capital campaign. Let's come together as a faith family to make it happen

Easter is just 34 days away!
Be part of our parish family's exciting next chapter



Scan to Pledge

VISITA DE LA VIRGEN A LOS HOGARES

El grupo de la Legion de Maria les recuerda que Nuestra Santísima Madre quiere visitar sus hogares, para que sientan su protección y compañía, para que compartan con Ella las necesidades que tiene cada miembro de su familia, Ella quiere escuchar sus plegarias y llevarlas a su amado Hijo Jesus.

En el vestíbulo estarán algunos miembros del grupo de la Legion de Maria, para tomar sus datos y programar la visita. Gracias.

ALTAR SOCIETY QUILT RAFFLE

Support the purchase of a **new monstrance** for the Pope John XXIII Center by participating in the Altar Society's **quilt raffle!**

Tickets are available for the **king-size quilt** on display in the Narthex (108" x 108", 100% cotton, machine washable).

Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20 and will be sold after all Masses from February 8 through March 8. The drawing will be held after the 12:00 p.m. Mass on March 8. You do not need to be present to win.

Thank you for your generous support.



THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

SAVE THE DATE: STEAK FRY - APRIL 25, 2026

St. Rita in the Desert Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul will hold its' annual Steak Fry on April 25th. Cost of the Steak Dinner will be \$25.00 and Sloppy Joe Dinner will be \$10. The big change this year is that we will only sell 200 Steak Dinner Tickets. Ticket sales will begin the weekend of March 14/15 (we will not sell tickets Palm Sunday & Easter Sunday weekends).

SAVE THE DATES

May 16, 2026 - 6:00pm - 8:30pm

"La primavera in Umbria"
4-Course Italian Wine Dinner with DJ & Dancing

Fundraiser for Rectory Payoff and New Church

May 22, 2026 at 5:30pm - 8:00pm

Solemnity of St. Rita of Cascia
Mass, Procession and Picnic

Tickets go one sale 4/11-4/12/2026 weekend

Volunteers Needed - Contact guild@stritainthedesert.org

FAMILY MINISTRY

March 7th, from 4-6:30 PM

Join us for our First Annual Family Gathering on at the Grupe family home. Father Garcia will celebrate a private Mass, followed by a potluck and fellowship.

For details or to RSVP, contact Amanda Grupe at familyfellowship@stritainthedesert.org

MUSIC MINISTRY

Lent calls us into a deeper relationship with God through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

If your almsgiving includes sharing your time and talents with your Parish family through music, then consider singing or playing in our choirs during Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. Our practices are open, come join us!

WELCOME TEAM

March 8th

Invites you to join us for Pastries & Coffee after all the Masses

DIOCESAN YOUTH AWARDS ANNOUNCEMENT

Celebrating Our Young Leaders at St. Rita in the Desert

We are delighted to announce this year's recipients of the Diocesan Youth Awards, recognizing outstanding dedication and leadership among our parish youth. This event took place on February 13, 2026, at St. Augustine Cathedral.

- **Reagan LaGuardia – St. Carlo Acutis Award for Liturgical Leaders:** Reagan has served faithfully as a cantor and choir member for many years, bringing her talents and devotion to our liturgical celebrations. Her commitment inspires all those around her.
- **Andrew Fujieda – St. Katharine Drexel Award for Missionaries of Mercy:** Andrew has dedicated over 14 hours volunteering at the Vail Food Bank for his Confirmation, far exceeding the 10-hour requirement. His service reflects a genuine desire to help those in need, and he intends to continue volunteering in the future.
- **Luke Scopel – St. Augustine Award for Missionary Disciples:** Luke actively participates in a student-led faith group at his school, which gathers nearly 200 students from various Christian traditions during lunch. He uses the Catechism of the Catholic Church to enrich his learning and sharing of the Catholic Faith, fostering unity and spiritual growth among his peers.

St. Rita in the Desert is proud of Reagan, Andrew and Luke. May they continue to grow in faith and love of Christ as they lead by example in our community.



Reagan LaGuardia with Bishop Kicanas

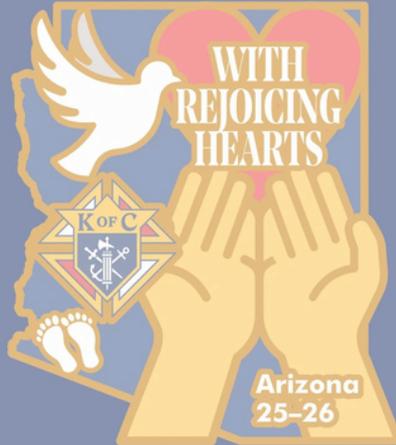


Andrew Fujieda with Bishop Kicanas



Luke Scopel with Bishop Kicanas

Prayerfully consider
joining the
Knights of Columbus!



Together,
we serve
With Rejoicing Hearts!



One Year FREE online Membership
<https://www.kofc.org/join>
Promo Code: BlessedMcGivney



Arizona Knights of Columbus Charity Raffle – Starts This Weekend!

Don't miss your chance to win the
\$10,000 Grand Prize!

**Tickets are just \$5 each, 5 for \$20, or
the best value—30 for \$100.**

Every ticket makes a difference. Half of all proceeds raised by St. Rita Knights stay right here in our community. In 2026, funds will support St. Rita Parish and the Vail School District Transition from School to Work program, helping special-needs students prepare for life after high school.

Visit the Knights' table after all Masses near the parish hall to get your tickets. Thank you for your continued generosity and support!

For more information, contact Wayne Glembin at
(520) 449-7115 or gkcouncil14230@gmail.com

KNIGHTS FUNDRAISER FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Support a St. Rita Special Olympian competing with Arizona USA Softball at the Special Olympics USA Summer Games (June 20–26).

Pick up **farm-fresh eggs** for \$5/dozen and support a great cause.

Stop by the table to donate or learn more.

ST RITA LENTEN FISH AND CHIPS

March 13th

Join the Knights of Columbus
for a Fish Fry

4-8pm (Hall/Ramada)

Mark your calendar to join us throughout
Lent for Fish Fry Fridays on

March 27th

ALUMINUM CAN RECYCLING

Aluminum cans may be dropped off in the recycling barrels next to the St. Vincent de Paul donation shed. Please note:

- **Aluminum cans only** (no glass, paper, metal cans, or trash)
- Please place cans in **secure, tied trash bags**
- **No clothing donations**—please take clothing to the Vail Resources Thrift Store across the street

If you have cans to donate but need assistance, please ask a Knight wearing a maroon council shirt for help.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PIMA- EAST LENTEN PENANCE SERVICES DATES

St. Pius X | March 09, 2026 | 6pm Confessions

St. Francis de Sales
March 11, 2026 | 9-11am & 6-8pm Confessions

St. Rita in the Desert | March 12, 2026
6pm Confessions

Our Mother of Sorrows
March 18, 2026 | 6pm Confessions

St. Cyril
March 24, 2026 | 6:00pm Confessions

Corpus Christi
April 01, 2026 | 6:00pm Confessions

St. Joseph Parish (None scheduled this year)



Rachel's Vineyard (Tucson) - Let Jesus Christ set you free from the emotional and spiritual pain of a past abortion at a co-ed Rachel's Vineyard retreat in Tucson, May 15-17, 2026. Visit: www.rachelsvineyardtucson.org or call/ Text to 520-743-6777.



We have a priest from the Diocese of Tucson that will be joining Catholic Mission Trips, Inc with teens, young adults, and seminarians from our area. We ask that you consider 'Offering Up' your Lenten Sacrifice into almsgiving/ donations to send the Priest and the building materials for natural disaster help. For more information please visit Catholicmissiontrips.net or call 703-957-9313.

ST. RITA GUILD

Sunday, March 1st

Gift shop will be open
9:00 am until noon.



February | March Concerts

I Dream a World

Featuring True Concord Choir, Orchestra, Tucson Girls Chorus & Jeffrey Biegel, piano

TODAY! Sunday, March 1 | 3pm
Catalina Foothills H.S. Music Hall, Tucson



This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him.."

Learn how to truly listen to your spouse on the upcoming Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experiences

Experience on May 30-31, 2026 in Tucson.

For more info go to: wwme.org or call 520-661-3644



St. Rita in the Desert - Lenten Food Drive

We're collecting the following items to help our neighbors: *cooking oil, jelly, canned tuna, & canned chicken*

† Your Support is a Blessing †

In this season of sacrifice and charity, your contributions will provide essential nourishment to those in our community struggling with food insecurity. With requests for assistance rising, your generosity will help sustain our outreach efforts well into the year.

Donate Today & Share the Love of Christ
Together, we can ensure that no one in our community goes hungry.

PLEASE RETURN BAG BY: Sunday, April 11th

"For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat..." - Matthew 25:35

SAINT SPOTLIGHT



SAINT KATHARINE DREXEL

Feast Day: March 3rd

Patronage:

Saint Katharine Drexel is the patron saint of racial justice and philanthropists.

Story: Saint Katharine Drexel was born on November 26, 1858, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to a wealthy and devout Catholic family. From an early age, she was deeply moved by the plight of Native Americans and African Americans, who faced systemic injustices and discrimination. Her father and stepmother instilled in her a strong sense of social justice and philanthropy.

In 1889, Katharine met Pope Leo XIII and asked him to send more missionaries to the Native American missions she supported. The Pope replied, “Why don’t you become a missionary?” Taking this to heart, Katharine decided to dedicate her life and fortune to the service of marginalized communities. She founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in 1891, a religious congregation focused on mission work among African and Native American peoples.

Katharine used her family’s wealth to establish schools and missions, founding Xavier University in New Orleans, the first Catholic university in the United States for African Americans. Her significant contributions helped create numerous schools and missions across the country. Katharine entered religious life and served as a source of hope and change until her death in 1955 at the age of 96.

Legacy: Saint Katharine Drexel’s legacy is one of dedication to education, social justice, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. She spent her life breaking down barriers and fostering an inclusive environment where all could access education and human dignity. Canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2000, she remains a powerful example of using personal resources for the greater good, inspiring others to work for equality and justice.

Reflection Question: How might you be called to use your own gifts, resources, or talents to promote justice and support those in need within your community?

KIDS CORNER



Feast Day: March 3rd

Patronage:

Saint Katharine Drexel is the special saint for people who work for fairness and those who like to help others by giving money and time.

Story:

Saint Katharine Drexel was born on November 26, 1858, in Philadelphia, into a family that was very loving and kind. Even though she was rich, she was taught to care deeply about others, especially those who didn’t have as much. As she grew up, she saw that many Native Americans and African Americans were treated unfairly and wanted to help them.

When she met Pope Leo XIII, she asked for missionaries to help, and he suggested that she become a missionary herself! So, Katharine decided to help directly by starting a group called the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. These sisters worked to teach and support Native American and African American communities.

Katharine used her family’s money to build schools and help people learn. She even started a university called Xavier University in New Orleans to help African Americans get a good education. She spent her whole life helping others and making sure everyone was treated with respect and kindness. She passed away at the age of 96, leaving behind a legacy of love and justice.

Legacy:

Saint Katharine Drexel showed us how important it is to use what we have to help others, especially those who are treated unfairly. She taught us that everyone deserves a chance to learn and be respected. Her work continues to inspire people to be fair and kind to everyone.

Question to Ponder:

How can you use what you have, like your talents or time, to help make things fairer and kinder for people around you?

Source: *Truthly App*

GOSPEL EXEGESIS

EXEGESIS FOR MATTHEW 17:1-9

The Gospel reading for Sunday, March 1, 2026, in Year A is from the Gospel of Matthew 17:1-9, which describes the temptation of Jesus in the desert. Exegesis is the critical interpretation & explanation of a text, especially a religious scripture like the Bible. The term comes from the Greek word "exegeisthai," meaning "to lead out," which conveys the idea of drawing out the intended meaning of a text.

In the context of biblical studies, exegesis involves a careful analysis of a passage to understand its historical context, linguistic elements, cultural background, and intended message. This process considers the author's purpose, the audience, & the particular circumstances surrounding the text's creation.

Exegesis contrasts with eisegesis, where one reads personal biases or preconceived notions into the text rather than extracting the text's original & intended meaning. Good exegesis aims to faithfully uncover the truth contained in the scriptures, helping believers to understand, teach, & live out God's Word.

The Transfiguration in Matthew 17:1-9 provides a profound revelation of Jesus' divine identity and mission. In this event, Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up a high mountain, symbolizing a place of divine revelation similar to Moses on Mount Sinai.

During the Transfiguration, Jesus' appearance is miraculously transformed; His face shines like the sun, and His clothes become dazzling white. This radiance reveals His divine nature and foreshadows the glory of His Resurrection. The appearance of Moses and Elijah alongside Jesus signifies the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, affirming Jesus as the ultimate mediator and the anticipated Messiah.

Peter's suggestion to build three tents shows his desire to prolong the divine encounter, yet it also reflects a misunderstanding of the need for Jesus' forthcoming suffering. In response, a bright cloud, symbolizing God's presence, envelops them, and God's voice declares Jesus to be His beloved Son and commands the disciples to listen to Him. This divine affirmation emphasizes Jesus' authority and the significance of His teachings, particularly about His impending passion.

After the vision ends, Jesus reassures the frightened disciples, urging them not to fear but to embrace faith. He instructs them to keep the vision private until after His Resurrection, indicating that the true understanding of His glory would only come through the lens of the Cross and the Resurrection.

The Transfiguration is a foretaste of the Kingdom, strengthening the disciples' faith by revealing Christ's future glory. It invites believers to trust in God's plan, encouraging them on their spiritual journey with the hope of resurrection and the promise of eternal life. How does this glimpse into Jesus' divine glory and future Resurrection influence your faith and perspective on life's challenges?

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH (CCC) CONNECTIONS:

1. Foretaste of the Kingdom: The Catechism notes that the Transfiguration provides the disciples with a vision of Christ's glory, preparing them for his Passion and sustaining their faith. CCC 556 states, "On the threshold of the public life: the baptism; on the threshold of the Passover: the Transfiguration. Jesus' baptism proclaimed 'the mystery of the first regeneration,' namely, our Baptism; the Transfiguration 'is the sacrament of the second regeneration': our own Resurrection."

2. Revealing Jesus' Divine Glory: The Transfiguration is a moment where Jesus' divine nature is manifestly revealed to His closest disciples. CCC 554 explains, "From the day Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Master 'began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things... and be killed, and on the third day be raised.' Peter scorns this prediction, nor do the others understand it any better than he: 'This is a scandal.'"

3. Father's Voice: God the Father's voice from the cloud emphasizes Jesus as His beloved Son, just as He did at the Baptism of Jesus. CCC 554-556 reflect on this moment as God's divine affirmation and directive to listen to Jesus as the culmination and fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets.

4. Strength for the Passion: The Transfiguration serves as encouragement and preparation for the disciples for the trials ahead. CCC 568 connects this to Jesus' Passion: "Christ's Transfiguration aims at strengthening the apostles' faith in anticipation of his Passion: the ascent onto the 'high mountain' prepares for the ascent to Calvary. Christ, Head of the Church, manifests what his Body contains and radiates in the sacraments: 'the hope of glory.'"

5. Invitation to Transformation: The Catechism relates the mystery of the Transfiguration to the transformative call of Christian life -- a call to be conformed to Christ. It reinforces the invitation to share in Christ's sufferings and glory, as explained in CCC 556: "You were transfigured on the mountain, and your disciples, as much as they were capable of it, beheld your glory, O Christ our God, so that when they should see you crucified, they would understand that your Passion was voluntary, and proclaim to the world that you truly are the radiance of the Father."

The Transfiguration reminds us that glory comes through the Cross and encourages believers to remain faithful and hopeful in the promise of the Resurrection. How does this understanding deepen your call to follow Christ more closely in your daily life?

Source: *Truthly App*

LENTEN SEASON

CATHOLIC LENT DONE RIGHT

Four Powerful Steps to a Better, Christ-Centered, Practical Lenten Season

(Adapted from the February 18, 2026 talk by [The Father Leo Shou](#) via YouTube)

Lent can easily become about self-improvement, strict rule-keeping, or extreme penitential practices — but the call of the Church is deeper: a conversion of the heart that draws us closer to Jesus. In this teaching, Father Leo gives four guiding principles to help Catholics grow in holiness this Lent without falling into discouragement or spiritual burnout.

1. **LEARN: Grow in Scripture, Sacrament & Identity**

✠ *Know Who You Are in Christ*

One cornerstone of a fruitful Lent is learning more about our identity as baptized Catholics. Lent isn't just about "doing things"; it's about knowing why we do them — and who we are doing them for.

Reflect on your life in light of your baptism:

- You are claimed by Christ.
- You are called to share in His death and resurrection.
- You are an adopted child of the Father.

Take time this Lent to:

- Read a daily passage of Scripture.
- Pray with the Gospels, especially Jesus' passion.
- Study a short reflection on Catholic teaching each day.

Learning deepens our roots — when we understand our vocation, all our Lenten practices have meaning rather than just "religious duties."

2. **ENCOURAGE: Fast From Gossip & Negativity**

✠ *Not Just Food — Fast From What Hurts Love*

Although fasting from food is a traditional Lenten practice, Father Leo reminds us that fasting can — and should — reach beyond food. One powerful form of fasting he highlights is fasting from:

- Gossip
- Complaining
- Negative speech
- Criticism of others

Challenge yourself this Lent:

- When tempted to speak ill of another, pause and pray instead.
- Offer words of encouragement to at least one person daily.
- Practice patience with those who irritate you.

This isn't just anonymity of sin: it's an act of charity, imitation of Christ, and renewal of relationship.

3. **NOURISH: Feed Body and Soul with the Right Things**

✠ *Fasting, Prayer & Nourishment Go Together*

While fasting is important, it shouldn't leave us drained. Instead, fasting should lead to nourishment — not just of the body, but of the soul. Lent invites us to nourish ourselves with:

- Prayer (especially the Rosary, Scripture, Divine Mercy Chaplet)
- The Sacraments — especially Confession and Holy Eucharist
- Works of mercy and generosity
- Rest and proper care for our bodies

A balanced approach ensures that fasting doesn't become an idol of suffering but a discipline that frees us for joy and deeper communion with God.

LENTEN SEASON

CATHOLIC LENT DONE RIGHT CONT.

Four Powerful Steps to a Better, Christ-Centered, Practical Lenten Season

(Adapted from the February 18, 2026 talk by [The Father Leo Show](#) via YouTube)

4. TRUST: Entrust Yourself to God's Providence

✠ *Lent Isn't About Perfection — It's About Trust*

Real spiritual growth doesn't come from willpower alone — it comes from trust in God, especially when life is hard, disappointing, or confusing.

This Lent, focus on:

- Letting go of the illusion that your spiritual progress depends only on your effort
- Trusting that God can work miracles in small, simple acts
- Offering your weaknesses, anxieties, and fears to the Lord

Trust transforms Lent from a “self-improvement project” into a journey of surrender and love.

A Simple Practical Plan for Lent

Here's a ready-to-use plan you can follow during these 40 days:

Daily Habits

- ✓ Morning prayer for 10 minutes
- ✓ Read one short chapter from Scripture
- ✓ Choose one Lenten virtue to focus on (patience, charity, humility, joy)

Weekly Practices

- ✠ Attend Daily or Sunday Mass
- ✠ Go to Confession at least once during Lent
- ✠ Fast from one habit that distracts you from prayer

Acts of Charity

- ♥ Send a kind note to someone you often criticize
- ♥ Volunteer at a parish ministry or local outreach
- ♥ Bring food for the parish Lenten Food Drive (St. Vincent de Paul)

Reflection Questions

- What is one thing I want Jesus to change in me this Lent?
- What am I fasting from that will open my heart to God and neighbor?
- Who can I encourage today with my words or actions?
- How can I practice trust in God when I feel weak or discouraged?

Closing Prayer for Lent

Lord Jesus Christ, during this holy season of Lent, grant me a heart that seeks You above all things.

Help me to learn more about Your love.

Free me from negative habits that distract me from You.

Nourish me with Your word and sacraments.

And entrust my whole life to Your divine providence.

Lead me ever closer to Your Sacred Heart so that I may rise with You in glory on Easter morning.

Amen.

DONATIONS



RECTORY DEBT PAYOFF

The Building Committee would like to invite all our parishioners to assist us with paying off the debt of our parish rectory. Please complete information and place in collection basket or bring to the office.

Name: _____

Amount: _____



CAMPUS MAINTENANCE

Please consider contributing to our Campus Maintenance. Please complete information and place in collection basket or bring to the office.

Name: _____

Amount: _____



ONLINE DONATIONS: [HTTPS://WWW.OSVHUB.COM/STRITAINTHEDESERT/GIVING/FUNDS](https://www.osvhub.com/stritainthedesert/giving/funds)



ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS

Please consider contributing to our fresh altar flowers. Please complete information and place in collection basket or bring to the office.

Name: _____

Amount: _____



REQUEST A MASS INTENTION

The stipend for a Mass intention is \$10. **Two Week advance notice** is required. Please complete information and place in collection basket or bring to the office. **PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

Mass for: _____

Living Deceased

Mass Date/Time: _____

Requested By: _____

Phone: _____