



HOLY INFANT  
Catholic Church **LIVE † JESUS**

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
AUGUST 9, 2026

# COURAGE

## MASS SCHEDULE

Daily: Monday–Saturday, 9 am\*, Chapel  
Saturday Vigil: 5:30 pm, Church  
Sunday: 8:30 am & 11:30 am\*, Church  
\* In-person & virtual

## CONFESSION

Saturday, 4 pm to 4:45 pm, Church  
or by appointment

## PARISH CENTER OFFICE

5000 Southpark Drive  
Durham, NC 27713

## OFFICE HOURS

Monday–Thursday,  
9 am to 4 pm;  
closed Friday

## CONTACT US

Office: 919-544-7135  
[info@holyinfantchurch.org](mailto:info@holyinfantchurch.org)

## VISIT US ONLINE

Go to [holyinfantchurch.org](https://holyinfantchurch.org)  
or scan the QR code below



OPEN HEARTS · OPEN HANDS · OPEN MINDS





### Thoughts from Salesian Spirituality

"Easter is the demonstration of God that life is essentially spiritual and timeless. Our joy that hath no end."

-Saint Francis de Sales

| TITLE                                         | NAME                       | PHONE        | EMAIL                             |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Pastor                                        | Rev. Robert Rutledge, OSFS | 919-973-0006 | RRutledge@holysininfantchurch.org |
| Director of Operations & Finance              | John Martin                | 919-973-0017 | JohnM@holysininfantchurch.org     |
| Director of Catechetical Leadership           | Michalene Sutton           | 919-973-0013 | MSutton@holysininfantchurch.org   |
| Assistant Director of Catechetical Leadership | Anna Lee                   | 919-973-0012 | ALee@holysininfantchurch.org      |
| Director of Liturgy & Music                   | Angela Flynn               | 919-925-3714 | AngelaF@holysininfantchurch.org   |
| Assistant Director of Liturgy & Music         | Cyrus D'Arcy               | 984-309-0440 | CyrusD@holysininfantchurch.org    |
| Communications Coordinator                    | Stacy Paper                | 919-973-0010 | StacyP@holysininfantchurch.org    |
| Financial Services Assistant                  | Amy Locke                  | 919-973-0009 | AmyL@holysininfantchurch.org      |
| Parish Services Assistant                     | Brandi Rhew                | 919-544-7135 | BrandiR@holysininfantchurch.org   |
| Pastor's Assistant                            | Karina Miranda             | 919-973-0008 | KarinaM@holysininfantchurch.org   |
| Pastoral Associate                            | Lynn Sale                  | 919-973-0018 | LynnS@holysininfantchurch.org     |
| Deacon                                        | Tom Hill                   | 919-544-7135 | TomH@holysininfantchurch.org      |

#### PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

Rev. Robert Rutledge, OSFS, Pastor

Laura Terpack, Peter Barrett, Co-Chairs,  
holysininfantpfcchair@gmail.com

John Martin, Director of Operations & Finance

Bob Dieter, Mike Pearl, Bob Radcliffe,  
Gerard Musante, JiNan George

#### PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Kim McCallister, Bryan Bland, Angie Van Epps,  
Carol Owen, Lindsay Glenn, Julio Revueltas, Matt Luedke,  
Bridget Ryan, Laura Terpack (*ex officio*),  
Lynn Sale (*ex officio*)

Rev. Robert Rutledge, OSFS, Pastor  
Midge Bowers, Chair, midge2031@gmail.com

#### FIND IT ON THE WEB

Our parish website is your primary source for the most complete and up-to-date information about the parish. Visit [holysininfantchurch.org](http://holysininfantchurch.org) for details on many topics, including:

- Mass and Liturgy Times
- Office Hours and Contact Information
- Calendar of Events, including event details
- News within the parish and around the diocese
- Worship & Sacraments, including sacramental prep information for Baptism, Reconciliation (Confession),
- Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick, and Holy Orders; Vocations for men and women; and Funerals
- Faith & Learning for adults, teens, and children; becoming Catholic; Catholic schools
- Salesian spirituality and the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales
- Joining the parish
- Getting Involved
- Ministries & Groups

Safe Environment Victim Assistance Hotline | Call 866-535-SAFE

#### PRAY FOR OUR SICK AND HOMEBOUND

During the General Intercessions at our weekend Masses, we remember all members of our parish and community who are homebound or suffering any illness. Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

Jean Arlotta; Mary Anthony; Jo Agusta; Nancy Balding; Jeff Baker; Charlotte Banks; Colette & Clayton Bean; Jerry DeBenedetto; Elizabeth Bently; Jennifer Bland; Maria Capone; Alice & Christos Chamis; Albina & Chin Chua; Eva Crowley; Lillian Davids; Rosemary Donohue; Eileen Dowling; Christine Drap; Jason Ferrigan; Adela Florey; Lillian Gage; Jo Garcia; Dot Gregory; Marjorie Goode; Fran Hadden; Mary Jane Haga; Mary Jane Harvey; Denise Herron; Patti Holland; Ruth & Kenneth Jones; Zack Kier; Donna LaMountain; Alice Lefebvre; Gerard Maras; Fanny Mazza; Peggy McIntyre; Terry Mercaldo; Katie Mostellar; Nelida Muniz; Kathleen O'Donnell; Johnathan Palermo; Marc Peloquin; Emanuel Pinarreta; Helen Pischak; Joe Porcelli; Diane Cursatis-Ratliff; Rosalind Riggio; Nancy Rizzo; John Sale; Shelia Rogers; Harriet Sansone; Julia Schmidt; Susan Sheehan; Tom Shreve; Betty Short; Bob Smith; Corrine Stavelly; Katherine Strubing; Marisa Suarez; Mary Sunderland; Richard Thomas; Angel David Torres; Pat White

If you need emotional support, reach out to the national mental health hotline: Dial 988.

**Stewardship of Treasure | July 1 - June 30**

|                       | Needed             | Received           | Difference      |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| First Offertory       | \$1,143,000        | \$1,185,393        | \$42,393        |
| Christmas Offertory   | \$27,000           | \$18,015           | (\$8,985)       |
| Easter Offertory      | \$16,000           | \$19,783           | \$3,783         |
| Holy Day Collections  | \$9,500            | \$11,004           | \$1,504         |
| Maintenance Offertory | \$47,000           | \$38,534           | (\$8,466)       |
|                       | <b>\$1,242,500</b> | <b>\$1,272,729</b> | <b>\$30,229</b> |

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK****Monday** 2 Cor 9:6-10 Ps 112:1-2, 5-6, 7-8, 9 Jn 12:24-26**Tuesday** Ez 2:8—3:4 Ps 119:14, 24, 72, 103, 111, 131  
Mt 18:1-5, 10, 12-14**Wednesday** Ez 9:1-7; 10:18-22 Ps 113:1-2, 3-4, 5-6  
Mt 18:15-20**Thursday** Ez 12:1-12 Ps 78:56-57, 58-59, 61-62  
Mt 18:21—19:1**Friday** Ez 16:1-15, 60, 63 or 16:59-63 Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6  
Mt 19:3-12**Saturday** Vigil 1 Chr 15:3-4, 15-16; 16:1-2  
Ps 132:6-7, 9-10, 13-14 1 Cor 15:54b-57 Lk 11:27-28**Saturday** Day Rev 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab  
Ps 45:10, 11, 12, 16 1 Cor 15:20-27 Lk 1:39-56**Sunday** Is 56:1, 6-7 Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8  
Rom 11:13-15, 29-32 Mt 15:21-28**UPCOMING EVENTS****Aug 10** Women's Faith & Fellowship, 7 pm**Aug 11** Virtual Centering Prayer, 8 am**Aug 11** Justice Garden Workday, 9 am**Aug 11** Stephen Ministry Meeting, 6:30 pm**Aug 12** Braver Angels Debate, 7 pm**Aug 13** Marian Prayer, 9:30 am**Aug 13** Eucharistic Adoration, 12 pm**Aug 15** Shroud of Remembrance & Solidarity**Aug 15** Justice Garden Workday, 9 am**Aug 15** Servants of God Prayer group, 3 pm**Aug 15** Rosary-Making, 3:30 pm**Aug 15** Reconciliation, 4 pm**Aug 15** OCIA Catechetical Session, 6:30 pm**Aug 16** Shroud of Remembrance & Solidarity**Aug 16** UMD Shelter Dinner**MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS**

August 10th to August 16th

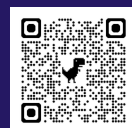
**Monday, 9:00 am***Emily & Dominick Zappia †***Tuesday, 9:00 am***Victor Legaspi †***Wednesday, 9:00 am***Jennie & Michael Lomazzo  
(anniversary)***Thursday, 9:00 am***Bill Gross (healing)***Friday, 9:00 am***Leonard Vogel***Saturday, 9:00 am***Barbara & David Whitmore  
(anniversary)***Saturday, 5:30 pm***Stephanie Lynch †***Sunday, 8:30 am***The Sauers Family †***Sunday, 11:30 am***Rosemarie D'Arcy †*

# 2ND ANNUAL KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS GOLF OUTING

**Join us for the 2nd Annual Knights of Columbus Golf Outing  
Tuesday, October 13th at The Preserve at Jordan Lake**

*We're hitting the greens for a great cause—and we want YOU to be part of it!*

The Knights of Columbus at Holy Infant Catholic Church invite you to an unforgettable day of golf, fun, food, and fellowship, all while supporting the exciting renovation of the DeSales Center. Whether you're an experienced golfer or just love a good day out, this event is a hole-in-one opportunity to make a difference. This is a 501c-3 deductible event.





# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2026 State of the Parish Report

### FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

As I reflect on the last year at Holy Infant, I can say that I am truly humbled by and grateful to our parish community. There is so much to celebrate!

I am especially grateful for all of you whose stewardship of time, talent, and treasure makes such an impact in our parish and surrounding community. It is because of your generosity that we can continue to grow God's kingdom.

Our Parish Finance and Pastoral Councils have wisely guided the course of our parish, and for this I am grateful. Our parish staff has also been selflessly dedicated as they serve our parishioners.

This report offers a statement of accountability for the good stewardship you have shown over the past year. We proudly list our accomplishments, and we humbly acknowledge the areas in which we need to grow. I believe that in being generous with our time, talent, and treasure we discover our "why". We discover God's purpose for us and our role in building up His Kingdom here on earth.

I ask for the blessing of our good and gracious God as we embrace the challenge of moving forward in our mission of discipleship. May God pour forth His richest blessings upon you and your family. And by His grace, may we all become better stewards of the blessings we have received.

Sincerely in Christ,



Rev. Robert Rutledge, OSFS



HOLY INFANT  
Catholic Church  
5000 Southpark Dr Durham, NC

## SACRAMENTAL MINISTRY

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Baptisms                     | 32 |
| First Reconciliations        | 16 |
| First Communion              | 16 |
| Adults Welcomed through OCIA | 3  |
| Weddings                     | 5  |
| Funerals                     | 14 |

**If you require sacramental assistance, please call the parish at 919-544-7135.**

## MY PARISH AT A GLANCE

**1,313**

Registered Families - 145 new families joined the parish in 2026

**3,157**

Individual Parishioners

**586**

Children (0-17)

**259**

Faith Formation Enrollment

**77**

Active Ministries

**\$69,824**

Financial Aid to  
32 Local Organizations

**\$9,720**

Neighbor to  
Neighbor Program

**\$7,200**

Feed My Sheep

## UNITED IN SERVICE

- Weekly **Food Collections** in Church and **Fill the Truck** Events to support Durham Community Food Bank and Baby Love. More than 11,000 pounds of food and funding were provided.
- More than 5,000 pounds of food produced and donated from the **Justice Garden**
- **Feed My Sheep** provides breakfast to kids during school and meals during vacation times
- Monthly meals at **Urban Ministries** for more than 150 per month due to donations at church
- **Share Your Christmas** provides families/kids with \$10,755 in gift cards/gifts and 227 coats
- Support for Holy Infant Elementary School students at **Immaculata and St Thomas More**
- Support for **Cardinal Gibbons High School, Planned High School** and **Cristo Rey High School**
- **Knights of Columbus** support for multiple charities and the parish events
- **Holy Infant Golf Association** (HIGA) provides donations to 6 charities
- **Yarn Ministry** provides hand-knit items to Duke Hospice
- **Sleep in Heavenly Peace** supports as a building location for beds and support towards funding. More than 1,350 kids' beds delivered
- **Neighbor to Neighbor Program** assisted 172 families with furniture and household items.
- **Financial Aid** to Parishioners in dire straights
- Other Organizations :
  - *Note in the Pocket*
  - *Church World Services*
  - *Habitat for Humanity*
  - *Ronald McDonald House*
  - *Pregnancy Support Services*
  - *Room at the Inn*
  - *Saving Grace Animal Adoption*
  - *StepUp Durham*
  - *TROSA*
  - *World Relief NC*
  - *Families Moving Forward*
  - *American Red Cross*
  - *Autism Society of NC*
  - *Care for our Common Home*
  - *Meals on Wheels*



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Holy Infant Fiscal Year runs from July 1 to June 30

| Families in Parish                     | 1070               | 1145               | 1202                                                                     | 1313               | Families in Parish                   |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Parish Revenue                         | 2022-2023          | 2023-2024          | 2024-2025                                                                | 2025-2026          | Parish Revenue                       |
| Total Offertory                        | \$1,021,000        | \$1,099,085        | \$1,162,825                                                              | \$1,234,195        | Total Offertory                      |
| Other Donations                        | \$11,844           | \$8,928            | \$10,867                                                                 | \$31,663           | Other Donations                      |
| Facility Fees                          | \$1,250            | \$250              | \$2,343                                                                  | \$2,094            | Facility Fees                        |
| Special Collections /Flowers           | \$33,353           | \$4,791            | \$5,139                                                                  | \$6,117            | Special Collections /Flowers         |
| Rebates / Grants / Claims              | \$19,176           | \$13,770           | \$38,917                                                                 | \$18,789           | Rebates / Grants / Claims            |
| Memorial/Restricted Donations          | \$11,588           | \$22,845           | \$18,864                                                                 | \$62,367           | Memorial/Restricted Donations        |
| Columbarium                            | \$25,863           | \$15,319           | \$43,249                                                                 | \$19,561           | Columbarium                          |
| Faith Development & Fees               | \$19,248           | \$23,587           | \$41,451                                                                 | \$28,040           | Faith Development & Fees             |
| Charity & Justice / PW&R               | \$166,767          | \$169,764          | \$173,755                                                                | \$172,595          | Charity & Justice / PW&R             |
| Special Projects                       | \$7,193            | \$9,760            | \$10,044                                                                 | \$9,504            | Special Projects                     |
| <b>Total Operating Income</b>          | <b>\$1,298,034</b> | <b>\$1,368,099</b> | <b>\$1,507,454</b>                                                       | <b>\$1,584,925</b> | <b>Total Operating Income</b>        |
| <b>Capital Campaign (Restricted)</b>   | <b>\$15,614</b>    | <b>N/A</b>         | <b>\$647,161</b>                                                         | <b>\$792,613</b>   | <b>Capital Campaign (Restricted)</b> |
| Parish Expenses                        | 2022-2023          | 2023-2024          | 2024-2025                                                                | 2025-2026          | Parish Expenses                      |
| Faith Development - Word               | \$56,988           | \$60,752           | \$71,424                                                                 | \$53,409           | Faith Development - Word             |
| Worship                                | \$29,640           | \$39,268           | \$54,040                                                                 | \$28,984           | Worship                              |
| Service / Peace & Justice              | \$96,860           | \$110,999          | \$103,186                                                                | \$96,522           | Service / Peace & Justice            |
| Priest & Rectory                       | \$107,665          | \$131,750          | \$136,666                                                                | \$124,121          | Priest & Rectory                     |
| Lay Personnel                          | \$516,053          | \$585,571          | \$602,942                                                                | \$635,929          | Lay Personnel                        |
| Office and Administrative              | \$93,126           | \$46,290           | \$44,281                                                                 | \$56,182           | Office and Administrative            |
| Facilities / Plant                     | \$224,777          | \$208,138          | \$270,631                                                                | \$266,903          | Facilities / Plant                   |
| Assessments                            | \$141,030          | \$168,188          | \$168,812                                                                | \$185,400          | Assessments                          |
| Special Projects / Misc                | \$6,427            | \$6,610            | \$8,384                                                                  | \$45,018           | Special Projects / Misc              |
| Columbarium                            | \$1,345            | \$10,782           | \$2,775                                                                  | \$2,456            | Columbarium                          |
| Loan Repayment – Interest              | \$61,155           | N/A                | N/A                                                                      | N/A                | Loan Repayment – Interest            |
| Capital–Parish Reserve Funds           | (\$37,032)         | (\$249)            | \$44,313                                                                 | \$90,001           | Capital–Parish Reserve Funds         |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                  | <b>\$1,298,034</b> | <b>\$1,368,099</b> | <b>\$1,507,454</b>                                                       | <b>\$1,584,925</b> | <b>Total Expenses</b>                |
| <b>Capital Project Expenses</b>        | <b>\$2,829,526</b> | <b>N/A</b>         | <b>N/A</b>                                                               | <b>\$473,117</b>   | <b>Capital Project Expenses</b>      |
| <b>Charity and Justice Support</b>     |                    |                    | <b>DeSales Center Renovation/Upgrade</b>                                 |                    |                                      |
| Donations to Charitable Organizations  | \$69,824           |                    | <b>We Remember You - Phase II Capital Campaign Status</b>                |                    |                                      |
| Assistance to Parishioners/Individuals | \$11,053           |                    | The DeSales Center Renovation/Upgrade project is well underway.          |                    |                                      |
| Special Second Collections             | \$70,108           |                    | The We Remember You - Phase II Capital Campaign pledges for the project. |                    |                                      |
|                                        |                    |                    | Pledges - \$2,406,352                                                    |                    |                                      |
|                                        |                    |                    | Received as of 6/30/2026 - \$1,439,774                                   |                    |                                      |

| Bishop's Annual Appeal                             |  |
|----------------------------------------------------|--|
| Holy Infant 2026 BAA Campaign (as of 30 June 2026) |  |
| Goal - \$122,574.85                                |  |
| Committed - \$113,812.44 (93%)                     |  |
| Received - \$106,277.88 (87%)                      |  |

## Ways to Give



**ONLINE**

Visit our website

[www.holyinfantchurch.org/giving](http://www.holyinfantchurch.org/giving)



**MAIL**

5000 Southpark Drive  
Durham, NC 27713

**At Mass:** Use your envelope or a visitor envelope  
and drop your donation in the basket

# DESALES CENTER RENOVATION UPDATE

The project to upgrade the DeSales Center is steadily progressing.

- DeSales Center closed with the last event on May 2nd.
- Remediation activities completed by Janezic Building Group on June 19th.
- JD Beam selected as General Contractor with a planned mobilization late July/early August.



## Facility Plans and Construction

- The Construction Drawings package has been submitted for Durham's approval.
- The Building Permit has been issued by Durham.
- Renovation should be completed in 13 – 15 months

## Financial Update

- Please make sure that your pledge is scheduled to be fulfilled, as the funds will be needed as construction is ready to go.

*If you were unable to pledge during the Capital Campaign or are one of the nearly 200 new families that have arrived since the campaign and want to contribute, please contact Amy Locke at [amyl@holysininfantchurch.org](mailto:amyl@holysininfantchurch.org) or (919) 973-0009.*





# Faith Development

## Director

Michalene Sutton  
919-973-0013  
MSutton@holysininfantchurch.org

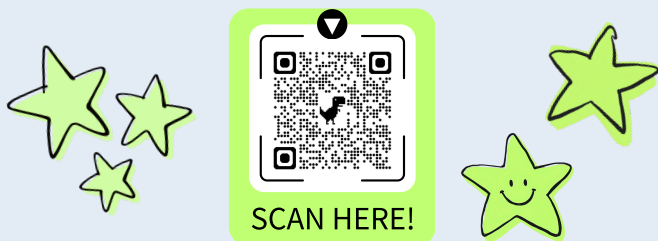
## Assistant Director

Anna Lee  
919-973-0012  
Alee@holysininfantchurch.org

## REGISTER FOR FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Registration is now open for the upcoming year of Faith Development! We invite all families to join us as we fall in love and remain in love with the One who calls us by name.

At Holy Infant, our lifelong faith formation process seeks to nurture both our minds and hearts through the formation of the whole person.



## A NEW CHAPTER FOR CGS

Beginning in the Fall of 2027, Holy Infant will offer Level II Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, expanding our ministry to serve children in grades 1 – 3. This is an exciting milestone for our parish and a testament to our commitment to nurturing the spiritual lives of our youngest members. To prepare for this next step, two of our catechists completed more than 100 hours of Level II formation between July 2025 & July 2026. Additionally, we have four catechists who are beginning 90 hours of Level I training this summer and fall, so that we continue to sustain and grow CGS at Holy Infant in the years to come.

Over the coming year, we will be working diligently to build the Level II Atrium, carefully preparing the beautiful materials that invite children into a deeper relationship with God through Scripture and the liturgy. Many of these materials are handmade, and we would love your help bringing this vision to life!

If you enjoy any of the following, we invite you to share your talents:

- Painting
- Sculpting
- Woodworking
- Coloring
- Calligraphy
- Other artistic or creative skills

Whether you can help with one project or several, your gifts can become part of a sacred space that will serve the children of our parish for many years to come.

If you would like to volunteer or learn more about helping build our Level II Atrium, please contact Michalene in the parish office. If you wish to make a gift in kind, please use the QR code below to purchase a material for our atrium.

Thank you for helping us create a beautiful place where our children can continue to encounter the Christ the Good Shepherd.



## FINDING GOD IN A NEW SEASON OF LIFE

Come to this two-night retreat and discover how God has been guiding you through every season of your life and how God may be inviting you into the next. Enter the next season of your life with greater peace and confidence: **September 4th-6th** in Hickory, NC.

For more information or to register, visit [www.catholicconference.org/new-season](http://www.catholicconference.org/new-season), email [info@catholicconference.org](mailto:info@catholicconference.org), or call 828-327-7441.

## SEEKING OCIA SPONSORS

Ten new people at Holy Infant have taken the first step to becoming fully initiated members of the Catholic Church this summer, and the OCIA team needs your help! Each person in OCIA is accompanied by a sponsor who serves as a spiritual mentor and friend along the way.

Sponsors participate in weekly formation sessions and should have regular check-ins with the person they are sponsoring. If you are open to sharing your faith with someone as their sponsor, please contact Anna in the parish office!



## SHROUD OF REMEMBRANCE

On **August 15th and 16th**, following all Masses, Holy Infant will host the Shroud of Remembrance and Solidarity, a powerful interfaith project that honors the more than 21,000 Palestinian children who have been killed in Gaza.

Spearheaded by Franciscan priests, the Shroud is a growing expression of prayer, remembrance, and solidarity. Faith communities from across the United States and around the world have participated in creating this meaningful memorial, joining together across religious traditions to recognize the dignity of every human life and to pray for peace.

Visitors are invited to spend a few moments viewing the Shroud after Mass, offering prayers for all those impacted by violence and reflecting on our shared call to be peacemakers. Visitors are also welcome to transcribe names listed on the Shroud in solidarity with all those opposed to the ongoing violence.

After its time at Holy Infant and other participating communities, the completed Shroud will be assembled and displayed in Washington, D.C., and New York City this September as a visible witness to hope, compassion, and the pursuit of peace.

We invite all parishioners to take part in this opportunity for prayer and reflection as we stand in solidarity with those who are suffering and continue to pray for peace in the Holy Land and throughout the world.

## SEASON OF CREATION

The Season of Creation is a global, ecumenical celebration held each year from **September 1st to October 4th**, inviting Christians to renew their relationship with God, one another, and the Earth. This year, as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States, we have further inspiration to actively celebrate the beautiful country where we live. Learn more below and using the QR code.

Here are some opportunities for your participation:

- The Season of Creation starts with a global online ecumenical prayer service held on September 1st at 9 am EDT.
- The Diocese of Raleigh is planning a Season of Creation prayer service at noon on Saturday, September 12th at the Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral.
- Gather at the Globe at noon on September 12th outside the Museum of Natural Sciences.



## BRAVER ANGELS DEBATE

Holy Infant is pleased to host a Braver Angels Debate on Wednesday, August 12th, inviting members of our community to engage in thoughtful, respectful dialogue on an important public issue.

The evening's debate resolution is:

**"Democratic Socialism would decrease prosperity in the U.S."**

Speakers will present arguments both in favor of and against the resolution. It's important to note that this topic does not represent Braver Angels' position, but serves as a starting point for meaningful discussion.

Use the QR code to learn more..



**CHECK OUT OUR PARISH CALENDAR FOR MORE  
UPCOMING EVENTS AT HOLY INFANT**





# Oblates of Saint Francis de Sales

## SUMMER SUNFLOWERS & SALESIAN SPIRITUALITY

This weekend, the month of August begins. Over the years, various authors have described the last few weeks of summer as slow and gentle, a time when the calendar itself takes a vacation. Christian author Carol McLeod, in her book *Vibrant: Developing a Deep & Abiding Joy for All Seasons*, has a beautiful description of the eight-month of the year:

*"August is a miraculous and marvelous month. It teeters between summer and fall with the longest and loveliest days of the year. It is the month of wildflowers in glorious bloom, sunsets vibrant in the sleepy dusk, and vegetable gardens abundant beyond measure. August sings in chrysanthemums, boasts in bachelor buttons, and shouts with sunflowers bending in the afternoon sunshine."*

During this final phase of summer, nature begins a seasonal shift from green to gold and the gardens and flowers are crowned with the sunflower. August is peak season for sunflowers. Each year, many people look forward to seeing the beautiful flowers scattered along roads, in fields, in front yards or displayed in homes. For many, these towering stems with bright yellow petals represent the sun, the warmth, and the beauty of summertime. They reach their vibrant full bloom during the next few weeks, and they serve as a reminder for all of us to stand tall, stay strong, and turn to the light in hard times.

Because of these traits, St. Francis de Sales saw the sunflower as a symbol of faith. He reminded his parishioners and readers that just as the sunflower tracks the sun across the sky, so we must focus on God's presence and grace as we journey through this world. The soul looks to the divine light as we navigate the difficulties of daily life and seek the inner calm that only God can bring.

In his famous prayer for peace, St. Francis tells us the God *"will either shield you from suffering or give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations."*

As he wrote these words, I wonder if Francis was looking out his window on an August afternoon in Annecy, France. Did the nature that surrounded the Savoy region remind him that God will protect us and strengthen us as the sun gives strength to the flowers that flourished along the Alps?

Let's look at the weeks of August as a reminder to turn toward the Lord. In the garden of God's grace, may we all be like the sunflower, blooming and flourishing in God's light and life.

-Fr. Jack Kolodziej, OSFS

