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Dear St. Rita's Family Members,  
Christ came on earth to reveal an extraordinary message, a message of love, hope, joy and peace. With gratitude for all you have been and done to grace St. Rita's parish, I hold you in my heart and in my prayers this Christmas season, asking God to bless you with peace, joy, hope and love.

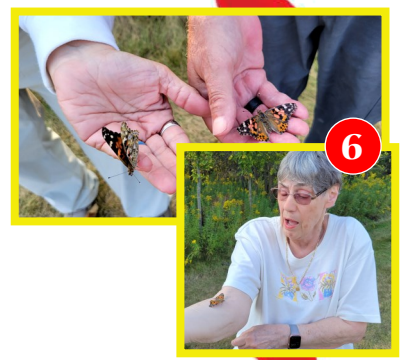


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I used to send a Christmas letter, in my former parish in Manchester, with pictures of some of the events that took place the previous year. I think it was my way of thanking the staff and the volunteers for their wonderful work, sharing their time and talents for the parish they love. Since I moved to St. Rita's this past first week of July, I have witnessed so many beautiful things happening in our wonderful parish! These include the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Religious Education department, and the Youth Group. Some I have pictures of, and some I do not. Yet all are in my heart.



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I would like to bring some of these before you. The first are from my memory in this Christmas letter.

The first few things people appreciate happens around the Eucharistic Celebration and the Altar.

- ◆ We have Bells during the Mass,
- ◆ Many Altar Servers have been trained. Even for funerals, we have homeschoolers who altar serve.
- ◆ Friday Adoration with meditative prayers and opportunity for confession.
- ◆ More times for Saturday and Sunday confessions.
- ◆ Our beautiful new Marian Monstrance and Candelabra for Adoration, all generously paid for by the people.
- ◆ Sunday Altar Flowers are sponsored by the people.
- ◆ Christmas poinsettias are sponsored by the people.
- ◆ Rosary at all weekend Masses in October.
- ◆ We had an All Souls Day prayer service at the Columbarium after Mass.
- ◆ We pray the St. Micheal's Prayer at every Mass.
- ◆ Throughout the month of November, at all the Masses, we offer the Prayer for All the Souls in Purgatory. .
- ◆ Once a month the Praise and Worship Music Team sings at a regular weekend Masses rather than a special Mass in the evening. *(continued on reverse)*



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Continued on reverse —

Now let me share with pictures some grace-filled events in our parish life.



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1. **“HEAD TO TOE”** school program drive: On just the first weekend, 130 packages of socks were donated.
2. **VBS:** 40 children registered for *“Scuba: Diving into Friendship with God”*
3. **“CHRISTMAS IN JULY”** donations for boys and girls were collected till August 10<sup>th</sup>
4. **“PILLOWCASE DONATIONS”** to make dresses for the children in Africa.
5. **SUMMER YOUTH CAMP.**
6. **“BUTTERFLY RELEASE”** on Tuesday the 10th of September.
7. **SUMMER PARISH PICNIC** on August 28<sup>th</sup>.
8. **“UNDERSTANDING SCRIPTURE”** and **“BOOK OF REVELATION STUDY”** met for 3 sessions in a week
9. **“WALKING WITH PURPOSE,”** a women’s program started on the 4th of September with 2 sessions, morning and evening, in a week.
10. **“BLUE WAGON”** food collections for the poor.
11. **K OF C BREAKFAST** once a month.
12. **“SHARE THE WARMTH”** coats, scarfs and gloves.
13. **“TRUNK OR TREAT”** on Oct. 27 at Columbia High School at 3:00pm
14. **APPLE CRISP SALE** by K of C on 27th of Oct.
15. **PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY** Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> to Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>.
16. **CONFIRMATION:** 10 of our candidates on Oct. 20th at Our Lady of Fatima
17. **STEPS AT THE CHURCH** were repaired
18. **RECTORY ROOF** was redone



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What a beautiful parish we have! How grateful I am to be able to be here with you! How God has blessed us all! In this Christmas season, let us rejoice and praise God. And let us spend time in prayer, with our Holy Mother Mary, in gratitude to God for bringing to us our Lord Jesus in the stable at Bethlehem!

Yours in the love of Christ,



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