

WELCOME!

We welcome all of our visitors and guests to St. Stephen Protomartyr Parish. If you would be so kind as to sign the Guest Book found in the vestibule of the Chapel or near the main entrance to the Church, we would appreciate it.

If you would like to register or find out more information about us, please call the parish office at 481-1133 or visit our website at www.saintstephenstl.org.

Our mission statement is: "Following the example of our patron St. Stephen, we are called to be witnesses of God's love and to be a faith-filled, reconciling parish."

New Year's Blessing

Wishing you joy, peace and God's blessings for the coming New Year.

At the beginning of the New Year we begin again to set our priorities and direction. We leave what is past and look toward that which is in store for us .

May this be a year of grace in which we daily recognize Christ's presence in our lives.

Peace,
Fr. Ron

Faithful Departed

In the charity of your prayers please remember Tom Wall who died this past week. Give him eternal rest, O Lord. May light unending shine on him. Receive his soul, O holy ones; present him now to God, Most High.

Our Alumni Shine

Congratulations to Rebecca Biundo, recently named as a winner of the Annual Catholic Appeal 2009-2010 high school essay contest in which juniors in Catholic high schools throughout the archdiocese are invited to write essays about the ACA. Among other topics, writers answer the question: How am I called personally to participate in the mission of the ACA at this time in my life.

Congratulations are also in order for Tony Puricelli, named as a National Merit Semi-Finalist. Tony attends St. Mary's High School and is vice-president of the student council, president of the National Honor Society as well as an Eagle Scout who remains active in the St. Stephen Protomartyr Boy Scout troop.

Well done Rebecca and Tony!!!

Feast of the Holy Family

These days everyone is thinking about resolutions for this New Year. Here is a paraphrase of the Prayer of St. Francis that in this parish family we might grow as the instruments of the Lord's presence as part of our New Year's resolutions.



Lord, make our parish the instrument of your presence. Help us to depend not on collections and committees but on a lively faith.

Keep us open to build bridges between people, and not isolate into factions.

Guide us to find words that encourage and affirm rather than criticize or belittle.

Give us the sensitivity to listen to the needs and hurts of others and not to react with cynicism or selfishness.

For we believe that it is ours to build community where there is isolation,

To proclaim gospel wholeness where there is brokenness,

And to replace the shallow promises made by our world with the promise and the presence of the Risen Lord.

Auction Results



The books are balanced and we are proud to announce that the profits from the Masquerade Auction totaled **\$47,654.35**.

Thanks so much again to everyone for their donations, help and participation.

If anyone is interested in chairing the next auction in November, 2011, please contact Barb Schlanger or Mary Regan at the rectory (481-1133).



Holy Day Schedule — Feast of Mary, the Mother of God

Thursday, December 31 at 5:00 PM at the Parish Church

Friday, January 1 at 9:00 AM at the Parish Church

Save the Date

Progressive Dinner

Saturday, February 13, 2010

Everyone is welcome and invited to ...

- Dine with good friends and make new
- “Mardi Gras” — St. Stephen’s style
- Volunteer to be a Host home for a cocktail or dinner party

Help Wanted:

Please volunteer to be a cocktail or dinner party host ASAP — call a committee member:

Jane Barber — 498-3624

Anne Borgmeyer — 752-2528

Sandy Gaydos — 352-1281

sunnyskies642@sbcglobal.net

More information will be available in the following weeks. Call if you have any questions.

Readings for the week

December 28, 2009 through January 2, 2010

Monday: 1 Jn 1:5-2:2 Ps 124:2-5,7c-8 Mt 2:13-18

Tuesday: 1 Jn 2:3-11 Ps 96:1-3,5b-6 Lk 2:22-35

Wednesday: 1 Jn 2:12-17 Ps 96:7-10 Lk 2:36-40

Thursday: 1 Jn 2:18-21 Ps 96:1-2, 11-13

Friday: Nm 6:22-27 Ps 67:2-3,5-6,8 Gal 4:4-7
Lk 2:16-21

Saturday: 1 Jn 2:22-28 Ps 98:1-4 Jn 119-28

Sunday: Is 60:1-6 Ps 72:1-2,7-8,10-13 Eph 3:2-3a,
5-6 Mt 2:1-12

PSR News

We have 89 children from 17 parishes at the South City Parish School of Religion which is located at 4170 Delor St. at St John the Baptist Parish. Like a full-time parish school, we continue to prepare our students for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation — all which will be celebrated in 12 different locations in the next few months.

Please help support our Second Annual Trivia Night for the South City Deanery PSR on Saturday, January 9, 2010 at our PSR building. Doors open at 6:00 PM and Trivia starts at 7:00 PM \$15 per person or tables of 8 for \$120 (includes soda and snacks) For reservations, call 773-3070 or email us at scdpsr4200@sbcglobal.net

The courage to be a parent — again

Ann and her husband Lance lived a parent’s worst nightmare: burying their child. A few years ago, their five-year-old daughter Grace died suddenly of a virulent form of strep. It was devastating. Three years later traveled to China to adopt a little girl, Annabelle.

One morning, while everyone in the family was getting ready for school and work, Ann went into the bathroom and found Annabelle laying limp on the floor. Ann and Lance raced Annabelle to the hospital. They were reliving the same nightmare. This time though, Annabelle survived.

The experience left Ann a little shaken but with a new understanding of what it means to be a parent. In an essay in the new book, Dedicated to the People of Darfur: Writers on Fear, Risk and Hope, Ann writes: “A friend whose father was murdered when she was a teenager told me that when her infant son’s terminal illness was diagnosed, she told the doctor, ‘You must be mistaken. I’ve already had mine.’ Hadn’t I already had mine? Could it be that [Annabelle] who had changed my sorrow to hope could suffer some unspeakable tragedy? Of course it was possible. Since Grace had died I had met families with multiple losses that I understood no one was safe. It was this understanding that almost kept me from having another child. The risk seemed too great. Before I was a mother, I leaped into love with my arms and heart wide open . . . Losing Grace had the opposite effect.

“What I do know is this: there is no safe route through parenthood, or through life. When we offer our heart to others, we do not know what will happen to it. It may grow. It may take us to places we never imagined. But isn’t that the risk of love?”

■ *Parents know the terror felt by Mary and Joseph in the story of their boy Jesus being lost in Jerusalem for three days. Luke’s story not only tells us something about Jesus the Christ, but also tells us something about the sacredness of the vocation of parenthood. Being a mom and dad is risky and terrifying; it demands everything we have and are; it is filled with pain and doubt and despair. Yet to be a parent is to be a coworker with the Father of all, God the Parent whose love for us, his children, knows neither limit nor condition. In the struggles of fear and anguish experienced by the Holy Family, we realize that the light of God shines in the midst of our own families as we confront those same tensions and crises in our life together.* ■

Adapted from Connections: January 2010.

December 27, 2009 Feast of the Holy Family

STEWARDSHIP: SHARING TIME, TALENT, TREASURE and PRAYER

“Beloved, see what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God..” (1 John 3:1)

Stewardship of Treasure

Last Week's Stewardship	\$ 15,696.00
Weekly Stewardship goal	\$ 10,481.00
Average	\$ 7,206.19
Renovations & Improvements	\$ 76.00
Tuition Assistance	\$ 1,121.00

Leadership Councils

This week we highlight the **Parish Council** whose members include: Marion Amsler, Jim Daubert, Matt Guntli, Judy Hammer, Matt Kuppinger, Beth Ryan, Bob Sampson, Lu Sturm, Mary Winfrey, Fr. Ron Hopmeir, Mary Regan

Parish Council Notes

The Parish Council met on Thursday, December 16.

The following items were discussed at the meeting:

- ◆ Seminary Campaign
- ◆ Stewardship
 - ◇ Need to update ministry catalogue
 - ◇ Website is in the process of being updated
- ◆ Parish activities for all parish members
- ◆ Parish Retreat
- ◆ Appreciation Dinner for parish

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be Wednesday, January 27.

Liturgical Ministries

Lectors

Saturday, January 2, Chapel of Sts. Mary & Joseph

4:00 PM — TBA

Sunday, January 3, Church of St. Stephen

8:00 AM — TBA

10:30 AM — TBA

Servers

Saturday, January 2 Chapel of Sts Mary & Joseph

4:00 PM — J. Renick, V. Chirco

Sunday, January 3 Church of St. Stephen

8:00 AM — S. Nolte, C. Rosentreter

10:30 AM — M. Cantalin, M. O'Neil

Parish Office Closed

The Parish Office hours for the holidays are:

Monday, December 28: Office Closed

Tuesday, December 29: 8:30 AM — 8:00 PM

Wednesday, December 30: 8:30 AM — 8:00 PM

Thursday, December 31: 8:30 AM — 2:00

Friday, January 1: Office Closed

Saturday, January 2: 9:00 AM — 4:00 PM

Military Service

If you have a family member serving in the military, we would like to recognize them in the bulletin and pray for them. Please contact the rectory with their name for inclusion in this listing.

This Week at St. Stephen Protomartyr

Sunday December 27	Monday December 28	Tuesday December 29	Wednesday December 30	Thursday December 31	Friday January 1	Saturday January 2
Feast of the Holy Family Blessing of Families	Parish Office Closed			Feast of Mary, Mother of God Mass 5:00 PM	Feast of Mary, Mother of God Mass 9:00 AM	
					Parish Office Closed	

New Year's Resolutions

As we make our resolutions for the New Year, one of those might be to spend more time in prayer. Here are seven prayer opportunities in which you might not have considered prayer, but where prayer is especially appropriate.

- *Waiting at a traffic light* — Praying while waiting for the light to change may help ones mind to calm down and experience serenity instead of road rage.
- *Waiting in a doctor's office* — Pray for those in the waiting room and for everyone who will see the doctor that day. Pray for the doctor, that God will guide her/him to make the kind of decisions for patients which will truly facilitate healing.
- *Seeing an emergency vehicle* — Pray that God will guide the emergency team to make good decisions and that God will help and bless all those involved in the crisis and ease their pain.
- *Waiting in a check-out line* — Pray for the cashier who will be helping you, for the other people in line with you, for everyone in the store.
- *Shoveling snow, mowing grass, raking leaves* — Nature can be a real pain sometimes, but imagine what our world would be like without snow, leaves, green grass, or even weeds.
- *Seeing something beautiful* — Whenever we experience anything beautiful, we can acknowledge it is a gift of love from the Lord, and give God thanks and praise.
- *Having a bad day* — Even the bad days provide us with opportunities to learn from mistakes, to grow and mature, and to be of service to God and others.

Every day you will encounter some unique prayer opportunities. Try bring some form of prayer to it, so that you and whoever or whatever makes up your day are placed in God's hands and blessed.

Resolution Night

Find an evening this week to make some New Year's resolutions as a family. Find areas of family life that need work—for example, getting along, having fun together, and strengthening your faith. Get out your new 2010 calendar and go through the year, penciling in one activity each month you will do to make sure the family improves in those areas. Then schedule a family meeting each month to check on your progress

SSP Holiday Hoop Fest

December 26 - 29

St. Stephen Protomartyr is hosting our first 8th grade **Girls** basketball tournament. 16 teams are participating.

SSP 8th grade team members:

Samantha Braun, Grace Butz, Danielle Goodman, Hannah Grindel, Jessica Kendrick, Valerie Massmann, Madeline Millman, Hannah Rettig, Bayley Roberts, Elise Thomas, Nadia Wood

Come out and support our team!

Block Kids Building Program

The National Association of Women in Construction, Chapter 38, St. Louis, MO will host their annual Block Kids Building Program Competition at St Stephen Protomartyr School on the morning of January 15, 2010 at the Parish Hall. Grades 1 thru 5 will be participating in the program.

The goal of the program is to introduce children to the construction industry in an effort to create an awareness of, and to promote an interest in, future careers in one of the many facets of the industry.

The St. Louis Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction would greatly appreciate your participation as an "inspector and/or judge" for this year's program.

Time of the program is 9:00 – 11:45 AM

Anna Baldwin is a member of the parish and the chairperson for this committee. If you would like to volunteer or come and be a spectator of this event, please contact Anna for additional information. Work number 314-514-6707, cell 314-681-3707 or my e-mail is anna.baldwin@dukerealty.com.

Bulletin Deadline

Due to the New Year's holiday the deadline for the January 3 bulletin the deadline is December 29.

2010 Calendars

Are you looking for your 2010 parish calendars? Well, we have been too!! We received word from the company who provides them to us that we should have them soon after Christmas. As soon as we receive them we will make them available. Thanks for your patience.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING FRAUD AND IDENTITY THEFT

Guarding Against Identity Theft -- Identity theft is a serious crime that happens when personal information is used without consent to commit fraud or other crimes. Personal information includes a person's name, Social Security number or credit card number. Individual Medicare ID numbers can also be used to commit fraud and identity theft.

Putting a Stop to Billing Fraud -- Most doctors, pharmacists, suppliers, insurance providers, and other health care providers who work with Medicare are honest. Unfortunately, there may be some who are dishonest. Medicare fraud happens when Medicare is billed for services or supplies that beneficiaries never receive. Medicare fraud costs taxpayers millions of dollars each year.

Tips for Consumers -- Medicare is committed to helping protect beneficiaries from fraud and identity theft and offers the following suggestions:

- ◆ Protect your Medicare Number, which is located on your Medicare card. Treat your Medicare card like it is a credit card. Do not ever give it out except to your doctor or other Medicare provider. Never give your Medicare or Medicaid number in exchange for free medical equipment or any other free offer. Dishonest providers could use your number to get payment for services they never delivered.
- ◆ If someone comes to your door claiming to be from Medicare or Medicaid, remember that Medicare and Medicaid do not send representatives to your home.
- ◆ Ask questions! You have a right to know everything about your medical care, including the costs billed to Medicare.
- ◆ Educate yourself about Medicare. Know your rights and know what a provider can and cannot bill to Medicare.
- ◆ Use a calendar to record all of your doctor's appointments and what tests or X-rays you get. Then check your Medicare statements carefully to make sure you got each service listed and that all the details are correct.
- ◆ Be cautious of any provider or plan representative who says he has been approved by the Federal government.
- ◆ Be wary of providers who tell you that the item or service is not usually covered, but they "know how to bill Medicare" so that Medicare will pay.
- ◆ Make sure you understand how a plan works before you join.
- ◆ Always check your pills before you leave the pharmacy to be sure you got the full amount. If you do not get your full prescription, report the problem to the pharmacist.
- ◆ Review your Medicare payment notice for errors. The payment notice shows what services or supplies were billed to Medicare, what Medicare paid, and what you owe. Make sure Medicare was not billed for health care services or medical supplies and equipment you did not receive. If you spend time in a hospital, make sure the admission date, discharge date, and diagnosis on your bill are correct.
- ◆ Report suspected instances of fraud by calling 1-800-633-4227 (1-800-MEDICARE). If a beneficiary believes they are a victim of fraud or identity theft, they should contact 1-800-HHS-TIPS (1-800-447-8477)/(TTY #: 1-800-377-4950) to report the incident. More information is available at www.stopmedicarefraud.gov

Mandatory Safe Environment Compliance

All adults who want to volunteer in parish activities or ministries that include children must be in full compliance with the Safe Environment Program of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Compliance requires attendance at a Protecting God's Children workshop, a signed Code of Ethical Conduct and a background check which will be updated in even numbered years. For more information contact our parish child safety coordinator, Mary Paule at 481-1133 of marypaule@sbcglobal.net.

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, December 28

8:00 AM — Teresa Butz

Tuesday, December 29 Chapel

8:00 AM — Sam & June Grass

Wednesday, December 30

8:00 AM — Peggy Klipsch

Thursday, December 31

8:00 AM — Philippine Lamprecht

5:00 PM — Randall Behnen

Friday, January 1

9:00 AM — Frank Jost Sr.

Saturday, January 2

8:00 AM — Caridad Velez

4:00 PM — Our Parishioners **Chapel**

Sunday, January 3

8:00 AM — Philippine Lamprecht

10:30 AM — Dorothy Lucille Lee Ringenbach

PRAY...

for our sick and recovering

Dennis Ehrhard, Dave Finnegan, James Forgash,
Joan Forshee, Arnold Herberts, Mary Lopinot,
Dan Nichols, Mary Toomey

for our homebound

Betty Eich, Dorothy Flippin, Helen Getchman,
Jeanette Holmer, Ellie Kearns, Walter &
Rosemary Kobylinski, Frances Krafft, Betty
Lenhardt, Rose Milentz, Verna Murphy,
Russ Niemeyer, Eva Schmidt, Lee Ann Teter,
Linda Tomasella, Adelaide Vogel, Eve Wachtel

for those in nursing homes

Audrey Alles, Mary Ann Genail, Eleanor Gunter,
Rose Hegger McBride

for family members serving in the military

Joel Bruce, Brandon Johnson, Mark Kimsey,
Stephen Napier, Brian Schoellhorn

DEVOTIONS

Tuesdays, after 8 am Mass: Perpetual Help
Devotions

Wednesdays, 8:45 am—7:30 pm: Church is open for
Eucharistic Adoration

First Friday of the month, after 8 am Mass: Holy Hour
and Benediction

SAINT STEPHEN

Saint Stephen Protomartyr Parish

PARISH OFFICE HOURS (314)481-1133

Monday through Wednesday 8:30 am—8:00 pm

Thursday 8:30 am—5:30 pm

Friday: 8:30 am—3:00 pm

Saturday: 9:00 am—4:00 pm

Closed Sundays, Holidays and Holy Days

BULLETIN ARTICLE DEADLINE

Monday by 4:00 pm

SACRAMENTAL CELEBRATIONS

Eucharist

Sunday: 8:00 am and 10:30 am at the Church of St.
Stephen Protomartyr

Monday and Wednesday through Friday:

8:00 am at Church of St. Stephen Protomartyr

Tuesday: 8:00 am Chapel of Sts Mary & Joseph

Saturday: 8:00 am at the Church of St. Stephen Protomartyr

Saturday evening Vigil:

4:00 pm at Chapel of Sts. Mary & Joseph

Holy Day: 8:00 am and 7:00 pm at the Church of St.
Stephen Protomartyr

Infant and Child Baptism

Baptisms are celebrated at any weekend liturgy or on the
last Sunday of the month following the 10:30 am.

Eucharist. Parents are asked to call the parish office to
arrange a Baptism. Parents (and godparents, if they are
able) are asked to attend a preparation meeting that will
be arranged after the parents meet with the priest
or pastoral associate.

Adult Initiation / Reception into the Catholic Church

Any adult who would like to know more about our Catholic
faith, and/or who is interested in becoming a member of the
Catholic Church, please call the parish office.

Reconciliation

Saturdays 9:30 am until 10:00 am

Marriage

Please contact one of the clergy at least six months prior to
the planned date of marriage.

Anointing of the Sick

We have a communal celebration of this sacrament at the
weekend liturgies in the fall and in the spring. If you would
like to be anointed before entering the hospital or if you are
homebound, please call the parish office.

PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Parish School of Religion formal classes in our Catholic Faith
Children: 4 yrs. through 8th grade and high school

The site of the Parish School of Religion is located on the
campus of St. John the Baptist Parish.

Please call, Father Leo Spezia, PSR Director at 314-353-1255.