St. Stephen the Martyr
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Encounter, Know, Proclaim

February 14, 2021

Pray & Worship

Mass Schedule

Daily: Monday-Friday at 6:30 AM & 8:15 AM*; Saturday at 8:15 AM*

Weekend: Saturday at 5:00 PM*; Sunday at 7:30 AM, 9:30 AM* & 11:30 AM

*These Masses will be live-streamed on our Facebook page and website.

- *Our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/StStephensCatholicChurchOmaha/*
- *Our website page: stephen.org/live-stream*

Private Prayer

Daily Mass Chapel and Worship Space are open from 9 AM to 9 PM Monday-Friday and from 10:00 AM to 6 PM on Saturday-Sunday. The Adoration Chapel is open 24/7; door access code: 9675*

Eucharistic Adoration Holy Hours

⇒ Sundays with Solemn Vespers from 4 to 5 PM
⇒ First Friday of the Month from 9 AM to Noon

No sign up required. Come as you are to spend time with Jesus. In the Worship Space or Facebook Live.

Contact Us

Parish Office:
Phone: 402-896-9675
Emergency: 402-896-9675 ext 2
Office Hours: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, M-F

Pastor: Fr. David Belt

Associate Pastor: Fr. Padraic Stack

Deacons:
Dcn. Ernie Abbott, (402) 506-2239
Dcn. Chuck Botdorf, (402) 681-4701
Dcn. Denny Dethlefs, (402) 861-4538
Dcn. Jerry Kozney, (402) 659-9219
Dcn. Marty Warwick, (402) 926-1253

Staff Contact Info: stephen.org/staff

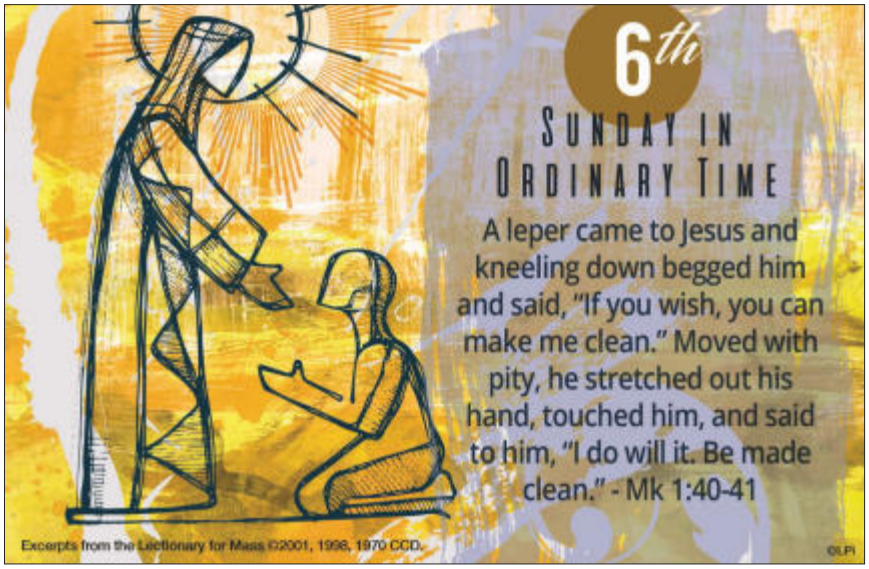
Bulletin Deadline:
Submit requests to a.hartwig@stephen.org.

COVID-19
The obligation to attend Sunday Mass continues to be suspended. Masks are required to be worn at all times during daily and weekend Masses, and when inside our buildings. Thank you.

Not yet a Parishioner?

Register as a Parishioner on our website **stephen.org**. Click on "Become a Parishioner" in the footer or call the Parish office for more information.

For more information about how we can support you in your faith journey, contact Adam Ybarra, Director of Evangelization and Catechesis at 402-861-4507 or a.ybarra@stephen.org.



"A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged him and said, 'If you wish, you can make me clean.' Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, 'I do will it. Be made clean.'"

Leprosy was a highly-contagious disease that basically caused the skin to rot and fall off. Because it was so contagious, those who had the illness were ostracized. They were pushed out of their homes and their communities. They were not allowed to worship in the synagogues. Instead, they were forced to live in the caves where people buried their dead. When this man comes to Jesus for healing, he is asking for more that the healing of his body. He is also asking that his family, his community, and his worshipping community may be made whole again by his presence.

The leper had faith in Jesus. He approached the Lord, knowing that He had the power to restore wholeness to his life and the life of those who were his friends and family members. Today we must have the same faith and ask Jesus to make us whole again. As individuals, we have places where we need God's healing power, but our Church, country and society also need the Lord's presence to heal the divisions that we cause. There are persons and groups of people who are marginalized or ostracized because of their race, health, lifestyle, or beliefs. Now more than ever, we need the presence of Jesus Christ, who heals the broken-hearted.

"What other people think of me is becoming less and less important; what they think of Jesus because of me is critical." *–Cliff Richard*

God bless you!
Father Dave Belt

Congratulations Newly Baptized!

Maeve Madelaine Leahy, daughter of Christopher & Lindsay
Ruby Belle Bartling, daughter of Christopher & Natalie

Ash Wednesday Mass

February 17, 2021

Join us! Seating reservations required.
Go to stephen.org/ash-wednesday-mass

6:30 AM	8:15 AM*	12:05 PM
4:00 PM	5:30 PM	7:00 PM*

** These Masses will be live-streamed.*
Find stream at stephen.org/live-stream or on Facebook

Sacraments

Reconciliation
Tuesday: 5:30-6:30 PM & Saturday: 3:30-4:45 PM

Baptism
Baptisms are celebrated on Sundays. Parents are required to attend a preparation class. Contact the parish office for information or visit: stephen.org/baptism-class.

Matrimony
Preparation for Marriage begins at least 6 months prior to the desired wedding date. Contact parish office for more information.

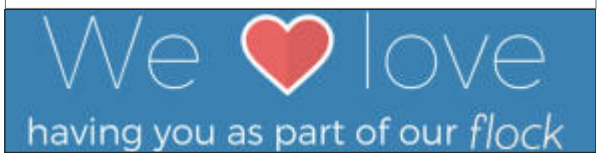
Anointing of the Sick
Contact Deacon Denny at (402) 861-4538 or d.dethlefs@stephen.org.

Homebound Eucharist
Contact the parish office to make arrangements.

Parish office phone number: (402) 896-9675

Stay in Communication with Us!

Our primary communication tool is email using Flocknote. If you are not receiving our emails please follow the steps at **stephen.org/flocknote** or call the parish office to give us your email.



Financial Stewardship

2/2/2021—2/8/2021

Offertory & Online Giving:	$52,369
Fiscal* Year-to-Date (FYTD) Actual:	$1,509,859
Budget:	$1,360,002
FY Total Budget:	$2,240,000
FYTD to Total Budget Percentage:	67%

**SSM Parish operates on a Fiscal Year from July 1—June 30*

Thank you for continuing to support us through your Sunday Offerings and Financial Stewardship. Conveniently give through OSV Online Giving or envelopes may be mailed to our office: 16701 S Street, Omaha NE 68135.

Give online at stephen.org/give

Stewardship Reflection

"Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed...He told them, 'Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.'" - Mark 1:35, 38

In today's Gospel reading we see a perfect example of stewardship. Jesus gives His time to do all that God wishes - healing the sick and preaching. But before He begins, Jesus makes time to be alone with God in prayer. It is through prayer, spending time with God, that we find the strength to do what He wishes us to do. Be sure to find time every day to be with God.

School News

United in Christ to ignite the joy of faith, community, and learning.

⇒ School students and staff would like to wish a Happy Valentine's Day to our wonderful Parish! Please check out the card we "sent" to our parishioners this weekend in the gathering space. We love our Parish and are so grateful for your continued support. Happy Valentine's Day!

⇒ We'd love to have your family at St. Stephen's! In addition to K-8, we have Preschool, PreK & TK for children ages 3-5. Visit our Virtual Open House: **school.stephen.org/openhouse**

⇒ Enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year is underway. Register by February 28th at **school.stephen.org/enroll**

Religious Education News

⇒ We hope all our RE families are staying warm these days! Remember that because of Ash Wednesday, we will not have RE classes or Sunday School classes this week. Enjoy the beginning of Lent!

⇒ Starting February 28th, our Sunday School program will meet slightly earlier at 9:00 a.m. instead of 9:30. If you have any questions, please contact the RE office.

⇒ First Communion parents should have received an email about our First Communion Zoom meeting for parents on February 21st at 7:00 p.m. If you did not receive this email, please reach out to the RE office. We can't wait to see you!

Youth Ministry News

⇒ **Life Teen** (High School) — Feb. 14: 6-8 PM, GPC- Happy Valentine's Day, Teens! Join us this week as we learn about loving our neighbor, continuing our Pro-Life series by tackling the topic of immigration.

⇒ **Edge** (Middle School) — Feb. 23: 6:30-8 PM, Dining Room— We are on a bit of a hiatus, Middle School! But never fear-We'll be back to celebrate our reunion with our monthly gym night at the end of the month.

There is no cost to attend our weekly gatherings. Dinner is included. Come when and as often as you can! Annual parent waiver is required. Complete today at: www.smartwaiver.com/v/ssmym2020.

For more information contact Laura Bogue, Youth Ministry Director, at l.bogue@stephen or (402) 861-4509.

Need to be Safe Environment Certified?

Will you be or are you considering volunteering with the youth of our parish in some way? Whether you are a sacristan, EMHC, staff member, coach, catechist, or parent hoping to help in the classroom or with school events, our Diocese requires that you be Safe Environment certified! Come learn and be empowered to be an ambassador of our Church and an advocate for our families and youth. Class size will be limited in order to maintain social distancing.

Participants must register online prior to attending a training, and there is no cost to attend. Register at https://omaha.cmgconnect.org/. A training will be held in the dining room of St. Stephen the Martyr from 9-11:30 AM on Saturday, February 27th. Contact Melissa at m.kane@stephen.org or at 402-896-9675 with questions.

Holy Mass Time Changes

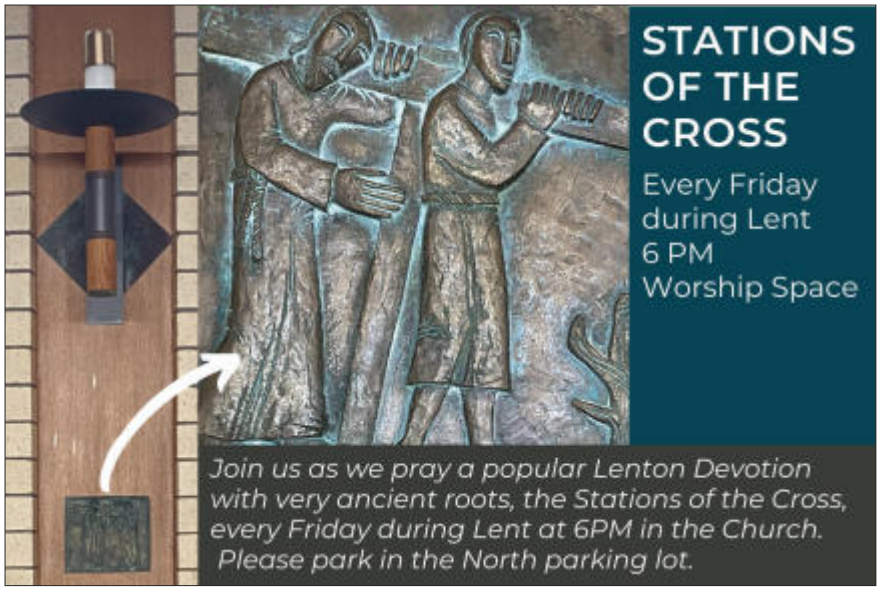
Beginning Sunday, February 21 our Sunday Mass times will be changing to:

Saturday at 5:00 PM
Sunday at 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, & 10:30 AM

We will continue to live-stream two Masses: Saturday 5 PM and Sunday 9:00 AM

February 7 & 14, 2021

Bring new shorts, tee shirts, underwear and socks for men, women and children in all sizes for all ages. Items will be distributed by Christian Family Movement (CFM) to our local shelters. Place your donations in the boxes in the gathering space or in the Parish Center between February 6-14. Your generosity is appreciated. Questions? Contact Teresa Ziska with our Social Justice Ministry at trziska@cox.net or Deacon Denny at (402) 861-4538.



Sharing the Burdens with our Struggling Families

Heartfelt THANK YOU:

Although pastors are called to care for the needs of people in the parish, this duty is not theirs alone. And it has nothing to do with the size of the pastoral staff---the entire parish is to be involved in caring for each other. The parish is a network of shoulders supporting the collective weight of everyone's trouble, especially those struggling to eat.

This past week was Catholic Schools Week, our kids from our parish school, their families and staff provided much needed food items for our pantry for those families still suffering under this pandemic to eat. Our Parish Food Pantry Ministry Team met the kids last Friday as they transported their donations the GPC. What an amazing group of young people in our school! Box upon box, cart upon cart of food poured in the door and the Ministry Team went to work to sort, shelve and began sharing with those families in need. Our Knights of Columbus had their monthly first Saturday Curb-Side Food Drive and added to the school donation. Those individuals that are not able to shop brought monetary donations and gift cards as well.

Sometimes we feel our contributions are small and go unnoticed by all, but the individual who is helped, and your heavenly Father sees and will reward you for following His command to "FEED MY PEOPLE". A wise woman once shared with me: "When you extend the hands of Jesus, people find rest for their weary heart." **THANK YOU** to all our St. Stephen's school families, kids, staff and parishioners for your amazing gifts of mercy.

May I offer a prayer: *Each thought, each word, each deed of mine, will be an act of love divine, and everything that I will do, will be, my God, for love of You.* Blessings from, Deacon Denny and the Pastoral Care Team.

Mass Intentions

Saturday, February 13
8:15 am † Mike Dallan (ME)
5:00 pm † Erin Doll (DB)

Sunday, February 14
7:30 am SI SSM parishioners (DB)
9:30 am † John O'Gara (PS)
11:30am † Beatriz Gutierrez (PS)

Monday, February 15
6:30 am † Baby Madison Grace Morrison (PS)
8:15 am † Mike Dallan (PS)

Tuesday, February 16
6:30 am † Dolores Irene Schafer (PS)
8:15 am † Daniel Mergens (DB)

Wednesday, February 17—Ash Wednesday
6:30 am † Michele Cooper (PS)
8:15 am † Bernadette Slamons (DB)
12:00 pm SI Tyler Jacobsen (DB)
4:00 pm † Mary Anderson (PS)
5:30 pm † Dave & Gladys Mandel (DB)
7:00 pm † Rachel Emily Waters (PS)

Thursday, February 18
6:30 am † Gladys Mandel (DB)
8:15 am † Joe Tiesi (DB)

Friday, February 19
6:30 am † Francis & Jeannette Bentz (PS)
8:15 am SI Mitch & Kathryn Morrison (DB)

Saturday, February 20
8:15 am † William & Anna Ehret (DB)
5:00 pm † Joann Fike (PS)

Sunday, February 21
7:30 am † Gladys Mandel (PS)
9:00 am † Warren Wills (DB)
10:30am SI SSM Parishioners (DB)

SI = Special Intention † = Repose of the Soul
DB = Fr. Dave Belt; PS = Fr. Padraic Stack; ME = Fr. Mike Eckley

Note: Priest schedule subject to changes

Parishioners who are sick/injured/healing:

Paul Richter, husband of Carol
Theresa O'Toole, sister-in-law of Phil & Sharon Pratt
Anna O'Toole, sister-in-law of Phil & Sharon Pratt

Deceased souls of our Parish-family

Mary Jill Faber, mother of Anne and Tom Byrne
Stephen Hatz, father of Jamie Robinette, grandfather of Morgan, Benjamin and Jack
Rich Brummer, father of Jayne Macholan
Editha Hickey, sister of Monina Williams
Dennis Swanstrom, husband of Lynn, father of Steve, and father-in-law of Courtenay

How Can We Pray for YOU?

You are not alone! St. Stephen the Martyr has prayer warriors who are ready to pray for YOUR intention! God has given us this incredible gift to intercede on behalf of others through prayer and thanksgiving! Submit your prayer request to be shared with our Prayer Line Ministry and/or with our Parish Family at: stephen.org/prayer-line or call Beth Wetgen at (402) 669-4793.

Thank You From St. Stephen the Martyr!

The parish would like to extend our gratitude to the Knights of Columbus for helping dismantle and remove a maintenance shed that stood on the southside of the Church. The shed's removal makes room for a new HVAC chiller that is scheduled to installed later this spring. Replacing the nearly 30-year-old chiller was made possible through your weekly stewardship and parishioner generosity.

Assisting with this effort were Knights of Columbus members Steve Simonsen, Jim Doll, Tom Martin, Jim Spurgin, John Christiansen, Bill Novak, Dick Fisher and Steve Cinnamon.

Welcome Lindsay Vodicka!

Please help welcome Lindsay Vodicka as our new development assistant. For the past 15-years Lindsay has been employed with The Knot Group, a wedding planning marketplace, as director of account strategy. In her role here, Lindsay will be involved with our database(s), stewardship efforts, annual appeals and special events. Lindsay and her husband Brent, have five children, Jaxon, 10; Emersen, 8; Callen, 6; Easton, 3; and Adalyn, 2. They are members of St. Charles Borromeo Parish and have three of their children enrolled here at SSM, where Lindsay has also been working part-time as a first-grade teacher assistant this year. When you see Lindsay, please introduce yourself and us welcome her to our parish team.

Have you ever wondered why it seems like social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter seem to "know" what you like?

Come join us for a special 2-part previewing and discussion of the Netflix Film ***"The Social Dilemma"*** and learn how social media can form and drive a culture.

Join us for a discussion with parishioner and former Google employee, Joe Toscano on Friday, March 5th from 7 to 8 PM. If you have not yet watched the film, join us for a preview as well on Friday, February 26th from 7 to 8 PM. Adults of all ages and youth invited along with their parents.

RSVP and more info at stephen.org.

SignUpGenius will be used for both nights as there will be limited capacity – livestreaming of the March 5th event will be provided.

Please contact Adam Ybarra, a.ybarra@stephen.org, for further questions.

WEEKLY PRAYER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 14, 2021

SUN 2/14	Lv 13:1-2, 44-46/Ps 32:1-2, 5, 11 [7]/1 Cor 10:31—11:1/Mk 1:40-45
MON 2/15	Gn 4:1-15, 25/Ps 50:1 and 8, 16bc-17, 20-21 [14a]/Mk 8:11-13
TUE 2/16	Gn 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10/Ps 29:1a and 2, 3ac-4, 3b and 9c-10 [11b]/Mk 8:14-21
WED 2/17	Jl 2:12-18/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17 [cf. 3a]/2 Cor 5:20—6:2/Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
THR 2/18	Dt 30:15-20/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6 [Ps 40:5a]/Lk 9:22-25
FRI 2/19	Is 58:1-9a/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19 [19b]/Mt 9:14-15
SAT 2/20	Is 58:9b-14/Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 [11ab]/Lk 5:27-32
SUN 2/21	Gn 9:8-15/Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9 [cf. 10]/1 Pt 3:18-22/Mk 1:12-15

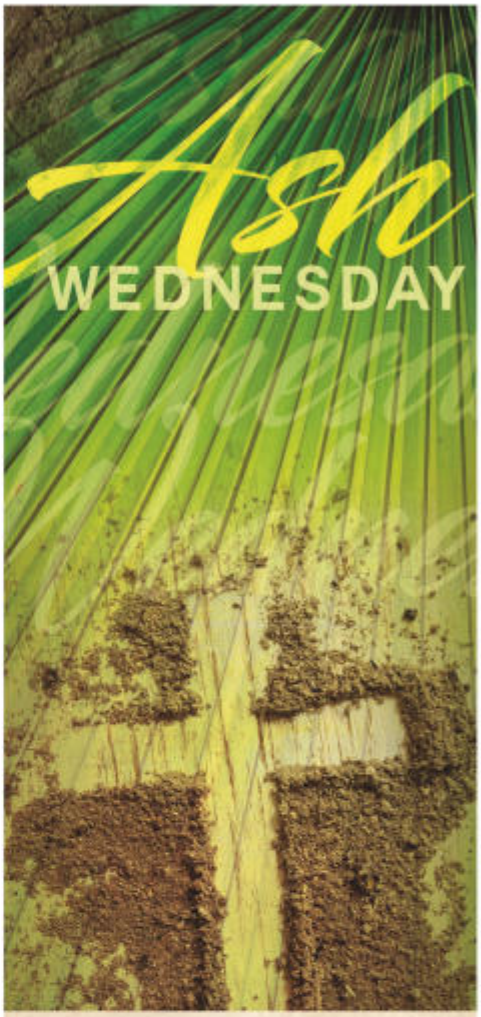
OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 14, 2021

Sunday:	6th Sunday in Ordinary Time; World Marriage Day; Valentine's Day
Monday:	Presidents' Day
Wednesday:	Ash Wednesday
Next Sunday:	1st Sunday of Lent

LIVE THE LITURGY

Inspiration for the week

Everybody has a place at the table, and nobody deserves to feel inferior, unworthy, unwanted, or marginalized. It is not part of God's vision. Jesus came to heal, make things whole, set things right, and restore relationships. No one is to feel unwelcome or alienated from the community. Whether we like it or not, this message is at the core of the Gospel. It makes a lot of sense when you think about it. Perhaps this is why people kept coming from everywhere to listen to Jesus speak and to be in his presence. He made perfect sense. Most of us have no issue buying into this vision. We run into trouble, however, when we fall into the trap of privilege and power. We diverge from God's vision when the powerful begin to control who is entitled to wholeness and inclusion, and greed becomes a driving force. Prejudice and entitlement have no place in the kingdom of God, and even the most needy and hurting among us are worthy of the compassion Jesus desires to offer. There are no easy solutions to the world's dilemmas. But one thing is for certain, no one can be singled out, excluded or mistreated. Everyone matters.



"God is waiting for you."

—POPE FRANCIS

News from the Greater Community:

CATHOLIC CEMETERIES TO OFFER STATIONS OF THE CROSS DURING LENT
All are invited to Stations of the Cross in Holy Angels Mausoleum in Resurrection Cemetery Wednesdays February 24th, March 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th at 6:00 PM. Of course we will walk the Stations in Calvary Cemetery on Good Friday at 3:00 PM. For further information please contact Deacon Jim Tardy 402/391-3711 or jtardy@catholiccem.com.

CATHOLIC FUNERAL RITES AND PRE-PLANNING.
Catholic Cemeteries will be hosting a workshop discussing Catholic Funeral Rites, Final Arrangements, and costs on February 20th, 2021 This workshop is in the Calvary Office at 78th and West Center Rd. 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM. This workshop will demonstrate how faith, liturgy and practical cemetery planning can assist you in the immediacy after death. Space is limited, so please RSVP by the Monday prior to each workshop with Deacon Jim Tardy 402/391-3711 or jtardy@catholiccem.com.

JPII NEWMAN CENTER OPEN HOUSE
Current and prospective college students: Join us at the JPII Newman Center on Saturday, February 27th from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. for our open house. The open house will feature tours of our three main spaces: Community areas, the Oratory, and Newman Hall and time for questions and student testimonials. We invite anyone looking for a home away from home to come see what our community has to offer. Students who attend the open house and apply to live at Newman Hall will receive $50 off their first month of rent. No RSVP necessary! Masks and social distancing will be required.

CATHOLIC BUSINESS GROUP-OMAHA (CBGO) FEBRUARY MEETING
-FEBR. 18th, 2021 at 11:30 am
-Garden Café - Rockbrook, 11040 Oak St. (Social distance guidelines are followed)
-SPKR: Jeanette Wojtalewicz, CFO at CHI Omaha
-TOPIC: Faith's Role in Business - One Woman's Perspective
Attend and hear Jeanette M. Wojtalewicz share how her life and business direction have been blessed by God. She will give real-life examples of how it is important to bring our Catholic Faith alive in all facets of our lives, including business.
THANK YOU to our February Event Partner(s): CFO Systems Inc.
Be early, there is always Networking, Conversation & Growing in our Catholic Faith.
Reservations are required by Members and Non-Members for all lunch meetings.
Cost: Free for Members, $20 for Non-Members.
RSVP at http://cpbcomaha.org/reservations/ to make your reservation.
For more information on "Catholic Business Group-Omaha" see our website http://www.CPBComaha.org , or search our name on Facebook.

INVITATION FROM IIGNATIAN VOLUNTEER CORPS OF OMAHA
Please join us for A Lenten Morning of Reflection presented by Fr. Andy Alexander, SJ on Saturday, February 20th from 9 AM-10:30 AM. This is a virtual event and you will receive your zoom link upon registration. This a free event, donations are welcome and appreciated. Please register for this event at www.ivcusa.org/Omaha. If you have questions, please contact Anne Mollner at amollner@ivcusa.org. Presented by Ignatian Volunteer Corps of Omaha.

SPECIAL MASS FOR VOCATIONS AT ST. COLUMBKILLE
The Serra Club of West Omaha invites you to join us for Holy Mass on Monday, February 15, at 5:30 PM at St. Columbkille Catholic Church in Papillion (200 E. 6th Street) to pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and consecrated religious life within the Archdiocese of Omaha. Mass will be celebrated by Rev. Frank Baumert. Immediately following Mass, we invite you to attend our brief *Meeting & Mixer.* Rev. David Reeson will join us as our speaker who will share with us his vocation story and call to serve as a priest. Find out how you can engage in helping to build the Church locally. Meet our dedicated Serra members and enjoy light refreshments with us. For questions, contact John Lingo, Serra VP, 402-290-4670 or John@JLingoLaw.com.

Are you or someone you know looking for employment?

Attend a job fair: Comfort Inn & Suites, 7007 Grover Street
Date: March 3, 2021 from 1-4 p.m.
Contact: Kathy Zywiec at 402-679-6554 or jobsguide@jobfairsnebraska.com
You can also email Deacon Denny at d.dethlefs@stephen.org

And we each have different gifts, according to the grace that has been given to us: whether prophecy, in agreement with the reasonableness of faith; or ministry, in ministering; or he who teaches, in doctrine; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, in simplicity; he who governs, in solicitude; he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness. —Romans 12:6-8

Get involved. Belong. Serve. Share.

Learn more about our Groups & Ministries at stephen.org/community.

WHY DO WE DO THAT?
Catholic Life Explained:

Question:
In today's digital world, do we really need to be face-to-face with a priest to confess our sins? Would Facetime or Zoom ever be allowed?

Answer:
The question of whether or not Catholics can celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation virtually (via social media, by phone, or in some other way) is a question that has actually been around for several years. The recent COVID-19 pandemic brought the question back in a new way, especially as many parishes were forced to introduce a sort of "social distanced" confession, with the sacrament being celebrated outdoors.

In reflecting on this question, however, there are a couple points that we want to keep in mind. First, as the Code of Canon Law observes in different places, the faithful have a right to the sacraments of the Church and the Church's ministers have a responsibility to make them accessible. At the same time, however, we always have to be sure that we respect the nature of the sacraments themselves.

Although modern forms of technology and communication can help us in our work of evangelization catechesis, the Pontifical Council for Social Communication has reminded us that, "Virtual reality is no substitute for the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the sacramental reality of the other sacraments, and shared worship in a flesh and blood human community. There are no sacraments on the internet" (The Church and the Internet, no. 9).

Although our encounters with others on the internet and via social media can be considered "real" in one sense, in the sacraments we encounter Christ in a personal and ecclesial way. It is never just a private experience but is always grounded in the life of the Church and this means that it must truly be personal, including the contact between the confessor and the penitent. While the convenience or ease of online celebrations might be appealing for many reasons, at heart, we always want to keep in mind the fullness of the Church's tradition and the meaning of the sacraments.

Adult Volleyball

All parishioners & friends (18 and older) are invited to play Volleyball, Saturday's from 6:30 PM until 9:30 PM in the gym. Come anytime. All skills welcome!
Contact Adam at a.ybarra@stephen.org or 402.861.4507 with questions.

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402-706-5679

Mission Village Animal Clinic
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BETH SOULLIERE, DVM
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16843 "Q" St.

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