



St. Stephen the Martyr
CATHOLIC CHURCH
Encounter, Know, Proclaim

December 19th, 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,
9:00 AM*, 10:30 AM & 6:00 PM

*These Masses will be live-streamed on our Facebook Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/StStephensCatholicChurchOmaha>) and our website (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 2:30 PM
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. Ben Boyd

Staff Contact Info: stephen.org/staff

Bulletin Deadline:

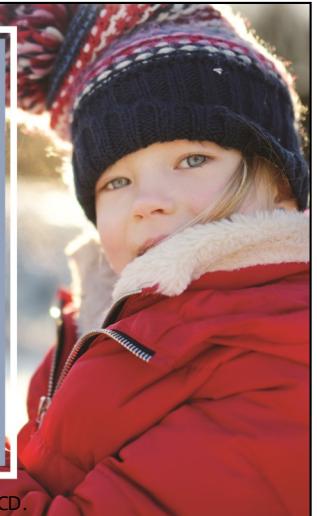
Submit requests to a.hartwig@stephen.org.

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

JOYFUL

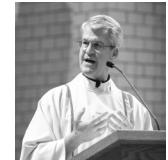
"And how does this happen to me,
that the mother of my Lord should
come to me? For at the moment the
sound of your greeting reached
my ears, the infant in my womb
leaped for joy." - Lk 1:43-44

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.



Pastor's Message—From Father Dave

"And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."



On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, we hear of the joyful meeting of cousins, Mary and Elizabeth. Still in his mother's womb, John the Baptist recognizes the presence of the Messiah and is overjoyed at the coming of the Christ into the world. The moment that Mary's greeting reaches Elizabeth's ears, John leaps for joy! Elizabeth continues to welcome Mary by saying, "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

The great joy that was experienced by Elizabeth and by John fills us in these last days of preparation. The reason for our joy is that we realize that God has fulfilled His promise to us that He would save us from the dark power of sin. Generations ago, God promised that He would offer us the gift of eternal life. And now we are called to be people of the promise. We must live our lives with the promise of eternal life as our foundation. If every moment of our life is spent loving God and one another; if we strive to be as faithful as Mary, we will know the joy of living in heaven.

Be people of the promise. Be willing to say "yes" to serving God. Be open to seeing the miracles that God shares with His people every day. When we live according to the promise of salvation and eternal life, we will be filled with great joy!

"Grief can take care of itself, but to get the full value of a joy you must have somebody to divide it with." —Mark Twain

May God bless you!
Father Dave

As we make plans to celebrate our Lord's birth with love and thanksgiving, we want to share a few pieces of information about attending Christmas Mass here at St. Stephen the Martyr:

Christmas Mass Schedule 2021

Christmas Eve—Friday, Dec. 24th

- 4:00 PM
- 4:15 PM (Gymnasium)
- 6:00 PM
- Midnight

Christmas Day—Saturday, Dec. 25th

- 9:00 AM
- 10:30 AM
- 5:00 PM*

- We ask you to extend hospitality to those who may be visiting for the first time and please bring your patience and kindness.
- Please arrive no earlier than 40 minutes before the start of Mass but at least 10 minutes before. The doors to the Worship Space will open at 3:30 p.m.
- We are not able to reserve seats and we ask that you do not save seats. There are many who are wanting to attend the various liturgies as their schedule permits.
- The 4 p.m. and 9 a.m. Masses will be live-streamed on our Facebook page and website at stephen.org/live-stream. The 6 p.m. Mass will include our Children's Choir.
- *Please note: because Christmas falls on a Saturday this year, we have an obligation to go to Mass twice that weekend: once for Christmas Day and another for Sunday. *The Saturday 5 PM Mass can fulfill Sunday obligation only if you've already gone to another Christmas Mass. Sunday Mass schedule remains our normal times.*

16701 "S" Street, Omaha, NE 68135 | (402) 896-9675 | stephen.org

St. Stephen the Martyr Catholic Church is a community for all people to encounter Christ, know Christ, and proclaim Christ.

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.

Church office phone number: (402) 896-9675

School News

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

- ⇒ **Christmas Break** — We hope all of our students, families, teachers and staff have a wonderful Christmas break filled with family time and the joy of the season. Classes resume Tuesday, January 4th.
- ⇒ **Help Move Library Books!** — The library will be getting new carpet over Christmas Break! Help us move books out of the library (Dec. 21st) and then return them safely to their shelves after carpet installation (Dec. 30th). For more information and to sign up to help, visit school.stephen.org/volunteer.
- ⇒ **January Knights of Columbus Breakfast For SSM Teachers** — Save the Date: January 2nd! On this date, all proceeds from the Knights of Columbus Sunday morning breakfast will benefit our St. Stephen teachers. Please plan to attend breakfast sometime after 7:30 a.m. Mass until Noon. Breakfast options include pancakes, eggs, or biscuits & gravy. Thank you very much to the Knights of Columbus for their support!
- ⇒ **8th Grade DC Trip Fundraiser – January 8th** — Join us Saturday, January 8th for an Italian Feast featuring delicious food from Taxi's. The menu includes: Italian Meatball Subs, Garlic Bread, Marinara Pasta with Meatballs & More! Take the night off cooking and support the group of 8th grade students that will travel to DC next spring.

Financial Stewardship

Offertory & Online Giving 12/7—12/13/2021:

Actual:	\$58,287
Budget:	\$45,186
FYTD Actual:	\$1,133,606
FYTD Budget:	\$1,183,806
Religious Retirement Actual:	\$4,411
Christmas YTD Actual:	\$2,645
Christmas YTD Budget:	\$33,548

St. Stephen the Martyr operates on a Fiscal Year from July 1—June 30

Thank you for your generous giving!

Your financial support is vital to the well-being of our church and school.

Thank you also to everyone who has completed a pledge for the coming year!

To make a gift or complete a pledge for 2022, simply scan the QR code or go to stephen.org/give.

Offerary envelopes may also be mailed to our office: 16701 S Street, Omaha NE 68135.



Are you receiving our weekly Parish News emails?

Our primary communication tool is email using Flocknote. If you are not receiving emails, check your junk folder! Please add mail@flocknote.com to your address book or safe sender list. If the emails are appearing in your junk folder, be sure to mark them as 'Not Spam'.

If you have any questions about Flocknote or need to update your email or contact information, please contact Alecia at a.hartwig@stephen.org or 402-861-4515.



Youth Ministry News

- ⇒ **Life Teen (High School)** — **Sunday, December 19th, 7-9 PM in GPC** — It's a Hy-Chi Christmas! We'll dec' the halls, then we'll enjoy a Christmas feast followed by loads of Christmas games and challenges. Don't forget to wear your ugly sweaters!
- ⇒ **Edge (Middle School)** — **Tuesday, January 11th, 6:30-8 PM in Dining Room** — We are on our holiday hiatus! Enjoy this time with your loved ones. We look forward to launching our new semester, "A Great Marvel: Questions About Virtue," when we resume in January.
- ⇒ **Steubenville Save-the-Date** — Friday, July 15 - Sunday, July 17, 2022 — Steubenville is a weekend conference that evangelizes, equips and empowers 8th-12th grade youth to become radical, joyful disciples. Enjoy keynote speakers, praise and worship, Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation, and much more. We will be attending the Steubenville Conference held in Rochester, MN. Register by January 10th for the early bird pricing of \$350! Visit stephen.org/steubenville for more information and to register.

ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR



JANUARY 22ND, 2022

Registration Now Open at
stephen.org/trivia-night

Don't delay in getting your table
Reserved for this highly anticipated event!

- ◆ Check-In, Setup & Social Hour: 6-7 PM
- ◆ Trivia begins at 7 PM
- ◆ Must be 21 years or older
- ◆ 10 Rounds of Questions
- ◆ \$224 per Table (8 players per table)
- ◆ 2 Drink Tickets per Player Included
- ◆ Buy 4 Mulligans (Free Answers) for \$20
- ◆ Payment Reserves Table; First Come, First Serve
- ◆ Heads & Tails Game and Raffle
- ◆ Team Theme, Costumes & Table Decorations Encouraged
- ◆ Best Team Costume Recognition and Award
- ◆ Bring Your Own Snacks
- ◆ Cash Bar: Wine, Beer, Margaritas and Sodas
- ◆ No outside alcohol

Stay up-to-date with Martyr Moms on our Facebook Group

facebook.com/groups/161991407828766



Stewardship Reflection

"For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy." (LUKE 1:44)

When you hear the scripture readings and Gospel reading at Mass, do you "leap for joy"? If not, don't blame the lecturer or priest, rather look inside yourself. What are you doing to grow in friendship with Jesus? How do you prepare for Mass each week? Or, do you just show up and expect to be entertained? As the Body of Christ, we are called to be active participants, not just passive observers.

ADORATION OF THE EUCHARIST



Eucharistic Adoration

The miracle of the Eucharist is one we can all experience! Please join us. You are always welcome to come and go as time allows.

- **Adoration & Vespers** from 4 to 5 PM every Sunday. Come and find peace! Dec. 19th, Dec. 26th, and Jan. 2nd
- **First Friday Adoration, Jan 7th** begins immediately following the 8:15 AM Mass and concludes with Benediction at 2:30 PM.



Cards & Games every 2nd & 4th Thursday at 1 PM in the GPC. Invite a friend. Bring a snack to share and an item for the food pantry.

⇒ No cards/games on December 23rd

This Men's and Women's group (age 55+) gathers for fun social events, special projects, and support. More information at stephen.org/primetimers. Email questions to Stephens.PrimeTimers@gmail.com



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FREE THROW CONTEST

All boys & girls ages 9-14 are invited to participate

Friday, January 21 at 7:30 PM
St. Stephen the Martyr Gym
Free & No Pre-Registration Required

Questions? Contact Matt Kreber at
402-637-2268 or kreber4@yahoo.com



kofc10160.org

Breakfast at St. Stephen the Martyr



Sunday, January 2nd

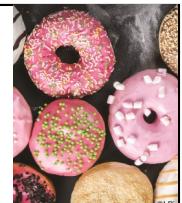
after the 7:30 AM Mass until 12 PM

Proceeds this week support
St. Stephen School Teachers

Three menu options:
Pancake Breakfast, Eggs Breakfast, or Biscuits & Gravy
Cost: \$8.00/adult, \$6.00/child, or \$30 max for family

Our Hospitality Ministry is looking for volunteers to help with Sunday Donuts and Coffee through the month of March. The time commitment is minimal and entails serving donuts, coffee, wiping down tables, greeting parishioners and guests.

Find the sign up link at stephen.org/connect



O Come, Let Us Adore Him



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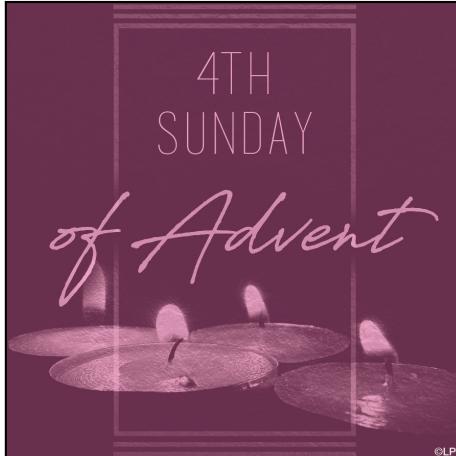


Christmas Decorating

Help is needed to decorate our Worship Spaces for Christmas. This is an excellent service opportunity for Youth preparing for Confirmation. Everyone is welcome to help. All youth under the age of 19 must sign up and a parent must attend with their child(ren). We have two opportunities:

- Christmas Decorating on Sunday, December 19th at 7 PM
 - Poinsettias Assistance on Thursday, December 23rd at 12 PM
- ⇒ Sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d45a4ac22a3f5c70-christmas3>
- ⇒ or find the link at stephen.org/youth-service

Questions? Please email or call Logan Hepp, Liturgy Coordinator, at 402-861-4502 or l.hepp@stephen.org. Thank you in advance!



WHY DO WE DO THAT? Catholic Life Explained:

Question:

Besides the Wise Men, what is significant about the Epiphany?

Answer:

Epiphany means "manifestation," or public display. The feast is usually celebrated January 6. In the US, it is celebrated on the Sunday nearest to January 6. It originates from a story unique to Matthew (2:1-12). Magi from the East come to offer homage to the newborn King, presenting him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

This part of Matthew's infancy narrative differs from Luke's account of the birth of Jesus. In Luke there are no Magi, star, nor gifts. Luke has Jesus being born in a stable after Mary and Joseph's long travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Matthew seems to have the family living in a house in Bethlehem, where the Magi find them.

Why these differences? They stem from the needs and concerns of the audience the authors were addressing, as well as the theological stance of each author. Knowing the original intention helps get at the correct interpretation of the text.

Since Matthew was writing primarily to a Jewish community, his concern was to show that Jesus did not come just for Jews, but for Gentiles as well. From his very birth, Jesus not only manifests himself to Jews, but also to Gentiles, who are prominently included in the manifestation, symbolized by the Magi and their journey. This is the most significant aspect of the feast of Epiphany. How do you manifest Jesus to all with whom you come into contact?

Not yet a Parishioner?

Register on our website stephen.org. Click on "Become a Parishioner" in the footer. Or call Adam at 402-861-4507 or email him at a.ybarra@stephen.org to learn more about how we can help you in your faith journey!

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock." - Rev 3:20

Jesus Christ invites each of us into a more perfect union with Him. All we must do is allow His grace to transform us.



The **Becoming Catholic!** program at St. Stephen the Martyr will help you deepen your relationship with Jesus Christ through a more intimate knowledge of His Church and Holy Scripture.

For more information, please contact Scott and Julie Tylski at tylkskisj@cox.net, (402) 861-2209; or Adam Ybarra at a.ybarra@stephen.org, (402) 861-4507. **Are you ready to open the door?**



WEEKLY PRAYER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 19, 2021

- Sunday:** Mi 5:1-4a/Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 [4]/Heb 10:5-10/Lk 1:39-45
- Monday:** Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 [cf. 7c and 10b]/Lk 1:26-38
- Tuesday:** Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21 [1a; 3a]/Lk 1:39-45
- Wednesday:** 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd [cf. 1a]/Lk 1:46-56
- Thursday:** Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14 [cf. Lk 21:28]/Lk 1:57-66
- Friday:** Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29 [2]/Lk 1:67-79
- Saturday:** Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 [2a]/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25
Night: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13 [Lk 2:11]/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14
Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20
Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3c]/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14
- Next Sunday:** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1]/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Lk 2:41-52 or 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28/Ps 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10 [cf. 5a]/1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24/Lk 2:41-52

OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 19, 2021

- Sunday:** 4th Sunday of Advent
- Tuesday:** St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church
- Thursday:** St. John of Kenty, Priest
- Friday:** Christmas Eve
- Saturday:** The Nativity of the Lord
- Next Sunday:** The Holy Family

LIVE THE LITURGY

Inspiration for the week

Did you ever find yourself wishing that God would just step in and fix all that is wrong with the world? After all, how much longer can all of this go on? There is so much inequity in life. Our world's political, economic, and environmental systems do not always serve the best interests of people. We read stories about injustice, disregard for human life, greed, heartache, and people being hurt and deprived every day. People are still starving and there is often little regard for human life. This is not the way God intended it to be. Realizing that we have caused most of these problems ourselves, we look to God for an answer and a way out of the difficulties we have created. Taking responsibility for our actions is not something that comes easily. What we fail to see is that God has already sent the answer in the person of Jesus Christ. God did fix our problem! Mary had to set her needs aside in order for the Son of Justice to come into the world. We need to do the same. It is only by believing in, listening to, and acting upon what God has spoken that true peace will ever come to be, and God's fix be made known.

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 at stephen.org/prayer-line or call Beth Wetgen at (402) 669-4793.

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 18

8:15 am † Joe Tiesi (BB)
5:00 pm † Bob Mannino (DB)

Sunday, December 19

7:30 am † Judy Bosiljevac (BB)
9:00 am † Paul Maria Chanh Tran (BB)
10:30 am SI St. Stephen parishioners (DB)
6:00 pm † Nestor Diaz (DB)

Monday, December 20

6:30 am † Pat & Gloria Gottsch (BB)
8:15 am † Nestor Diaz (BB)

Tuesday, December 21

6:30 am † Rod Ruppert (DB)
8:15 am † Howard Ball (BB)

Wednesday, December 22

6:30 am SI Jason D. (DB)
8:15 am † Dale Stork (BB)

Thursday, December 23

6:30 am † Rev. John Barry Bentz (DB)
8:15 am † Ed Fuxa, Jr. (DB)

Friday, December 24—Christmas Eve

4:00 pm † Lewis Storm (DB)
4:15 pm † Joan Pearson (BB)
6:00 pm † Erin Doll (BB)
Midnight SI St. Stephen parishioners (DB)

Saturday, December 25—Christmas Day

9:00 am † Fern Scigo (BB)
10:30 am † Mike Dallan (DB)
5:00 pm † Kathy Geelan (BB)

Sunday, December 26

7:30 am † Jim Brazda (BB)
9:00 am SI St. Stephen parishioners (DB)
10:30 am † Tom Sautter (DB)
6:00 pm † Bill Lutz (DH)

SI = Special Intention † = Repose of the Soul
DB=Fr.Dave Belt; BB=Fr.Ben Boyd; DH=Fr.Dennis Hanneman;
GO=Fr.Gary Ostrander
Please note: Priest schedule subject to changes

*If you'd like to reserve a Mass Intention, please contact Melissa in the parish office at m.kane@stephen.org or 402-896-9675.



Pray For...

Parishioners who are sick/injured/healing:

Eli Cole, son of Jim and Tiffany

Christopher Holzman, nephew of Anita Finger

Joyce Murphy, mother of Peggy Thiesen



News from the Community:

MERCY HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADING CLINIC

Mercy High School is hosting a Cheerleading Clinic for girls in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade on Saturday, January 15th from 12:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Come have lunch at Mercy, meet new friends, learn cheers from Mercy cheerleaders and perform during the Varsity basketball game. For more details and to register, go to <https://www.mercyhigh.org/happenings/>.

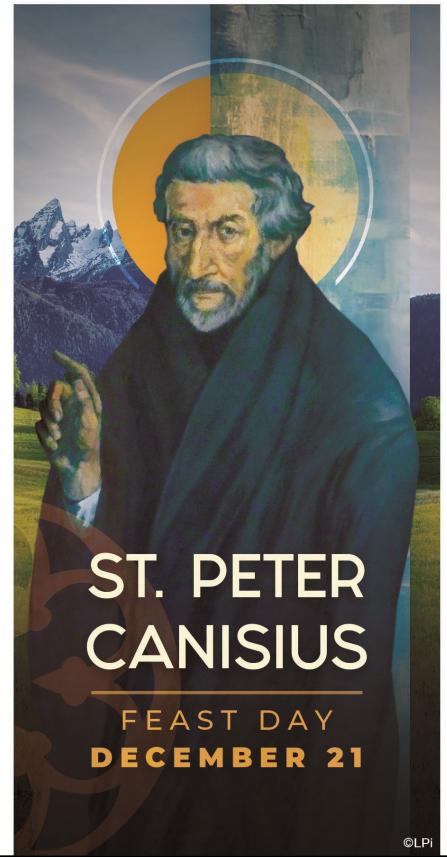
SPIRIT CATHOLIC RADIO CELEBRATION DINNER—SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2022:

Spirit Catholic Radio invites you to our 17th annual Spirit Celebration Dinner, where we will enjoy a meal together and honor keynote speaker and Spirit Award Recipient, Steve Ray. Steve has hosted many pilgrimages for Spirit Catholic Radio and is a frequent guest on Spirit Mornings and EWTN Radio. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. with the dinner and program beginning at 7 p.m. Only \$50 per seat. Please make your reservation at spiritcatholicradio.com/dinner by February 5, 2022.

DIRECTOR OF STEWARDSHIP & COMMUNICATIONS– St. Vincent de Paul Parish is accepting applications for the Director of Stewardship & Communications. Works with the Pastor, Parish Staff and Stewardship & Communications Committee. Organizes stewardship efforts, promotes Sacrificial Giving, supports the Archbishop's and St. Vincent Fund Annual Appeal, provides communications to parishioners. Application and job description at www.svdpomaha.org. Click on "About Us" then click "Employment". Send resume and completed application by Thursday, Jan. 6th to: parishoffice@svdpomaha.org

FIVE FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION PUBLIC SQUARE ROSARY

Please join us at St. Robert Bellarmine Church for the 2022 Five First Saturday Devotion Public Square Rosary Crusade on Saturday, January 1, February 5, March 5, April 2 and May 7 at 3:00pm near the southwest entrance. Our nation is in great need of public prayer, repentance and conversion. We ask God to save America through the Rosary of His Most Holy Mother. More info all - Robin 402-616-5620



Your Generosity Makes our Ministries Possible!

With January 1, 2022 fast approaching and as you review your calendar year-end charitable donations, we would like to share several beneficial ways to complete your charitable gifts to St. Stephen the Martyr Catholic Church.

Does Your Employer Match Gifts? Please ask your employer if they will match charitable contributions. Many local businesses do.

Gifts of Appreciated Stock: There are many advantages to donating and transferring stocks and mutual funds as a method of tithing to St. Stephen. Donors receive an income tax deduction for the current fair market value of the stock regardless of what you originally paid for the security.

Giving Through Your IRA: The IRA Charitable Transfer is an excellent way to make gifts to St. Stephen. By transferring and making your IRA distribution payable directly to St. Stephen, you can avoid being taxed on your withdrawal.

Life Insurance: One option to consider designating St. Stephen the Martyr Catholic Church as the owner and/or beneficiary of a new or existing life insurance policy. If the insurance policy is listed in St. Stephen's name, monthly premiums made toward the policy may be tax-deductible.

Memorial and Tribute Gifts: Remembering a loved one through a memorial gift is a beautiful way to honor their memory. Instead of flowers, consider making a gift in memory of a beloved relative, friend, or colleague. Consider how they would want their passing memorialized by those left behind to continue God's work at St. Stephen.

Memorial Tree of Life An additional opportunity to remember a loved one is recognition on the St. Stephen Memorial Tree of Life sculpture located in the Gathering Space. This is a beautiful way to honor and pay tribute to the life of a family member or friend. To learn more visit stephen.org/tree-of-life

Designating Your Gift: St. Stephen accepts gifts for school tuition assistance, technology, Religious Education, building maintenance and improvement, and landscaping. We do not accept memorials consisting of tangible property to be placed at or around the church or school grounds, such as statues, flag poles, plaques, garden monuments, etc. If interested in making gifts to establish (or add to existing) scholarships or endowments, please contact Dan Koenig, Director of Operations at (402) 861-4543 or d.koenig@stephen.org or Catiana Urrutia at (402) 861-4541 or c.urrutia@stephen.org.

St. Stephen the Martyr encourages all parishioners to consult with their tax advisor when considering their 2021 year-end giving options. To qualify for a deduction in 2021, gifts must be received in the parish office no later than Friday, December 31st.



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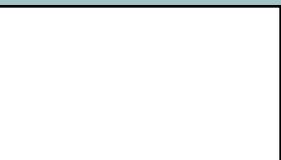
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