



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

December 18, 2022

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

Mondays from 7-8 PM in the Worship Space
First Friday of the Month 9 AM—2:30 PM

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. Zach Tucker

Staff Contact Info: stephen.org/staff

Bulletin Deadline: Monday, 5 PM

Submit requests to Leslie at l.schulte@stephen.org.



FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT

*"...and they shall name him Emmanuel,
which means "God is with us."*

*The Fourth Sunday in Advent announces the identity of
Jesus, the long awaited Messiah. We wait, knowing that
the day Jesus was born, everything changed.
Let us allow ourselves to be changed once again by the
victorious arrival of Emmanuel—our God who became
like us so he could be with us.*



4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*"She will bear a son and
you are to name him Jesus,
because he will save his
people from their sins."
- Mt 1:21*

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

©LPH

Pastor's Message—From Father Dave

"This is how the birth of Jesus came about."

With this line, our Gospel continues to tell the amazing
story of how God broke into human history and sent His
only-begotten Son to save humanity from the shackles of
sin.

But before the birth of Jesus could take place, many obstacles had to be
overcome. A young, teen-age virgin, Mary was afraid when the angel
appeared to her, announcing that she had been chosen by God. Joseph was
ashamed to hear that his wife-to-be was already pregnant, and he thought
about breaking off the engagement.

What we can learn from these remarkable events is that God can take the
obstacles in our lives and make them stepping-stones, leading us closer to
Him and His kingdom. When we confront difficulties in life, we must
remember that God does not always work like we think He might. There will
never be any obstacle or difficulty in life that God cannot overcome and use
to draw us closer to Him. All we need to do is trust Him, just like Mary and
Joseph did.

"God often visits us, but most of the time we are not at home."

*--French Proverb
May God bless you,
Father Dave*



*Celebrate
Christmas*

AT ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR

Christmas Eve:
4 PM, 4:15 PM,
6 PM



Christmas Day:
Midnight, 9 AM,
10:30 AM, 6 PM

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/sacraments.

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

Financial Stewardship

Offertory & Online Giving 12/6 — 12/12/2022:

Actual:	\$47,266
Budget:	\$49,894
FYTD Actual:	\$1,087,429
FYTD Budget:	\$1,190,324
Religious Retirement Fund:	\$2,877.26
Christmas to Date:	\$1,600
Christmas Budget:	\$70,000

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. To make a gift simply scan the QR code or go to stephen.org/give.

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



"When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home."

Matthew 1:24

Putting our complete trust in the Lord without expecting anything in return. Striving to put God first in all things and follow Him wherever He may lead us. Joseph was a model of these pillars of our faith. As we prepare for the birth of our Lord, pray for the strength and courage to be a model of discipleship, just as Joseph was.

#stewardshipreflection

Join our Parish Family!

Welcome visitors and newcomers! If you would like to register as a parishioner, please visit stephen.org. Click on "Become a Parishioner" in the footer of our website. Contact Adam Ybarra at (402) 861-4507 or a.ybarra@stephen.org with any questions and to chat about ways we can help you grow closer to Christ!



Congratulations!

Jeffrey Keane and Sheri Bailey

Married at St. Stephen on Saturday, December 10th

Your faith community wishes you many blessings!



Congratulations Newly Baptized!

Devin Thomas Walsh, son of Brian and Kellen

Ford Allen Knox, son of William and Samantha

Miles David Donnelly, son of Matthew and Bonnie

Jack Michael Donnelly, son of Matthew and Bonnie

School News

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

- ⇒ **2023 Musical Registration Now Open:** We are excited to announce that this year's musical will be Disney's Newsies Jr. The musical is open to all 1st through 8th graders! Registration is open. Get all the details & register at school.stephen.org/musical.
- ⇒ **Save the Date:** Our Open House for the 2023/2024 school year will be January 29th from 9 AM—Noon. More details coming soon!

Religious Education News

- ⇒ **Catechists Needed for RE:** We still need volunteers for:
 - ⇒ Co-Catechist—Grade 2: Wednesday at 5:30 PMAll the lessons are planned, and materials are provided. RE tuition is waived for the immediate children of adult volunteers. If you are interested, please call the RE office at 402-896-5683.

Youth Ministry News

- ⇒ **Sign up to make sandwiches for St. Vincent de Paul:** Next Drop-off will be Monday, Dec. 19th. Help is needed to provide sandwiches for the sack lunches for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul! Sandwiches can be made from home, and then dropped off in the GPC. This is a GREAT opportunity to volunteer as a family, and would count towards stewardship hours for our Confirmation candidates. Sign up at stephen.org/youth-service.
- ⇒ **Life Teen (High School) and Edge (Middle School):** Hello, Tweens and Teens! Our weekly youth nights will be on a bit of a "Holy Hiatus" during this transition period. Questions may be directed to Adam Ybarra at a.ybarra@stephen.org.



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FREE THROW CONTEST

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

Sunday, January 8 at 1 PM
(check-in at 12:45 PM)

St. Stephen the Martyr Gym
Free & No Pre-Registration Required

Questions?

Contact Matt Kreber at kreber4@yahoo.com



Advent Parish Mission - The Eucharistic Revival

*Night 1 - My Story: Mercy and
the Eucharist*

*Night 2 - Your Story: Living
Relationship with Jesus*

*Night 3 - Our Story:
Eucharistic Amazement*

DECEMBER 18TH-20TH
7 PM
in the Worship Space

Please join us!

For more info on Fr. Vasek:
www.fathervasek.com



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Encounter, Know, Proclaim



Fr. Craig Vasek

USCCB Secretariat of
Evangelization and
Catechesis



Listen to a recorded
interview here!



Return of Holy Communion in Both Species, Bread & Wine



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We would like to joyfully announce that the Holy Eucharist will be available again in both species of the bread and the wine at St. Stephen the Martyr. The Precious Blood will be offered once a month and with fewer stations for reception from a chalice. **We hope to make the Precious Blood available at every Mass to all the faithful. However, we need more EMHCs to make this happen.** Please prayerfully consider serving others by becoming an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (EMHC) so we can once again distribute communion under both species at all Masses. To sign up to become an EMHC or other Liturgical Ministry and Hospitality roles, scan the QR code.



Meet Evan Collins: Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministry



Please welcome our new Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry – Evan Collins. Evan comes to us with a great deal of background in relational ministry. His first day will be December 19. Learn more about Evan below:

"I was born and raised in St. Louis, MO where I graduated from Lindenwood University with degrees in Corporate Communications, Religious Studies, and Philosophy. Upon graduation, I became a FOCUS missionary where I served for two years at Benedictine College watching men and women fall deeply in love with Jesus Christ.

I left FOCUS to move to Lafayette, LA to pursue my now-wife who was serving Jesus there with Family Missions Company. Upon getting married at the Cathedral Basilica in St. Louis (look it up) we moved to Gretna where my wife's family is (we are expecting our first baby this Christmas!). I'm currently

getting my Master's in Theological Studies from St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry.

All along the way, my life has been, well, a real life: a process of deeper conversion, an ever-more incarnate understanding of the Gospel, and a love for walking with others into the mysteries of the Church that Jesus Christ is continually encountering us within.

I am deeply excited to serve the Lord as a faithful partner with the Holy Spirit, son of the Father, and friend of Jesus Christ at St. Stephens.

My favorite saints: St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. Francis of Assisi, Pope St. John Paul II. My Confirmation Saint: St. Wenceslaus. Yes, my wedding suit was green and yes it was on St. Joseph's day March 19th, 2022."

Hospital Ministry

If you or a loved one has been hospitalized, please let us know because we do not always hear from the individual hospitals. Please call the parish office at (402) 896-9675 if you would like a visit. We would love to offer the "medicine of prayer"!

Weekly Parish News Email

Did you know? Our primary communication tool is email using Flocknote. You can receive weekly email updates, funeral information or other important reminders. To subscribe, follow the steps at stephen.org/flocknote or call the parish office to give us your email.



WHY DO WE DO THAT? Catholic Life Explained:

Question: What is the Hispanic Advent custom of "Las Posadas"?

Answer:

"Posada" is the Spanish word for inn or lodging. "Las Posadas" refers to a traditional Advent custom in preparation for the birth of Jesus, beginning on December 16. For nine successive evenings, groups reenact the search of Mary and Joseph for shelter in Bethlehem.

Two children dress as Mary and Joseph, sometimes with Mary riding on an actual donkey. They are usually accompanied by children dressed as angels and shepherds along with the Wise Men. Adults accompany them as they process to designated homes where they sing Christmas songs and request lodging. Part of the group enters the home and becomes the chorus that responds to the request for lodging. In the beginning the request is rebuffed. They move to several more homes where the ritual is repeated. Eventually, at the last home, their need is recognized, and they all enter the home where a party ensues. This is repeated in different neighborhoods and homes each of the nine days.

While this custom teaches children an important aspect of the Christmas story, it also emphasizes the need for hospitality to strangers and the continual need we all have to make room for Jesus in our "posada." As we struggle to arrive at a fair and just immigration policy, it would be good to recall the fact that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus were also immigrants looking for a hospitable place to dwell. ©LPi



WEEKLY PRAYER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 18, 2022

Sunday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 [7c, 10b]/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24

Monday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17/Lk 1:5-25

Tuesday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 1:26-38

Wednesday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21/Lk 1:39-45

Thursday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/Lk 1:46-56

Friday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14/Lk 1:57-66

Saturday: Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29/
Lk 1:67-79

Next Sunday: *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/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 [3]/Heb 1:1-6/Jn
1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 18, 2022

Sunday: 4th Sunday of Advent

Wednesday: St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Friday: St. John of Kanty, Priest

Saturday: Christmas Eve

Next Sunday: The Nativity of the Lord

LIVE THE LITURGY

Inspiration for the week

"God is with us." This is the one constant in the unpredictability of life. The particulars of our lives can change, not only instantly but dramatically. People experiencing a time of peace can easily find themselves at war. Times of prosperity can rapidly become times of want. Our vision for the future can be destroyed, and our securities placed in jeopardy. These final days of Advent allow us to make final preparations. The true safety and security we seek can only come from God. The rest, harmony, and peacefulness we desire are found in God alone. How do we know this to be true? God Himself gave us a sign: Emmanuel, God with us. Do not be afraid, and do not be unbelieving. Hold fast to what God has done in giving us His only begotten Son. We do not have to anxiously attempt to control life's unpredictability. All we need to do is make sure that our hearts are in the proper place and seeking the right things!

How Can We Pray for YOU?

You are not alone! St. Stephen 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 at stephen.org/prayer-line or call Beth at (402) 669-4793.

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 17

8:15 am † Ambrose Schaefer (DB)

5:00 pm † Erin Doll (ZT)

Sunday, December 18

7:30 am † Byron Barber (ZT)

9:00 am † Joe Tiesi (ZT)

10:30 am SI St. Stephen parishioners (DB)

6:00 pm † Holy Souls in Purgatory (DB)

Monday, December 19

6:30 am † Jeffrey Kane, Jr. (ZT)

8:15 am † Holy Souls in Purgatory (ZT)

Tuesday, December 20

6:30 am † Francene Buda (DB)

8:15 am † Holy Souls in Purgatory (ZT)

Wednesday, December 21

6:30 am † Jeffrey Kane, Jr. (DB)

8:15 am † Holy Souls in Purgatory (ZT)

Thursday, December 22

6:30 am † Mack Greder, Sr. (DB)

8:15 am † Glen Eich (DB)

Friday, December 23

6:30 am † Jeffrey Kane, Jr. (DB)

8:15 am † Fr. Barry Bentz (ZT)

Saturday, December 24—Christmas Eve

4:00 pm † Lewis Storm (DB)

4:15 pm † Mike Dallan (ZT)

6:00 pm † Greg Elwer (ZT)

Sunday, December 25—Christmas Day

12:00 am SI Parishioners (DB)

9:00 am † Kathy Stover (ZT)

10:30 am † Bruce Allacher (DB)

6:00 pm † Arlene Anstett (DH)

SI = Special Intention † = Repose of the Soul

DB=Fr. Dave Belt; ZT=Fr. Zach Tucker; DH = Fr. Denny Hanneman

Pease 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.

Please pray for...

Parishioners who are sick/injured/healing:

Nancy Major Jaeck

Bill Utecht, brother-in-law of Ron and Bonnie Skartvedt

Ryan Huebner, son of Marty and Cheryl

Daniel DiGiacinto, brother of Rebecca Berry

Berniece Adams

John F. Johnson, brother of Tom

Fr. Nick Baker, Diocese of Lincoln

Deceased souls of our parish family:

Vi Ramaekers, mother of Donna Murphy,
grandmother of Sean & Zach Murphy

Adele Hassenstab, mother of Tom Hassenstab
and Jane Craig

Jim Willette, father of Brad

Connie Bogue, mother of Andrew, grandmother of
Max and Nate

Bob Gentrup, father of Brenda Urrutia

Robert "Bob" Jaeck, husband of Nancy Major

Jeffrey Kane, Jr., son of Jeff & Melissa

Jim Baumert, father of Dee Ernesti

Mary Pfeifer, wife of Greg

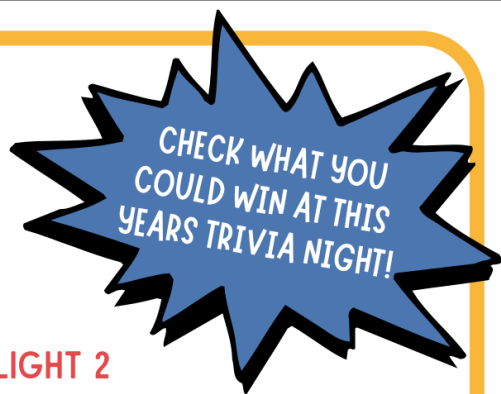
Diane Ames, sister of Rose Mary Braun

Tina Szalewski, sister of Ed and Debby Synowicki



TRIVA NIGHT

JANUARY 28, 2028



FLIGHT 1

1st place: Entry fee for 2024 Trivia Night & \$50 gift card

2nd place: \$120

3rd place: \$60

FLIGHT 2

25th place: Half-priced entry fee for 2024 Trivia Night

26th place: \$40

Last place: Two, \$20 gift cards

BEST THEMED TABLE

\$50 gift card & half-priced entry fee for 2024 Trivia Night



**THERE ARE ONLY 15 TABLES LEFT
SCAN TO REGISTER OR
VISIT STEPHEN.ORG/TRIVA-NIGHT**

QUESTIONS? CONTACT CATIANA URRUTIA 402-861-4541/C.URRUTIA@STEPHEN.ORG



Thank you for your generosity! The Angel Tree Project for Youth Emergency Services was incredibly successful!

Wow! What an overwhelming response for St. Stephen the Martyr Angel Tree Project, put together by the Social Justice Ministry.

Christmas Trees were placed in the Gathering Space with tags on them listing specific needs for YES, and parishioners were more than generous!

Thanks to all of you, we were able to provide Youth Emergency Services (YES) with gift cards to Casey's, Walmart & Target valued at \$3,480. Bus passes will give them 563 rides. The amount of underwear and personal hygiene products was phenomenal. Cash donations were added to proceeds from the bake sale held in September for a \$1,700 check for YES to use as needed. Any donations we could not use for YES went to the Catholic Charities Juan Diego Center.

Our parishioners have shown incredible generosity! Thank you on behalf of YES, the Juan Diego Center and the St. Stephen the Martyr Social Justice Ministry! We truly were the "hands and feet of Christ!"

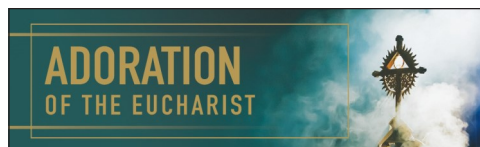
**JESUS,
GIVE
ME
THE
FAITH
OF ST. JOSEPH**



PrimeTimers Cards & Games

Every 2nd and 4th Thursday at 1 PM in the Parish Center—Everyone is welcome! Bring your favorite board game or join a group for pitch, pinochle, bridge, dominos, or tripoli. Bring a snack to share and an item for the St. Stephen food pantry. Bring a friend or partner!

Be on the lookout for more fun gatherings for our PrimeTimers (Ages 65+) in 2023!



Eucharistic Adoration

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

Weekly Eucharistic Adoration:

Mondays from 7-8 PM
in the Worship Space

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