If you are new to St. Stephen Protomartyr Parish or just visiting — WELCOME!
Visitors, please sign the Guest Book found near the main entrance to the church.
If you would like to register in the parish, please call or email the parish office.
Welcome to the neighborhood and parish community!

Parish
3949 Wilmington Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63116
314-481-1133
314-481-6036 fax
stephenprosssp@gmail.com
www.saintstephenstl.org
@sspstl @sspstl

Chapel of Sts. Mary and Joseph
6304 Minnesota, St. Louis, MO 63111
@stsmmaryandjosephchapel

School
3929 Wilmington Ave., St. Louis, MO 63116
314-752-4700
314-752-5165 fax
michelwendellssp@gmail.com
@SSPCatholicSchool

Father Ron Hopmeir, Pastor
frron@saintstephenstl.org

Mrs. Mary Regan, Pastoral Associate
maryreganssp@gmail.com

Mr. Stephen E. Jones, Music Director
stephenjonesssp@gmail.com

Mrs. June Tessin, Office Manager / Bookkeeper
juntessinssp@gmail.com

Mrs. Michel Wendell, Principal
michelwendellssp@gmail.com

Mrs. Mary Paule, Child Safety Coordinator / Secretary
marypaulessp@gmail.com

Ms. Stephanie Oehler Wobbe, Communications Coordinator
stephaniewobbessp@gmail.com
**STEWARDSHIP: SHARING TIME, TALENT, TREASURE, and PRAYER**

“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. 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.

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**SUNDAY CONTRIBUTION**

Due to an early deadline by the bulletin publisher, the Sunday contribution amounts for December 15 were not available in time for this bulletin. They will be published in the December 29 bulletin.

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**LITURGICAL MINISTERS**

**LECTORS**

Tuesday, December 24
5:00 p.m. — TBD
10:00 p.m.— TBD

Wednesday, December 25
10:00 a.m.— E. Kovac, L. Harbaugh

Saturday, December 28
4:00 p.m. — W. Kveton, C. Kveton

Sunday, December 29
8:00 a.m. — S. Gunter, C. McGeehan
10:30 a.m. — G. Joly, E. Joly

**SERVERS**

Tuesday, December 24
5:00 p.m. — Colin M., Nolan G.
10:00 p.m.— Zach M., Landon M.

Wednesday, December 25
10:00 a.m.— TBD

Saturday, December 28
4:00 p.m. — Zach M., Anya J.

Sunday, December 29
8:00 a.m. — Aaron V., Ella C.
10:30 a.m. — Bianca C., Reagan M.

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**THIS WEEK’S READINGS**

**Monday:** Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Ps 25:4-5, 8-10, 14; Lk 1:57-66

**Tuesday:** 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 & 29; Lk 1:67-79

**Christmas Vigil:** Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25

**Christmas, Night:** Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13; Tim 2:11-14; Lk 2:10-11

**Wednesday, Christmas:** Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18

**Thursday, St. Stephen Protomartyr:** Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3-4, 6 & 8ab, 16bc and 17; Mt 10:17-22

**Friday, St. John, Apostle & Evangelist:** 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a & 2-8

**Saturday, Feast of the Holy Innocents:** 1 Jn 1:5—2:2; Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7cd-8; Mt 2:13-18

**Sunday, The Holy Family:** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5; Col 3:12-21; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

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**CHRISTMAS SEASON MASS SCHEDULE**

**Christmas**
Tuesday, Dec. 24, 5 p.m. and 10 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 25, 10 a.m.

**Feast of St. Stephen**
Thursday, Dec. 26, 8 a.m., and reception in rectory

**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**
Saturday, Dec. 28, 4 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 29, 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

**Feast of Mary, the Mother of God**
Tuesday, Dec. 31, 5 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 1, 9 a.m.

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**THIS WEEK AT ST. STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday December 23</th>
<th>Tuesday December 24</th>
<th>Wednesday December 25</th>
<th>Thursday December 26</th>
<th>Friday December 27</th>
<th>Saturday December 28</th>
<th>Sunday December 29</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liturgy of the Word 8 a.m.</td>
<td>NO 8 A.M. MASS</td>
<td>Mass 10 a.m.</td>
<td>Mass 8 a.m.</td>
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<td>Mass 8 a.m. &amp; 10:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>Quilters 9 a.m.-2 p.m.</td>
<td>Mass 5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Reception 8:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>Novena 7 p.m.</td>
<td>Mass 10 p.m.</td>
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<td>FEAST OF SAINT STEPHEN</td>
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**HOLIDAY HOOPS FEST BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT**
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.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS
We are accepting donations for flowers in church for this Christmas season in honor of the living and deceased members of the parish or of your family. You may use the envelope for Christmas flowers or mark an envelope "Flowers" and list the name(s) of those you wish to remember. Place your donation in the collection basket or drop it by the rectory. After the Christmas season, donors may take the flowers home.

DECORATING CHURCH
All hands on deck!
   We will be decorating the church for Christmas on Dec. 22, 2019, after the 10:30 a.m. Mass.
   Thanks in advance!

LETTER FROM ARCHBISHOP CARLSON
Christmas 2019
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Rejoice! The weeks of Advent waiting are over, and Christ is born!

We rejoice in our Savior’s birth — remembering the great gift of faith He has given us through the mystery of His incarnation and the saving power of His death and resurrection.

Each year, the people of the archdiocese are asked to make a special gift on Christmas Day to support our seminarians at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary. These men are responding to Christ’s call to follow Him as they discern a vocation to the holy priesthood. This year, more than 140 men have dedicated themselves to living, growing, and serving in His love as they prepare for a life of parish ministry. God willing, these men will bring the faith given to us by Christ 2000 years ago to future generations.

This Christmas, I ask you once again to pray for vocations and for all priests and seminarians. I also ask you to be generous in your donation to the Christmas collection at your parish, which helps ensure that our seminarians receive the education and formation they need to grow closer to Christ each day. Your support is a source of inspiration for the seminarians and helps to build up the Church in St. Louis. Together, we can encourage our future priests to walk the path of holiness as they seek to configure their hearts to the Heart of Jesus Christ.

Please be assured of my prayers for you during the season of Christmas. May the Lord of life come into your hearts and homes in a special way during this holy time of year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson
Archbishop of St. Louis
THE UNRECORDED CONVERSATION

It must have been a painful conversation.

We know it took place. We’ve all experienced that kind of devastating encounter — when we were told we were no longer needed, when we discovered that someone we trusted betrayed us, when we heard the most awful words in the English language: I don’t love you anymore.

The evangelist Matthew leaves that conversation out of his story of Jesus’s birth. But we know it took place — when Mary told Joseph she was with child. We know how Joseph felt because we’ve felt that way — betrayed, foolish, naïve, used. But the difference is that, despite his own pain, Joseph realizes Mary’s own confusion and anguish and fear over what has happened. But love enables these two hearts — no matter how broken and scared — to do that.

Joseph could not and would not subject her to the Law of the time; he would not expose her to public humiliation and shame. They would work this out “quietly.” Their difficult conversation ended on a note of compassion and mercy.

Matthew picks up the story from there — how Joseph trusts God in the angel’s message, and God’s Christ enters human history in the person of Jesus.

It was said by many detractors that Jesus was born in scandal.

But we know better.

Jesus was born in mercy and compassion.

Joseph’s response is the first light of the Kingdom of God that this little boy — Joseph’s little boy — would proclaim.

In today’s Gospel — Matthew’s version of Jesus’s birth — God’s plan of humankind’s salvation depends on Joseph, whose life has been turned upside by the angel’s news. Joseph accepts the son as his own as a matter of love and compassion, of trust and faith. God’s birth in our midst depends on human partners — a Mary, a Joseph, you, me — willing to put aside our own fears and hurts to be God’s ministers of mercy, prophets of God’s justice, mirrors of God’s compassion. In this season and in every season, may we imitate the compassion and faith of Joseph — to seek understanding and acceptance within our families even at the cost of our own expectations and hopes, to seek to always be sources of affirmation and support for our spouses and children.

From Connections, December 2019
CAROL FOR A CAUSE
Looking to start a new holiday tradition with family and friends? Get a group together and “Carol for a Cause” in your neighborhood with the St. Louis Christmas Carols Association this year! Bring joy and good will to your neighborhood while collecting donations for area agencies serving children.

For more information, contact area chair Anne Borgmeyer at 314-752-2528.

NEW YEAR’S EVE CELEBRATION AT OLS
Ring in the new year at Our Lady of Sorrows (5020 Rhodes Ave.) on Dec. 31, 2019, from 7 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. The event features the band Hit List! and The Wolk Brothers. Cost is $40 person, which includes buffet dinner from Lochirco’s, as well as soda, coffee, beer, and wine. You are welcome to bring your own beverages. All proceeds from the event will be donated to the parish.

For more information or to make reservations, contact Marjorie at 314-481-1453 or mdwolk@hotmail.com.

ARCHBISHOP’S ADOPTION FUND
Have you or someone you’ve known been touched by adoption? Adoption, even through non-profit agencies, can be very expensive. The Archbishop Robert J. Carlson Adoption Fund was created to help build families through this loving choice.

There are two ways you can help:

- Buy a raffle ticket for yourself or as a gift for 10 seats at a 2020 Cardinals Game in Suite 33 — bit.ly/adoptioanrantraffe

Help build families this Season of Our Savior’s Birth! For more information, contact Melissa Barnason at melissabarnason@archstl.org.

BLUEGRASS AND SPAGHETTI
SAVE THE DATE!
On Saturday, Jan. 11, 2020, The Fishpot Creek Bluegrass Band will be providing the music at our 4 p.m. Mass. After Mass, there will be a spaghetti dinner in the parish hall, the proceeds of which will benefit the maintenance of the Chapel of Sts. Mary & Joseph.

More information to come.

TAX ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE
The St. Louis Tax Assistance Program offers FREE electronic income tax return preparation and tax information for a family with income below $56,000. Must bring W-2s, 1099s, and 1098Ts, if applicable. The program benefits working families who are eligible for the earned income credit and child-care credit.

Location: St. Mary’s High School, 4701 S. Grand Blvd.
Dates: January 26, February 2, 9, 16, 23, and March 2, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

For more information, please contact Anne Skelton at 314-602-8622 or anneskelton@live.com.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT MERCY CENTER
Come to the Quiet, a guided silent retreat led by Dawn Stringfield, is taking place Jan. 3-5, 2020, at the Mercy Conference & Retreat Center (2039 N. Geyer). How would it feel to unplug the cell phone, tablet, and laptop and allow yourself time and space to listen more deeply to the Spirit within and around you? Mindfully walk the labyrinth and beautiful grounds; soak up the sacred space of the chapels; read, reflect, journal, pray; or simply rest. To register, visit www.mercycenterstl.org.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT MERCY CENTER
Dec. 26-29 — Holiday Hoops basketball tournament
Jan 1 — Feast of Mary, Mother of God
Jan 3 — Adult Pickleball
Jan. 11 — Fishpot Creek Bluegrass Band, 4 p.m. Mass
Jan. 11 — Spaghetti Dinner benefitting SSMJ
Feb. 1 — Sports Trivia Night
Feb. 8 — Gala

LOOKING AHEAD
Dec. 26-29 — Holiday Hoops basketball tournament
Jan 1 — Feast of Mary, Mother of God
Jan 3 — Adult Pickleball
Jan. 11 — Fishpot Creek Bluegrass Band, 4 p.m. Mass
Jan. 11 — Spaghetti Dinner benefitting SSMJ
Feb. 1 — Sports Trivia Night
Feb. 8 — Gala
UPCOMING ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Annual Christmas Novena
Dec. 17- Dec. 23, nightly at 7 p.m.

Decorating the Church for Christmas
Dec. 22 after the 10:30 a.m. Mass

Christmas Eve
Dec. 24, Mass at 5 p.m. with sung music at 4:30 p.m.
Dec. 24, Mass at 10 p.m. with sung music at 9:45 p.m.

Christmas Day
Dec. 25, Mass at 10 a.m. with sung music at 9:45 a.m.

Feast of St. Stephen
Dec. 26, Mass at 8 a.m., then reception in the rectory

Feast of the Holy Family
Dec. 28 and 29, Blessing of Families after Mass

Feast of Mary, the Mother of God
Dec. 31, Mass at 5 p.m.; Jan. 1, Mass at 9 a.m.

NEW TWIST!
WINE & BOURBON DONATIONS

The popular WINE RAFFLE returns to the Gala — $10 gets you a “mystery” bottle of wine worth at least that much — but this year we are adding a BOURBON RAFFLE! At this time, we are looking for donations of wine worth at least $10 a bottle and bourbon worth at least $25 a bottle (even if you buy them on sale for less). If you are gifted something at Christmas that maybe isn’t your cup of … tea, we would love to have it for the raffle! Put bottles in the back of church, marked with your name and the dollar value (regardless of sale price). Questions? Contact Mandy Borgmeyer at mborgmeyer80@gmail.com.

LIMITED-EDITION RAFFLES!

Only 300 chances to win each of two raffles! Tickets are $25 each. Buy them online at ssp2020.givesmart.com or after Masses. The LATE NIGHT RAFFLE — cash prizes of $1,000, $300, and $200! The BIG APPLE RAFFLE — Apple Watch 5 (GPS) with AirPods Pro!

CAN YOU HELP?

The auction committee is looking for St. Louis Cardinals tickets; Mizzou football tickets; downtown St. Louis restaurant gift cards (for themed package); golf-course passes; timeshares; bed-and-breakfast stays; brewery or winery tours; and concert or theater tickets. Do you have special connections or interest in donating any of these items for auction? Contact the chairs at StStephenGala@gmail.com.

REMAINING CHORAL CLUB EVENTS

The SSP Choral Club (our schoolkids from 3rd through 8th grade) is embarking on its Christmas 2019 Tour! You can catch them here or around town on any of the dates below.

Tuesday, Dec. 24, All Grades
4:30 p.m., SSP Christmas Eve Mass, caroling with adult choir; Mass to follow at 5 p.m.

Sunday, Jan. 12, All Grades
2 p.m., Epiphany pageant, SSP Church
**MASS INTENTIONS**

**Monday, December 23**
8:00 a.m. — Liturgy of the Word

**Tuesday, December 24**
5:00 p.m. — Mike Bauer
10:00 p.m. — LaVerne Gartner

**Wednesday, December 25**
10:00 a.m. — Ken Simon

**Thursday, December 26**
8:00 a.m. — Roland Keeton

**Friday, December 27**
8:00 a.m. — Charles Stough

**Saturday, December 28**
8:00 a.m. — Mary Ann Sciaroni
4:00 p.m. — Florence Arcipowski

**Sunday, December 29**
8:00 a.m. — Our Parishioners
10:30 a.m. — Ronald Ulrich

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**PLEASE PRAY**

for our sick and recovering ...

Dave Asinger
Bob Beck
Suzi Beck
Liz Bentrup
Ann Dosenbach
Erin Goedeker
Jan Haffer
Paul Heidbrier
Thomas Lorenz
Lois McClellan
Steve Moylan
Dianne Neels
Grace Phillips
Virginia Zenthoefer

for our homebound ...

Albertine Honious
Art Petersen

for family members serving in the military ...

Derek Hirtz
Tristan Moylan
Ryan O’Neil
Brian Schoellhorn
Steve Asinger
Dianne Neels
Grace Phillips
Virginia Zenthoefer

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**DEVOTIONS**

**Tuesdays,** after 8 a.m. Mass: Perpetual Help Devotions

**First Friday of the Month,** after 8 a.m. Mass: Holy Hour and Benediction

**Christmas Novena,** Nightly, Dec. 17-23, 7 p.m.

**Weekdays,** 8:45 a.m.-4 p.m.: Church is available for prayer. Stop by the rectory for entry.

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**SAINT STEPHEN**

Saint Stephen Protomartyr Parish

**Parish Office Hours** 314-481-1133
Monday through Thursday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Closed Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays

**Bulletin Article Deadline**
Monday at 12:00 p.m. prior to the weekend bulletin.

**Sacramental Celebrations**

**Eucharist**
- Saturday evening vigil: 4:00 p.m.
- Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m. (nursery available)
- Monday: Liturgy of the Word 8:00 a.m.
- Tuesday through Saturday: Mass 8:00 a.m.
- Holy Day: 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

**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.

**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 3:00 - 3:30 p.m.

**Marriage**
Please contact 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 Located on the campus of St. John the Baptist Parish. Call the PSR Director at 314-773-3070.

**Church Nursery**
Located in the rectory basement during 10:30 a.m. Mass. Enter by way of the alley. Staffed by parents.

**Children’s Liturgy of the Word**
Children ages 4 through second grade are invited to participate and hear the scriptures in a way meaningful to their age. During our Sunday Mass at 10:30 a.m.