What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love [God], this God has revealed to us through the Spirit.

—1 Corinthians 2:9–10
STEWARDSHIP: SHARING TIME, TALENT, TREASURE, and PRAYER

“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20)

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LITURGICAL MINISTERS

LECTORS
Saturday, February 22
4:00 p.m. — G. Joly, E. Joly

Sunday, February 23
8:00 a.m. — P. Cooper, S. Gaydos
10:30 a.m. — A. Borgmeyer, S. Gunter

SERVERS
Saturday, February 22
4:00 p.m. — Mark W., Stephanie W.

Sunday, February 23
8:00 a.m. — Sophie W., Makenna S.
10:30 a.m. — Ellen K., Tara J.

THIS WEEK’S READINGS

Monday: Jas 1:1-11; Ps 119:67, 68, 71, 72, 75, 76; Mk 8:11-13

Tuesday: Jas 1:12-18; Ps 94:12-13a, 14-15, 18-19; Mk 8:14-21

Wednesday: Jas 1:19-27; Ps 15:2-3a, 3bc-4ab, 5; Mk 8:22-26

Thursday: Jas 2:1-9; Ps 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7; Mk 8:27-33

Friday: Jas 2:14-24, 26; Ps 112:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Mk 8:34—9:1

Saturday, The Chair of St. Peter: 1 Pt 5:1-4; Ps 23:1-3a, 4, 5, 6; Mt 16:13-19

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time: Lv 19:1-2, 17-18; Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13; 1 Cor 3:16-23; Mt 5:38-48

This Week at St. Stephen Protomartyr

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Monday February 17</th>
<th>Tuesday February 18</th>
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<td>Liturgy of the Word 8 a.m.</td>
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<td>All School Mass 8 a.m. Baptismal Service</td>
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PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

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.

LUKE 18 RETREAT

“Let the little children come to me. Do not stop them; for it is such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.” Luke 18:16-17

St. Stephen will be hosting a Luke 18 Retreat for 7th and 8th graders this spring! The retreat is open to all parishioners, St. Stephen students, and non-parishioners in these grade levels.

What is Luke 18? Luke 18 is a weekend-long retreat, welcoming the participants (also referred to as “Lukers”) into the Church by helping them experience God and His love — a love that is unconditional and accepts them as they are. Through games, skits, songs, personal sharing, and a series of talks given by high school students, the Lukers are encouraged to have fun and grow in their faith. The weekend offers the opportunity to experience God’s love on a more personal level, and the Lukers are challenged to share that love with those around them.

The retreat is scheduled for March 27-29, 2020, and will be held in the Parish Center, Parish Hall and classrooms at St. Stephen. The 7th and 8th graders stay at the retreat all weekend, spending Friday and Saturday nights in all-male and all-female “sleep houses” at parishioners’ homes. (All sleep-house families are in compliance with the Archdiocese Safe Environment requirements for volunteering with minors.) The weekend will end with Sunday Mass at 10:30 a.m. All family and friends are invited to attend this closing celebration.

The cost of the retreat is $35 to cover meals, supplies, T-shirts, etc. If your child is interested in participating, contact Leigh Manalang at 314-486-0717 or Mary Regan at 314-481-1133 by Feb. 28, 2020.

TOWN HALL MEETING

Please join us at a town-hall meeting on March 1, 2020, at 12:30 p.m. in the Parish Center. At that time, we will reflect on where we are today as a community of faith. All parishioners, school parents, and staff are welcome. Thanks to all who submitted the pre-meeting survey, which will guide our discussion.

Sr. Mary Jordan, FMSA, will facilitate the meeting.

RICE BOWL PROGRAM

Rice Bowl is the Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services and begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2020. Seventy-five percent of your Rice Bowl donations support CRS’s humanitarian relief programs in nearly 100 countries. Additionally, CRS allows each diocese that participates to keep 25% of the collection in the local community to be used for hunger and poverty alleviation programs.

Rice Bowls will be available in the back of church for your use at home during the Lenten season. You will be asked to return them — and the donations inside them — to church at Easter.

FISH FRY SEASON IS UPON US

Our world-famous fish fries begin their 16th season on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2020, and continue every Friday during Lent, except for Good Friday. Dinner is served from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall. The menu includes signature dishes, the ever-popular fish tacos, a catch of the day, succulent side dishes, delicious desserts, and beverages (soda, tea, lemonade, coffee, beer, and wine). Dine in or carry out. Handicap-accessible. Cash, checks, and credit cards are accepted.

HELP WANTED: If you can help out during the fries — or if you can provide a dessert or help with setup or cleanup — please contact Greg at grvenneman@sbcglobal.net. All help is appreciated, whether it be for one fry or all seven! Serving shifts begin at 3:45 p.m. and 5:15 p.m. Kids seeking service hours are more than welcome to help with bussing tables and selling raffle tickets.
AN IMMIGRANT’S GIFT ON CHRISTMAS EVE

In an essay in *The New York Times* this past Christmas Eve, Tali Farhadian Weinstein tells the story of her coming to America from Iran forty Christmases ago.

In February 1979, three-year-old Tali, her parents, and her infant brother were Jews trying to escape Tehran at the height of the Islamic Revolution. The family managed to get to Israel before outgoing flights were halted. Tali’s father went ahead to the United States on a tourist visa to find housing and employment. Finally, Tali and her mother and brother were able to fly to the United States, arriving at Kennedy Airport on Christmas Eve. Tali’s mother was terrified. The tourist visas she bought from a travel agent in Israel were certainly fake. They had one-way tickets, and they didn’t look like “tourists” — they had a large suitcase stuffed with pots and pans, a few items of clothing for the children, and photo albums. Tali writes: “When it was our turn for inspection, the Immigration and Naturalization Service officer — very reasonably — challenged my mother’s claim that we had come for a short visit. My mother didn’t say that what she wanted was asylum, that we had a well-founded fear of persecution in our country of origin. My mother didn’t know that those words had the power to keep us in America, that anyone on American soil had a right to be heard on that claim. Maybe because she had grown up in a county with no such protections, she couldn’t imagine such a thing.

“We could have been turned away. But that nameless I.N.S. officer — about whom I know nothing other than how he conducted himself in that moment — made a different decision. Before him stood a young mother traveling alone with her babies, visibly in need of refuge. She told him that the children wanted to see their father, that they had spent months apart. And he granted us ‘deferred inspection’ — meaning that we had permission but not authorization to enter the country — and told us to come back to the airport right after the holiday for deportation.”

With the help of New York’s Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Tali’s family applied for and received asylum.

Today, Tali Farhadian Weinstein is the general counsel of the district attorney’s office in Brooklyn. One of the most important lessons about law and law enforcement, she learned as a three-year-old immigrant from that nameless I.N.S. officer on that Christmas Eve. She writes in her *New York Times* piece: “Law enforcement requires us to exercise our humanity and sense of justice, always mindful of the demands of safety, in individual cases. Discretion in law enforcement can be abused, of course, but the alternative — the letter of the law without the spirit of the law — is worse.”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus speaks of “fulfilling” the Law — not abolishing it. Jesus seeks to restore the spirit of mercy, justice, and reconciliation that gives meaning and direction to every just legal code. The border control officer Tali and her family encountered in New York was wise and compassionate enough to see beyond their questionable documents to recognize the reality of their situation and respond with the discretion the law permitted. Today’s Gospel challenges us to look beyond legalisms and social and cultural yardsticks — and our own narrow interests — to recognize people in need and our responsibility as followers of Jesus to seek them out, to advocate for them, to welcome them.

From *Connections*, February 2020

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St Stephen Protomartyr Athletic Association presents:

**Spirit Night at**

**CHICK-FIL-A @ HAMPTON & CHIPPEWA**

When: Thursday, February 20th from 4-7pm

Mention St Stephen Protomartyr or SSP and we will receive a portion of all sales.

**No Flier Needed**

Valid on Dine-in, Drive Thru, or Carry Out

Tell your friends and family & we can make this a HUGE SUCCESS!!!
LES MIS FOR LENT — HERE AT SSP

Ponder the themes of justice, poverty, freedom, and love in a six-week Lenten study to be hosted here at St. Stephen.

Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables* is a truly epic story. Whether you’ve tackled the 1,400-page 19th century novel, witnessed the Broadway musical (and memorized its soundtrack), or seen the several screen adaptations of it, you already know the power of its story.

In the six-week study *The Grace of Les Misérables*, author and pastor Matt Rawle dives into six ideals found in the story — grace, justice, poverty, revolution, love, and hope — each represented by a character in Hugo’s story. Discover the parallels between the iconic story and musical and our Christian calling, inspiring us to both understand our faith and live it.

The program will run Monday evenings at 7 p.m in the parish hall, beginning March 2, 2020. Now would be a great time to watch one of the film adaptations, read the book — or the SparkNotes — or otherwise (re)acquaint yourself with the basic story before the program begins.

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR SPRING SPORTS

Register online before Feb. 29, 2020, for the 2020 season of tee-ball, CYC baseball/softball, and track at ezrosters.com/stl-ssp. Tee-ball ($50) is pre-K through 1st grade, CYC baseball/softball ($60) is 2nd grade through 8th grade, and track ($60) is 2nd grade through 8th grade. We will NOT be able to guarantee a spot for your child if you are not registered by Feb. 29.

Questions? Email sspathletics@gmail.com.

NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP — 100 STRONG

Greg Venneman is spearheading a clean-up blitz on Feb. 29, 2020, from 8 a.m. to noon, to tackle all the neighborhood problem spots at once! This can only be done with MANY! It’s a risk to schedule this in winter, but litter knows no season. The goal is a massive turnout — a hundred or more! Meet at the Carondelet Park pavilion near Grand and Holly Hills at 7:30 a.m. There will be donuts! Bring your own tools — rakes, shovels, scoops, pickers, grabbers, brooms, blowers, gloves ... We will disperse in groups of five to ten to the identified problem spots. Greg will pick up full bags with his truck at noon.

Questions? Contact Greg at 314-809-8340 or grvenneman@sbcglobal.net.

Eh! Rosanne Rosannadanna here! Finally … some time to reflect on last Saturday night and all of the stuff leading up to such a great evening! Lots of people are offering ME, Rosanne Rosannadanna, congrats for a great night. But the congrats really goes to all of YOU! From the crazy McGeehan co-chairs to Fr. Ron, Michel Wendell, Mary Regan and the rectory staff, to Jill Pace’s think-tank committee, to Anne Borgmeyer and the décor team, to Holly Seher’s creative genius, to the amazing auction committee, to the Kendal Dauphin & Catherine Kent invitation-party extravaganzas, to Christine Dawson’s basket-making expertise, to the fantastic Foizey photo booth, to Megan McManus and Krissy Forgash who got a ridiculous number of gift cards donated for the Empire State Building punch board, to Stephanie Wobbe’s spot-on messaging, to Mandy Borgmeyer’s Greenwich Village Wine & Whiskey Pull and all the folks who donated liquor, to our sign-up party guru Angie Butz, to the Resmann & Neidel raffle mashup, to Jennifer West and the all the sponsors she recruited, to the ever-generous Regina Agha from Cheap Signs Fast who always provides in-kind support, to Alesia Bessire who took classroom creations to a new level, to Ryan Hanlon and the video kids, to the wonderful Guntlis and the illustrious Bridgette Fyvie for their Gala expertise, to Scott & Sharon Reibe’s bar service which helped to loosen lips and open wallets, to our amazing photographer Dwight Doerhoff who brought his camera without being asked, to outstanding emcees Dave Borgmeyer and Steve Butz, to those who provided moral support through the process, to ALL of our volunteers, to the folks who came in the most ridiculous costumes, and to everyone who donated an enormous amount of money for our parish and school — WHEW!

It’s because of all of YOU that our Gala was so EPIC. SSP sure is a special place!

OUR RAFFLE WINNERS

- Big Apple Raffle — Carol Sestric
- Late Night Raffle, $1,000 — Carol Sestric
- Late Night Raffle, $300 — Irene Dobberstein
- Late Night Raffle, $200 — Felicia Spencer
- Quilt Raffle — Tara Ohler-Jenney
- Jewelry Raffle — Jennifer West
HOME MEDICAL EQUIPMENT
Are you in need of a walker, wheelchair, or other medical devices? Do you have equipment in your home that is no longer being used? South Grand Senior Ministry takes gently used medical equipment to share for short-term or long-term needs. If you have a need or have something to give away, contact Kevin at Immaculate Heart of Mary, 314-481-7543. (Walkers are not needed at this time.)

LENTEN RETREAT
South Grand Senior Ministry invites you to a Lenten Day of Reflection. This annual event will take place on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at The White House Retreat Center (7400 Christopher Dr.). The program will include conferences by Fr. Jim Blumeyer, with opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The day will include Mass and lunch.

Cost for the day is $5 per person, payable at the door. The retreat is open only to parishioners of SGSM member parishes. For reservations, call Diane at 314-772-1525, ext 206, by Tuesday, March 3.

SOMETIMES IT’S HARD TO ASK FOR HELP
We’re brought up to be strong, self-sufficient, independent people. We tend to think that if we ask for help, it is a sign of weakness. So we try to keep our struggles hidden, stuffed deep inside. However, that’s not God’s plan. Galatians 6:2 says, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” God wants us to care for others — and allow others to care for us in our time of need.

If you’re sad or struggling inside, don’t suffer alone. Ask for help. We’ve got a team of Stephen Ministers who are ready to listen, care, encourage, pray, and help you through a tough time. (It’s confidential, too!)

For more information, contact Leigh at 314-486-0717 or Leighsgsm@gmail.com. Our Stephen Ministers are here to care!

SSP 50+ CLUB MEETING
All seniors of SSP Parish are welcome to join us at the monthly meetings of our 50+ Club on the third Thursday of each month at 11 a.m. in our Parish Hall. The next meeting is scheduled for Feb. 20, 2020.

OUR ALUMNI SHINE
Congratulations to the SSP grads who were named to the honor roll at Bishop DuBourg High School for the fall semester!

First honors (3.5 GPA and above) —
Peter Junker, Michelle Kimack, Valerie Shelton, and Alex Venneman. Second honors (3.0-3.49 GPA) — Jack Dennis, Adam Meyer, and Jordan Moylan-Hay. Keep up the great work!

LENTEN REFLECTION AT OLS
The Women’s Guild of Our Lady of Sorrows (5020 Rhodes Ave.) is hosting a Lenten reflection on Feb. 23, 2020, at 7 p.m. in Faenger Hall, featuring a Living Last Supper. Refreshments will be served at 6:15 p.m. Call Linda at 314-752-4660 with any questions.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT MERCY CENTER
Giving Up Violence, March 1, 2020, 1:30-3:30 p.m. — Explore the movement to recapture the centrality of Jesus’s commitment to and practice of nonviolence, and ask the question of how we’re called to reject violence and embrace nonviolence at the personal and political levels. Led by Johnny Zokovitch, executive director of Pax Christi USA.

Giving Up Exclusion, March 15, 2020, 1:30-3:30 p.m. — Without being aware of it, we claim privilege, often based on race, gender, class, or other circumstance. There are also situations where we don’t even notice who’s missing or being treated differently. Led by Sr. Priscilla Moreno, RSM, co-founder of the Alliance of Sisters of Mercy of Color Living in the USA.

Belonging, Becoming and Connecting in a Digital Era
March 20, 2020: Pre-Retreat Talk, 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m. — Unpack the mysterious urgings in the depths of our hearts. Led by Sr. Sue Mosteller, CSJ, and Maria Fitzgerald, MSW, of L’Arche St. Louis.

March 21, 2020: Retreat Day, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. — Our hearts ache for community and belonging. Looking at the Gospels, the writings of Henri Nouwen, and our own stories, we will reflect upon what it means to “belong to a community” in the modern world. Led by Sr. Sue Mosteller, CSJ, and Nathan Ball, MDiv, of L’Arche USA.

All programs are held at the Mercy Conference & Retreat Center (2039 N. Geyer). For more information or to register, visit www.mercycenterstl.org.
Mass Intentions

Monday, February 17
8:00 a.m. — Liturgy of the Word

Tuesday, February 18
8:00 a.m. — Jan Willmann

Wednesday, February 19
8:00 a.m. — Florence Arcipowski

Thursday, February 20
8:00 a.m. — Len Amsler

Friday, February 21
8:00 a.m. — Magdalen Mike

Saturday, February 22
8:00 a.m. — Mike Bauer
4:00 p.m. — Jim Forgash

Sunday, February 23
8:00 a.m. — John & Cecelia Hopmeir
10:30 a.m. — Sally Gunter

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 a.m.
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.