Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

MATTHEW 4:1

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
stephenprossp@gmail.com
www.saintstephenstl.org

@ SSPStl @ SSPStl

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

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
jutenessinssp@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

“*It is written: The Lord, your God, shall you worship and Him alone shall you serve.” (Matthew 4:10)*

Tempted between the riches and power of this world and service to God, Jesus chose service to His Father. If we wish to truly follow Jesus, we, too, must decide to turn away from worldly power and riches and put God at the center of our lives. Lent is our time to prune ourselves of earthly things. Ask God how He is calling you to serve.

SUNDAY CONTRIBUTION

| February 23 Contribution | $ 2,347.00 |
| Online giving contribution | $ 1,453.00 |
| Total weekly contribution | $ 3,800.00 |
| R & I | $ 70.00 |
| Tuition Assistance | $ 195.00 |
| Central & Eastern Europe | $ 120.00 |

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

**LECTORS**

**Saturday, March 7**
4:00 p.m. — T. Jenney, A. Borgmeyer

**Sunday, March 8**
8:00 a.m. — P. O’Connell, A. Rotermund
10:30 a.m. — Girl Scouts

**SERVERS**

**Saturday, March 7**
4:00 p.m. — Reagan M., Katie W.

**Sunday, March 8**
8:00 a.m. — Jack B., Ollie M.
10:30 a.m. — Aidan J., Bianca C.

STARTING THIS WEEK — LES MIS FOR LENT

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. 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.

The program will run Monday evenings at 7 p.m in the parish hall, beginning **March 2, 2020**. It’s not required, but if you’d like to prepare, watch one of the film adaptations, listen to the Broadway soundtrack, or read the book — or maybe the SparkNotes!

Rice Bowls are available in the back of church. Through Lent, collect cash at home to combat poverty via the efforts of Catholic Relief Services. Return your filled bowls to church at Easter.

THIS WEEK’S READINGS

**Monday:** Lv 19:1-2, 11-18; Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15; Mt 25:31-45

**Tuesday:** Is 55:10-11; Ps 34:4-5, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19; Mt 6:7-15

**Wednesday:** Jn 3:1-10; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19; Lk 11:29-32

**Thursday:** Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25; Ps 138:1-2ab, 2cde-3, 7c-8; Mt 7:7-12

**Friday:** Ez 18:21-28; Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8; Mt 5:20-26;

**Saturday:** Dt 26:16-19; Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8; Mt 5:43-48

**Second Sunday of Lent:** Gm 12:1-4a; Ps 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22; 2 Tm 1:8b-10; Mt 17:1-9

THIS WEEK AT ST. STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday March 2</th>
<th>Tuesday March 3</th>
<th>Wednesday March 4</th>
<th>Thursday March 5</th>
<th>Friday March 6</th>
<th>Saturday March 7</th>
<th>Sunday March 8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liturgy of the Word 8 a.m.</td>
<td>Mass at 8 a.m. Perpetual Help Devotions</td>
<td>All School Mass 8 a.m.</td>
<td>Mass 8 a.m.</td>
<td>All School Mass 8 a.m. Eucharistic Adoration Fish Fry 4-7 p.m.</td>
<td>Mass 8 a.m.</td>
<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>Parish Picnic Meeting 7 p.m.</td>
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<td>Fish Fry 4-7 p.m.</td>
<td>Mass 4 p.m.</td>
<td>GIRL SCOUT SUNDAY</td>
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<td>Les Mis Discussion 7 p.m.</td>
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**March 1, 2020**
**First Sunday of Lent**

**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.

**GATHER FOR GROWTH — THIS WEEKEND**

Whether you submitted survey responses or not, all are welcome to attend our Gathering for Growth meeting this Sunday, March 1, 2020, at 12:30 p.m. in the Parish Center.

The meeting is expected to last around two hours; light refreshments will be provided.

May the Holy Spirit guide us as we imagine and plan for our bright future together!

**HELP WANTED — VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

We are looking for that special someone who would be interested in coordinating our Vacation Bible School this summer. The dates of the program are flexible to accommodate the availability of an interested coordinator.

There are many worker-bee volunteers at the ready to help; we are in need of a person to manage the moving parts. Contact Mary Regan at 314-481-1133 or maryreganssp@gmail.com.

**A NOTE FROM THE GALA CHAIRS**

Thanks to everyone’s generosity, the 2020 Gala has raised more than $70,000!

Before we officially finalize the books on the event, you can help us raise just a little bit more by purchasing one of the seven remaining spots for the 2021 Camp Capri Lake Party generously donated and hosted by the Hartzlers and O’Connells.

Enjoy a day of fun in the sun at Lake Capri on Sunday, July 11, 2021. For $50 per person, spend the day swimming, boating, playing games, and more! Cool off with some ice-cold beverages and BBQ in between the lake games and boating.

Go to www.ssp2020.givesmart.com and search Capri Lake to sign up!

**FIRST PARISH PICNIC MEETING**

All are welcome to the first planning meeting for this summer’s 2020 Parish Picnic. We will meet Wednesday, March 4, 2020, at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall to review the financial information from last year’s picnic and discuss some plans and changes for this upcoming picnic. Please join us if you can! Questions? Contact the chairs at ssppicnic@gmail.com.

**BAPTIZED IN CHRIST**

We joyfully welcome the newest member of our community of faith, Oliver Reid Cravens, son of Heidi Bartels, who was baptized on Feb. 23, 2020.

**IT’S FISH FRY TIME!**

Our world-famous fish fries serve up deliciousness 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 (below) includes signature dishes, the ever-popular fish tacos, a catch of the day, succulent side dishes, delicious desserts, and beverages. Dine in or carry out. Handicap-accessible. Cash, checks, and credit cards are accepted.

**ADULT DINNERS**

- Fried or Baked Cod (2 pieces) $9.00
- Fish Tacos (2 soft shell) $9.00
- Catch of the Day (fried Catfish, baked Salmon & Grouper) $9.50
- Fried Jumbo Shrimp (5 pieces) $9.50

(Dinner includes: coffee, tea, lemonade, 2 sides, 2 hush puppies and 2 slices of bread)

**SIDES:**

- Sauteed Green Beans, Home Made Spaghetti, French Fries, Sweet Potato Fries, Sweet Corn Hush Puppies, Mac & Cheese Bites, Cole Slaw, (sides subject to rotation)
- Additional sides available (6 oz. $1.50) (Pints $3.00)

- Fried or Baked Cod Sandwich $5.50
- Cod by the piece $2.50
- Fried Jumbo Shrimp by the piece $1.50
- Fish Tacos $2.50

**Child’s Menu:** (with adult dinner purchase)

(1 includes 1 side & 2 hush puppies)

- Fried or Baked Cod (1 piece) $5.00
- Fried Shrimp (3 pieces) $6.00
- 4-Cheese Ravioli w/marinara dipping sauce $5.00
- Pick Three Sides Plate $5.00

Dessert $2.75 (free for Seniors) | Soda $1.75 | Draft Beer $2.00 ($6.00 Pitcher) | Premium and craft beer available! | Wine by glass $2.00 | Margaritas $6 glass
**OUR NEWEST EAGLE SCOUTS**

Congratulations to Gabriel and Maximilian Manalang, who have both earned Eagle Scout rank through Boy Scout Troop 104. Their Mass and Court of Honor is being celebrated this weekend.

Gabe’s Eagle project benefitted the Clavius Robotics program offered at Saint Louis University High School. Clavius has partnered with selected Catholic middle schools in the city (including St. Stephen) and surrounding underserved areas to offer robotics training in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subject areas as an after-school activity. Gabe and the Scouts built 20 robotic tables that were given to grade schools across the St. Louis area. The 4x8 foot plywood tables prepared the grade school students for the annual competition at the Clavius Project Jamboree. Instead of having to create a makeshift robotics course by applying tape to the ground, the students had a regulation robotics table available to them to practice.

Max’s Eagle project benefitted our neighborhood with the construction of four bat houses installed in Carondelet Park near Horseshoe Lake. These bat houses, made out of plywood and placed on 16 foot wooden poles, will offer a safe and comfortable place for bats that are away from predators so they can raise their young. Thus, the bat houses will encourage bats to settle and live in the park rather than in the surrounding houses or city buildings. Bats also limit the number of bugs in the area. Just one brown bat can eat over 1,000 insects every night. Plus, bats play a key role in the pollination of plants.

Gabe and Max would like to thank Michael and Julie Lohff, David Borgmeyer, the Scouts of Troop 104, and all those parishioners of St. Stephen who supported them throughout their years of Scouting.

**LAST CALL FOR LUKE 18 RETREAT**

It’s not too late to sign up for St. Stephen’s Luke 18 Retreat for 7th and 8th graders! The retreat is open to all students in these grade levels, regardless of where they attend school.

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.

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 as soon as possible.

**LOOKING AHEAD**

- March 10 — Holy Name Society Meeting
- March 17 — Finance Council Meeting
- March 19 — 50+ Club Meeting
- March 27-29 — Luke 18 Retreat
- April 12 — Easter
- April 26 — First Communion
- May 2 — Golf Tournament

**BOX TOPS RECAP**

Thank you to all who participated in our Box Tops collection drive! This year we will earn about $400, which is down from almost $800 last year. We attribute the decline to the fact that there are fewer Box Tops on products, and it is cumbersome to use the app to scan receipts. It seems as though all the complaints about the app and new program are falling on deaf ears at the Box Tops organization!

The money raised can no longer support a competition where the top three classrooms win celebrations. However, we ask that you continue to send in your Box Tops — and scan your receipts when you can — as every little bit helps the school. We just won’t have the school-wide competition.

Thanks, Felicia Spencer, for coordinating the drive!
AN ANATOMY OF SIN

Kichijiro is a supporting figure in Martin Scorsese’s 2016 historical drama movie *Silence*. In the movie, Kichijiro is a Japanese guide who serves and accompanies the French Jesuits, Frs. Rodriguez and Garupe. The Jesuits go to Japan on a mission to find their lost mentor, Fr. Ferreira, who has been rumored to have committed apostasy. Kichijiro is a cowardly drunkard who denies being Christian and betrays his visitors to the Japanese officials, only to return to Fr. Rodriguez, begging to have his confession heard. This cycle happens a number of times throughout the movie.

From Kichijiro’s character in the movie we can surmise what some might call the “anatomy of sin.” Sin is mysterious and predictable, depending on how you look at it. We can come to understand what the early Church Fathers have described as a four-fold path: Suggestion, Conjunction, Acceptance, and Captivity. In Suggestion, a thought or image, desire or feeling is presented to the soul. (For the sake of clarity, I’ll just use the word “thought” to encompass all these sentiments.) Some of these thoughts draw the soul towards God, but not all.

The next step, Conjunction, is the interchange that we have with that thought. We can entertain the thought with delight or with repulsion. Up to this point, these thoughts can be temptations towards sin, but we have not yet committed it, either in thought or in action.

Acceptance follows, wherein the thought is embraced by the will, and a plan for carrying out a corresponding action ensues. Up until this point, the person — you and I — have the will power to make course corrections on the thoughts which have been presented to us.

But if we linger in this acceptance, we become enslaved — or held Captive, the fourth stage — to the thought and its expression, from which there is no escape of our own volition.

Some of you might be thinking to yourself, “Gee, this sounds like a summary of an addiction recovery course.” Well, in a certain sense, yes. This approach does fit in that arena. But it also applies to our spiritual lives, at least I know it does for me! This cycle helps me to understand why it is that when I go to confession, I usually have the same set of sins. I have often reflected at how my life can look like Kichijiro’s: the fears I can have about the loneliness of virtue, the anxieties about wanting to save my reputation among people with conflicting ideas, the need for unconditional acceptance without embracing the consequences of my actions, etc. When external events trigger these thoughts within me, there are predictable outcomes, none of which make me proud.

The wisdom of the Church gives us six weeks to reflect on how we have this tendency to prefer the fleeting pleasure or power of sin over the goodness and mercy of the Father. This is where sin is a mystery to us: why, when given the choice to pursue goodness and virtue, do we instead choose pleasure and vice? Are we even mindful or aware of the diversity of thoughts that we have throughout the day? Are we conscious of how our actions and speech are dictated by those interior thoughts?

St. Isaac the Syrian gives us a hope-filled insight here: “The inflamed thoughts are uprooted and turned to flight by constant occupation of the mind with God. This is a sword that puts them to death. …. Whoever always thinks about God drives the demons away from himself and pulls up the seeds of their malice.”

While we cannot know the interior dimensions of a fictitious movie character, we can examine our own interior with the wisdom of the Church during this season. Maybe we can practice being mindful of our thoughts during this time. Maybe we can learn to be more discerning of what we allow our thoughts to entertain. Maybe, during this Lenten season, we can learn to think more about God throughout the day and let His thoughts become our thoughts so our actions and words might better reflect His.

Br. John Marmion Villa
From LPi *Connect!* Sunday Reflections
DESERТ DAY
How often have you said to yourself: I really need a day of prayer and quiet! Come to the quiet and beauty at Sanguis Christi Spirituality Center (204 N. Main, O’Fallon, Mo.) on Thursday, March 5, 2020, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and let God speak to your heart.

The day will begin and end with prayer. The remainder of the day is solitude, quiet, reflection, and rest. The opportunity to talk with a spiritual director is available. Lunch is provided; a free-will offering is requested. For more information or to register, contact Sr. Carol Orf at corf5464@outlook.com.

TRIVIA NIGHT
The Peregrine Society’s 12th annual Trivia Night is scheduled for Saturday, March 7, 2020, in the gym at Epiphany Catholic Church (3164 Ivanhoe). Doors open at 6:15 p.m., and play begins at 7 p.m. The cost is $25 per person at tables of eight. Beer, wine, soft drinks, and snacks are included. Cash prizes will be awarded to the two highest-scoring tables. Make reservations by calling 314-781-6775 or visiting www.peregrinesoc.org.

The Peregrine Society has been providing a variety of services to cancer patients in St. Louis City and County for the past 71 years.

RUMMAGE SALE
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church (5021 Adkins) is holding a rummage sale on Saturday, March 7, 2020, from 7 a.m. to noon. Questions? Contact Connie Baumgartner at 314-416-9975.

DINNER AUCTION
St. Vincent DePaul Catholic Church (1408 S. 10th St.) is hosting its annual Dinner Auction on Saturday, March 21, 2020, from 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets are $75 each, which includes a formal catered dinner with cocktails and appetizers. All money raised will support the work of the parish’s food pantry and lunch window. In addition, this year the parish is hoping to expand its after-school tutoring program for at-risk youth in the city as well as help senior citizens with the increasing costs of medications.

For more information or to make reservations, visit www.SVDP2020.givesmart.com.

BOOK STUDY
The Aquinas Institute of Theology (23 S. Spring Ave.) is hosting a book discussion series that will explore spirituality for the second half of life.

Using the book Falling Upward, by Richard Rohr, the study will explore the questions, tasks, and gifts God gives us as we move into a deeper spiritual maturity. There will be opportunity for sharing and listening, community building, and prayer. The Study Series will be held on four consecutive Thursday evenings this spring — March 12 through April 2. The group is limited to 20 participants.

The facilitator is Fr. Mark Wedig, a Dominican friar and the President of the Institute.

For more information or to register, contact Angie Doerr at 314-256-8858 or doerr@ai.edu.
MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, March 2
8:00 a.m.— Liturgy of the Word

Tuesday, March 3
8:00 a.m.— Bourisaw Family

Wednesday, March 4
8:00 a.m.— Bill Jost

Thursday, March 5
8:00 a.m.— Ed Villar Sr.

Friday, March 6
8:00 a.m.— Ceferina & Justo Villar

Saturday, March 7
8:00 a.m.— Francas & Michael Badiola
4:00 p.m.— Our Parishioners

Sunday, March 8
8:00 a.m.— Charles & Virginia Stough
10:30 a.m.— Jan Piccalo

PLEASE PRAY

for our sick and recovering ...
Dave Asinger  Jan Haffer  Steve Moylan
Bob Beck  Paul Heidbrier  Dianne Neels
Suzi Beck  Thomas Lorenz  Grace Phillips
Liz Bentrup  Bob Marx  Virginia Zenthoefer
Ann Dosenbach  Evelyn Matt
Erin Goedeker  Lois McClellan

for our homebound ...
Jack Heffernan  Albertine Honious  Art Petersen

for family members serving in the military ...
Derek Hirtz  Ryan O’Neil  Dylan Schulte
Tristan Moylan  Brian Schoellhorn  Mitch Sollmann

DEVOTIONS

Tuesdays, after 8 a.m. Mass: Perpetual Help Devotions
First Friday of the Month, after 8 a.m. Mass: Holy Hour
and Benediction
Weekdays, 8:45 a.m.-4 p.m.: Church is available for prayer. Stop by the rectory for entry.