

A quarterly publication of the
St. Stephen Cathedral parish



The Currys -
Family, Church
and Community
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Photos from
Fall Festival!
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the Parishioner

Bridgette Whittinghill is thankful for her precious husband, Rob Whittinghill and thankful Fr. Sunnesh married them in The Cathedral Church on 12-13-14.



Jennifer Payne is thankful for her husband Charlie.

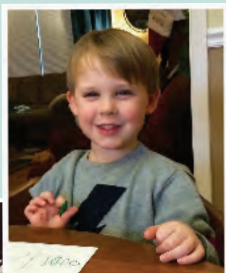


Matt and Haley
Fitzgerald are thankful
for one another.

The Janet Murphy family is thankful for their children & their spouses.



Matt and Jessica Weafer are thankful for Dominic, age 4 and Kennedy, due March 3.



WHAT ARE
ST. STEPHEN
PARISHIONERS
THANKFUL
FOR?

Amanda and Nathan Refitt are thankful for their many blessings from God, especially their 5 children, Landon, Luke, Kolbe, Olivia & their newest addition Gianna!



The Ross Leigh family is thankful for family.



Patty Blair is thankful for her grandchildren.

The John & Julie Moore family is thankful for family and friends!



Donna Murphy is thankful for Bishop Medley.



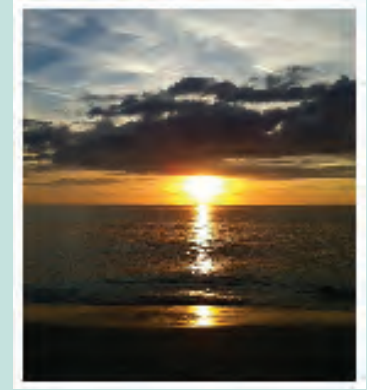
Patty and Dean Blair are thankful for family.

Chrissy Kurtz is thankful for her husband and children.



The Dick and Donna Murphy Family is thankful for family.

Patty and Dean Blair are thankful for having the opportunity to enjoy God's beautiful creation.



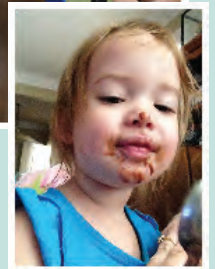
Gary Pierce is thankful for being able to spend Christmas with his 3 children and 7 grandchildren after hip surgery at Thanksgiving, along with speedy recovery afterwards.



Sarah and Zac Roby are thankful for family, new and old.



Shelby Pagan is thankful for horses and anything chocolate.

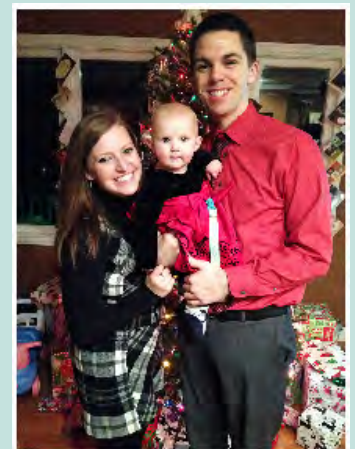


Gary is also thankful for

- For all family members having good health and no illnesses over the holidays.
- For my dear wife Ann, whose been my partner for 46 years as of Dec 2014.
- For the beautiful results of the Cathedral restoration.
- For living in the Owensboro community which cherishes family life, helping neighbors, and a true sense of what's important in life.
- For St Stephen's participation at St Benedict Shelter and the help and sense of community that it brings to many less fortunate.
- For the Parishioners at St Stephen who are involved in numerous ministries that are of importance in making our Church a loving environment for people to praise God.



Charlie and Jennifer Payne are thankful for their children.



Katelyn Stallings and Taylor West are thankful for their Goddaughter, Jossie.



David McCrady is thankful for the wife and children that God has given him...more than he ever realized. He and Christy have stuck by each other for nearly 18 years and she has given him his prides and joys, Will and Georgia. His fight with cancer has made him see and appreciate his faith, his friends, and his families.



Patty and Dean Blair are thankful for good friends, like Danny and Rose Ann Payne.

A Shepherd Saves His Sheep

By Aaron Carrico

So there we were, Fr. Suneesh on his 1974 classic Schwinn bicycle and me pulling my son, Jude, in a bike trailer. Fr. Suneesh had never made the country ride before that day, and was he ever in for a treat!

We made our way out 10 miles from my home when we began the climb up an exhausting hill. By this time, two-year old Jude was out cold in his sealed bike wagon. It was a good thing, too, as we made it half-way up the hill. Just as I was dropping into the bottom gear, I saw the dog! A pit bull with one good eye and a scar over the other ran towards me, barking like a... well like a crazy one-eyed dog.

I couldn't out run the dog. What could I do? I kept pumping, trying to ignore the beast. Meanwhile, as Fr. Suneesh looked back from up ahead with his bright red Indian jumpsuit flapping in the wind, I wondered, "Why doesn't this dog go after the foreign dude?" But no, the evil pit sunk his teeth into my calf with a vicious force.

For what felt like minutes, I just stopped and waited for the dog to let go. Thank God, he didn't attempt to rip the flesh from me! The demon dog let go and I jumped from the bicycle. What would I do? I needed a savior. I did. His name was Fr. Suneesh.

The man in red jumped from his equally red bicycle to rescue us from certain doggie doom. He picked up his bike by the mid-bar and began to taunt the beast. Speaking in a foreign tongue (cursing it in another language, I wonder?), he defended me and my sleeping son from the dog. Slowly, but surely, we made our path up the steep hill. "Back! Back!" my shepherd defended his 'sheep' from the foe and out of the dog's property line.

A farm truck was passing ahead once we reached the top of the hill. The driver astutely recognized the events before him and slowly made his way between us and the pursuer. Safety at last!

I looked down at my bleeding leg and thanked God. We were all okay, the priest, myself, and my still sleeping son; all thanks to Fr. Suneesh.



Ministers of Praise

L-R: Seated: Regina Lewis and Lucy Neal

Row 1: Rose Therese Cecil, Helen Miles, Margaret O'Bryan Mills, Nina Van Bussum and Juanita Clark. Row 2: Norma Axley, Debbie Sikes, Linda Sikes, Joyce Nalley, Skippy Hayden, Frank Hayden, Margaret Velotta, Margaret Frey.

Row 3: Fr. Jerry Riney, Henry Luckett, Bill Lanham, Tony Sikes, Ruth Zachery, Kay Meisenhelder, Mary Alice Higdon, Mary Alice Wethington, Margie Hill, Fr. Suneesh Mathew, George Frey.

Not Pictured: Kay Adams, Betty Aull, Cecil Barnett, Paul and Rose Bender, Margaret Bonner, LaWanna Brand, Ron Calvert, Archie Clark, Shirley Conkright, Virginia Curry, Charles Danhauer, Robert Danhauer, Albert Dant, Jean Fulkerson, Betty and Dan Harding, Sharlene Hatfield, Mary Michael Hayden, Betha Horrell, Donald and Mary Houle, Mary Howell, Mary Hudson, Barbara and Jerry Huff, Jackie Jaskowski, Colene Jennings, Sallie Johnson, Lou Jones, Edna Kavolus, Betty Kelley, Sue Knight, Merici Millay, Mary Elise O'Bryan, Bill (S.B.) Payne, Edward Pickett, Tom Riney, Maury Schaefer, Charles Sims, Margaret Smith, Mary Taylor, Louise Thompson, Teresa Townsley, Betty and Margarey Whittinghill, Mel Windle, Vincent Wink

The Ministry of Praise Committee was initiated by Fr. Jerry Riney as a prayer support group for the parish. This ministry is especially suited to the sick and homebound, those who can no longer be as actively involved as they would like or as they used to be. An olive wood cross and a prayer book are given those who are commissioned.

George and Margaret Frey are the "captains" and may be reached at 270-683-7627 if you are interested in joining.

Welcome New Members!



We extend a warm welcome and congratulations to those who, through the process of Christian Initiation, were brought into full communion with the Catholic Church on November 1, 2014! Pictured above from left to right: Fr. Suneesh, Fr. John Vaughan, Paula Shanks, Melissa Shoulta, Bridgette Whittinghill, David McCrady, Donna Murphy, Fr. Jerry Riney



Melissa Shoulta (*right*) with her husband & sponsor, Charles



David McCrady (*left*) with his sponsor, Rodney Ellis



Bridgette Whittinghill (*right*) with her sponsor, Lee Ward



Paula Shanks (*left*) with her sponsor, Wilma Stallings



The Currys - Family, Church, and Community

By Marianna Robinson

About four years ago, Dirck and Chona Curry moved to Owensboro and registered at St. Stephen Cathedral. Along with their grown daughter Noelle, Dirck's parents Kenneth and Virginia Curry joined them in Owensboro. Noelle, their daughter, worked with the church's Youth Group prior to making a career change last fall. The Currys also have two sons, Justin and Jason.

When they came to Owensboro, Dirck was already an ordained Catholic deacon, and since his arrival, Dirck has become involved with an assortment of Cathedral ministries including serving on the RCIA team and serving on the altar in different capacities in the sanctuary. He can read the Gospel, deliver homilies, preside at funerals, and administer the Sacraments of Baptism and Marriage. His wonderful wife Chona is equally involved with various church-related activities; with a smile on her face, she's always ready to say "yes" when asked to help in any way she can. She has the reputation of being a very fine cook. One has only to look at one of her pizzas or to sample one of her soups or homemade breads to know Chona is gifted in culinary art. She and Dirck enjoy being in the kitchen together; making lasagna and various soups are but two of their specialties.

In addition to cooking together, after 32 years of marriage, the Currys enjoy gardening, prayer-walks, attending concerts, dancing, and traveling to countries on mission assignments. Attending daily Mass is a priority of the Currys.

Along with being an active deacon at St. Stephen, Dirck practices osteopathic medicine at Owensboro's McCauley Care Center; many of his patients are uninsured or underinsured. When asked what he likes about his ministry at St. Stephen, he commented that parishioners are friendly and supportive. Last fall, when accepting the challenge of coordinating the Parish Fall Festival, he appreciated the fact that so many parishioners stepped up to the plate and volunteered to help with the many jobs that needed to be done.

When asked to comment, Fr. Jerry Riney remarked without hesitation, "Deacon Dirck and Chona are tremendous assets to St. Stephen Cathedral. They truly live out what the diaconate is all about---serving selflessly in the name of the Lord. No one could put a price tag on Deacon Dirck's service to the poor through the McCauley Clinic and beyond. Much of what the Currys do is "behind the scenes, done joyfully and without a lot of fanfare."

Cathedral Fall



Festival 2014





St Stephen's Cathedral Youth: *Shining Lights in the Community*

By Anna Rakotoniaina

Many of St Stephen parishioners had the opportunity to see some of our parish youth perform at OCHS as part of the Emerald Players production of George Orwell's 1984. From leads to background performers to directors, Allie Kuntz, Iona Palmer, Jack Padgett, and Adney Rakotoniaina, as well as Katie Pagan, the Emerald production sponsor, created a representation of life with "Big Brother."

Why did they audition for this socially-tough, extremely disturbing, yet thought provoking play? In sum, because they all love acting and the arts; but also because they love those involved in the play. Did they make a connection between their spiritual and social involvement? Yes, to all, they consider their gift of acting from God. Iona specifies that God and St Stephen have given her a "community and the opportunity to be involved" in that play. Others proclaim that being a member of St Stephen's parish has allowed them to grow closer together as Emerald Players.

They certainly sent a powerful message about societal issues. In small and everyday ways, St. Stephen's young members are a witness of their sense of community and spirituality to larger groups. In this case, they were shining lights from St. Stephen Cathedral.



Nursing Home Christmas Caroling



Hermitage Christmas Caroling



St. Nicholas Celebration



It is hard to believe that it is time to think about registration for next year but it is just around the corner. Cathedral Preschool has been in the business of getting children ready for kindergarten since 1986. If you are wondering what goes on in preschool, we invite you to drop by for a visit.

At Cathedral Preschool we provide your 3, 4 and 5 year old children with:

- A research based academic curriculum that will prepare them for kindergarten
- Minds-in-motion program for supporting your child's physical and academic development
- A Christ centered atmosphere in an age appropriate loving and caring environment
- Socialization and learning to be with peers
- An opportunity to develop listening skills, independence & learning to follow routines
- AND....they will have a great time!!

Registration begins February 9th. We have morning and afternoon classes. For more information about classes and costs, visit our web site at cathedralpreschool.com, or give us a call. (270) 926-1652





Volunteers helping with the backpack outreach



Habitat for Humanity House Dedication



St. Stephen Cathedral *Trunk or Treat*



Epiphany Potluck



Parish Council

Front row: Mark Heinz, Lottie Miller, Teresa Brown; 2nd row: Haley Fitzgerald, Donna Murphy (staff), Christy Ellis, Margie Ebelhar (recording secretary), Fr. Suneesh Mathew (staff); 3rd row: Matt Fitzgerald, Bo Ivey, Dcn. Dirck Curry (staff), John McNulty, Ron Bornander

Christmas - the Work Begins

By Fr. Jerry Riney

Puccini, the famed composer, contracted cancer at an early age. He chose to spend his last days composing his final opera, *Turandot*. When friends urged him to rest he retorted, "I'm going to do as much as I can on my great masterpiece. Then it's up to you, my friends, to finish it if I don't." His friends forever mourned his death, but built upon his melody and completed what Puccini started.

When *Turandot* was played for the first time in 1926, the conductor, the legendary Toscanini, paused and with a smile announced, "This is where the master ends." After a brief but profound silence he added, "And this is where his friends begin," continuing the opera to its end.

The season of Christmas commenced with decorations, carols, gift giving, and packed churches. The day after Christmas, the very next day, we celebrated the feast of St. Stephen, our patron, who died for his faith. The message is clear. There is no nostalgia in being put to death for what one believes. If Jesus is truly born into our lives, we will pay a price.

Almost immediately we celebrated the Feast of the Holy Family. Like Mary and Joseph we are called to be holy, to accept God's grace individually and communally. And on the second Sunday after Christmas we hear of the Magi who followed the star of faith to the presence of the Christ Child and offered Him gifts of gold (kingship), frankincense (divinity) and myrrh (humanity). These wise "seekers," educated in medicine, natural science, and cosmology, represent "difference"—in culture, traditions, and in ways of living. Truly God wanted the whole world to know Jesus.

Finally, the Christmas season is crowned with the feast of the Baptism of Jesus. We are called into His life through

the Sacrament of Baptism, becoming part of a community of faith where we live our lives as witnesses to His kingdom, His values, His way. We are called to continue the mission which Jesus began, to become, not a band, not a fan club, nor mere spectators, but to become the true followers which He sought.

Christmas has called us to revel in the mystery of the Incarnation, God literally "pitching His tent among us" (John 1), to accept Jesus as Messiah, Savior, and Lord, and to begin the hard work of conversion. To do less would be to relegate Christmas to a pagan winter festival. Like the friends who committed themselves to finishing Puccini's masterpiece, so are we, the friends and disciples of Jesus Christ, called to take up the work of His mission.

**When the song of the Angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,**

The work of Christmas begins:

**To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among the people,
To make music in the heart.**

(Howard Thurman)



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Are you going through a difficult time?

Stephen Ministers are members of St Stephen Cathedral Parish who listen, care, encourage and provide emotional and spiritual support to people who are facing a crisis or going through tough times. The care you'll receive is confidential, free and very helpful.

To learn how you – or a friend, neighbor, coworker, or relative – can receive care, talk to your pastor or one of our Stephen Leaders.

Stephen Ministry Office | 270-852-8421

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The Stephen Ministry Caregivers from St Stephen Cathedral Parish are from left, back row, Ritz Heinz, Mark Heinz, Carrie Wieder, Bill Kelly, Karen Howard; front row, Lawanna Brand, Ruth Zachary, Fr. Suneesh Mathew, HGN, and Joan Perry