

A quarterly publication of the
St. Stephen Cathedral parish



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A Beckoning to Come Home

By Alex Reid



The Catholic church is a shining beacon to the world that is drawing more people home every day to the truth and knowledge of Jesus Christ and His sacraments. That's the best way this former Baptist boy can think to describe the experience I have had in my conversion to the Catholic Church.

It began as a search... something was missing in my church, and more so within me, but I could never put my finger on it. Having been raised in a worship environment that vehemently stood against everything that the Catholic church teaches, I had never experienced a Mass, nor the sacraments, nor the reverence with which the Catholic church worships Christ. I also had no idea where to start looking for that missing link.

About a year and a half ago, my fiancée and I were looking for a church to have

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First Communion

Congratulations to all of our First Communicants:
Alexander Green, Alexander Goodman, Ariel
Hurm, Noah Knoop, Adrienne Owens, Juliette
Palmer, and Kolbe Reffitt

A Beckoning to Come Home (Continued from page 1)

our wedding, and somehow St. Stephen Cathedral came up in our conversation. I think it was because of all the summer nights I had walked my dog past the church and marveled at how beautiful it was on the outside. We “snuck in” one late Sunday afternoon after Mass was over and everyone was gone, save a few sisters praying. The very atmosphere of the church itself struck me as completely different from anything I had known before. There was a peace here, a beckoning I couldn’t explain... And it stuck with me, always in the back of my mind, and ALWAYS unexplainable. Why was this church so different from any church I had ever been in, or even worked in as a youth pastor? Remember, I had never before been in a Catholic church, let alone experienced the sacraments. “What was it?” became the question that nagged at my mind for a very long time.

Youtube and Google became my best friend as I began to read, watch and study every video I could find to explain what I had experienced; and everything I read and studied pointed not only to the sacraments and the Holy Eucharist, but to Christ himself... to the actual experience of knowing the Body and the Blood of Christ better and more personally... I knew what I had to do. RCIA became the highlight of my week, and I came as often as my hectic work schedule would allow. This church community opened its arms to me and invited me to be a part of it in a way that no other church ever had. Easter Vigil was the best Easter experience of my life. I’m finally a Catholic. I’m finally home.



Photos by Corey Bruns

St. Stephen Chapter of the St. Vincent de Paul Society

By Harry Bellew



Standing, Bill Goetz, Bob Berry, Harry Bellew, Peggy Bellew, Larry Lyon, Denise Payne and seated Florence Wieder who recently retired from this ministry.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a worldwide Christian community founded in Paris in 1833 by a group of young Catholic lay people; Frederic Ozanam was their leader. The Society has been Catholic from its origins. It remains an international, Catholic, voluntary organization of lay people serving men and women in need.

The St. Stephen Cathedral Chapter of St. Vincent de Paul maintains office hours four mornings per week, dispensing food, utility and rent assistance, bus tokens, and gasoline vouchers to walk-in clients. We will attempt to help anyone who is needy. We rely entirely on donations from parishioners to help our clients, which number about 100-125 per month. We also make 10-15 home visits per month. Our parishioners have always been very generous in donations of food, toilet articles, and money.

Our volunteers are called Vincentians. Our current roster includes: Linda Beam, Harry and Peggy Bellew, Bob Berry, D. J. Clark, Bill Goetz, Bill Lanham, Larry Lyon, Bob Mahoney, Pat McNulty, Mary Ann Medley, Denise Payne, Gene Schadler, Steve Wathen, Bill McCarty, and Florence Wieder. We can always use additional volunteers, so if you have a reverence for the poor and can spare three to six hours per month, please contact us. We meet regularly on the first Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Media Center in the Parish Office.

St. Stephen Cathedral Parish would like to welcome the following new parishioners since February 2017

John and Sharon Bell
Sara Fulks and Josh Foster and family
Michael and Christie Hagan and family
Greg Hartz
Lea Ann Johnson
Kevin and Ann Kauffeld
Charles Lentz
Tom and Kristy Lovett and family
Sherry Phelps
Larry Roberts
Robbie and Donita Swinford



Genevieve Drury and Samuel Osborne
are Baptized on Divine Mercy Sunday,
April 23, 2017

Holy Thursday



Photos by Rob Abney

Good Friday



Photos by Rob Abney

Friday



Rob Abney

Easter Vigil



Photos by Rob Abney

May Crowning

May 7, 2017



Congratulations to Our High School Graduates!

Maggie Booth
Adam Bouchard
Lindsey Carrico
Hope Johnson
Allie Kuntz
Madlyn Murphy
Mary Anne Murphy

Iona Palmer
Molly Payne
Brooklynn Reynolds
Erin Walker
David Weafer
Taran Wells

Happy Half Birthday, Saint Stephen!

By Fr. Jerry Riney



The Feast of Saint Stephen, our parish patron, is purposely celebrated the day after Christmas, December 26, to remind us that our commitment to this Incarnate Son of God, Jesus, will demand sacrifice.

Our parish should have a huge party to celebrate the feast of Saint Stephen! But it would be overshadowed by the ongoing Christmas celebrations! Realistically, how can anyone compete with Jesus? I feel a tad sorry for those who have birthdays around Christmastide.

Have you ever been to a half birthday party? Once I was invited to celebrate a half birthday party on June 26 - the actual birthday was December 26! There was a half cake! People brought as gifts: a half bottle of wine, one sock, a half dozen roses, one glove, and so on!

Let's throw a "half-birthday party" on Monday, June 26 in honor of Saint Stephen, the first martyr and deacon and our patron saint! His life as a deacon is rich and offers much food for thought and action. We will celebrate with a Parish Ice Cream Social. Join in the fun and fellowship beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Center. There will be lots of ice cream with toppings galore. *All are welcome!*

Do you know how the order of Deacon came about? In the early Church, the apostles were so busy with the distribution of food to widows and orphans that they were neglecting prayer and preaching of the Word of God. Not good! The early Church was wise enough to understand that. So the

Church convened and decided under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to select seven reputable men filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom to serve the needs of those on the fringe of the community. Stephen was the first of seven to be called forth to serve the needs of orphans and widows; this freed up the apostles to spend more time praying and preaching the Word of God.

After being "prayed over and hands laid upon him," it was noted that Stephen had the "face of an angel" and led others to Jesus through signs and wonders (Acts 6:1-7). Then Stephen encountered the religious leaders whose vision was not only blurry but also blinded by their own ego and complacency/indifference.

Stephen continued to preach boldly and relentlessly about the risen Christ, and more were added to the "community by his signs and wonders." It was decided that Stephen must be eliminated. As Stephen is being stoned to death, Saul of Tarsus looked on (how could this not have influenced his radical conversion later). Like Jesus, Stephen prayed for the forgiveness of his murderers. The blood of this first martyr watered the seeds of faith, and the Church grew beyond expectation!

Does our patron saint inspire us to be better faith witnesses? Does he inspire us never to get discouraged in the midst of obstacles? Does he inspire us to serve more generously and to forgive our persecutors more readily? Saint Stephen, deacon and martyr, pray for us!

Care for Our Common Home

By Janice C. Scherm

In the opening words of his powerful encyclical *Laudato Si', On Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis recalls the prayer of his patron, St. Francis of Assisi, from "The Canticle of the Creatures," "Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs." Pope Francis says further that St. Francis "shows us how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace."

All of these things give an ever deeper meaning to the care which we show for our beloved church and its grounds, and how, in answering this call, we are in turn nurtured. Volunteers have come together recently to beautify the grounds surrounding the church, the offices, the rectory, and adjacent land—weeding, mulching, planting flowers, and ongoing care. Gary and Ellen Aud mulched and planted the area outside the Parish Offices, and Linda Coomes and Debbie Johnson beautified the Mary Grotto for The Blessed Virgin's special month of May. Bill and Cecelia McCarty repaired and painting the St. Francis of Assisi statue with the bowl and created the lovely circle of petunias on the concrete landing attached to the church off the parking lot.

The raised bed in front of the bricked Cathedral sign is being cared for by Ken and Ann Payne, and the Knights of Columbus are responsible for the beautification of the southwest corner of 7th and Cedar. Other dedicated volunteers have included Teresa and Terry Brown and Joe and Felicity Polio.

More volunteers are needed and are most welcome, and we are especially encouraged to "Adopt a Spot" for ongoing care and upkeep. Anyone interested may call the Parish Office (270-683-6525) or Building/Grounds Supervisor Jeff Payne (270-925-4695).

"Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as



Bishop McRaith's Wake



Youth News

The Youth Group made Marian container gardens on May 7th.



**Jacob Breeden receives the
Parvuli Dei (Children of God)
Scouting Award.**

**Youth group members performing
in Seussical at Empress Theaters.**





A Christian Tradition of Caring and Learning

By Pam Weafer

Every year for as long as I can remember Cathedral Preschool families have donated Easter candy, eggs, jelly beans, cakes, and other Easter treats for the Sisters at Mount St. Joseph. The preschool students made Easter crosses or painted eggs to attach to each treat bag. Preschool parents helped assemble the treat bags; and on Holy Saturday, we made the trip out to the Mount to personally deliver the Easter goodies to the Sisters. Several preschool families traveled with us or met us there. The Sisters are always so thrilled to see the preschoolers and the children loved passing out Easter treats and wishing Happy Easter to everyone. It is a tradition I hope continues for a very long time.

We still have openings for students for next year in our three and four-year-old classes. Call the school (270) 926-1652, stop by, or email pam.weafer@pastoral.org for more information. Check out our website for prices and class choices at www.cathedralpreschool.com.



Jack Moore, Shelby Pagan, Bruce McCrary, Bailey Dant, Lucy McCrary, Eva Ray, Simon Ray, and Scarlett Ray help deliver Easter treats to the Sisters at Mount St. Joseph.



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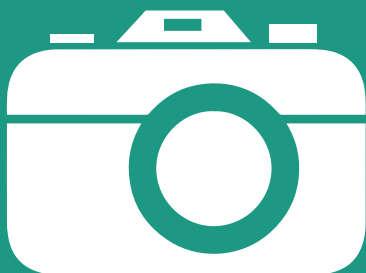
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**We love pictures of
our parishioners!**

If you have any pictures to share of parishioners serving in ministry, gathering for church social events or meetings, or even receiving community recognition, please email them to ststephencathedralnewsletter@gmail.com. Include names of people in the pictures and a brief description of the photo!

***Like St. Stephen
Cathedral on
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