

A quarterly publication of the
Saint Stephen Cathedral parish



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and more!



Keeping Safe & Secure Project *Our New Porch is Open*

By Father Jerry Riney

We are pleased and proud that our new porch is open! What a pleasure to see Bishop Medley open wide the front doors at the conclusion of the Easter Vigil Mass and step out onto the porch to offer greetings to worshippers. I have had several parishioners tell me how proud they are of the completed renovation.

In addition to the porch structure, new custom railings have been installed. If you look carefully you will notice that the style of the railings is similar to the design of the railings on the interior of the Cathedral. New lighting has been installed on the porch landings as well as in-ground, on both sides of the porch. New sidewalks have been poured, and the sidewalk ramp leading from Locust Street to the elevator entrance has been widened and a new railing has been installed. The panels on the front doors were professionally refurbished, and the doors have been given a fresh coat of paint both

(Continued on next page)

Our New Porch is Open *(Continued from page 1)*

inside and out. A landscaping area has been added to the front of the porch on the street level, and the recent addition of plants softens one's approach to the church with a welcoming "green space." A coat of arms for the Diocese of Owensboro has been crafted and will soon grace the limestone on the center of the porch on the street level.

In addition to the porch renovation, the existing restrooms in the downstairs hallway have been updated and feature new fixtures and aesthetic improvements. Upgrades to our campus security are underway and will be implemented soon, including security enhancements for the church, office building, and rectory.

Without the support and generosity of our parishioners and benefactors, these improvements would not be possible. We are deeply grateful for all those who have contributed and who continue to honor their financial pledge, and we are also grateful for the financial support of Bishop Medley and the Diocese of Owensboro. Thank you, also, for your patience throughout the duration of this much needed project.

Like the faithful who have gone before us, we are proud to serve as grateful, responsible caretakers of Saint Stephen Cathedral, to provide a beautiful place for our parish family and the people of the Diocese of Owensboro to gather and worship for generation after generation.



Meet Me at Fourth and Walnut

By Father Jerry Riney

God speaks to us in the events of our lives. Too often the ordinary does not seem salvific. Yet in all that seems so ordinary, in all that surrounds us every day, God does speak.

On an ordinary day when he was running errands for the monastery, Thomas Merton experienced God's Spirit in the ordinary people walking the streets, many of whom were homeless, all of whom were strangers to him. Merton's famous revelation is described this way in *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*:

"In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, of spurious self-isolation in a special world, the world of renunciation and supposed holiness... This sense of liberation from an illusory difference was such a relief and such a joy to me that I almost laughed out loud... I have the immense joy of being man, a member of a race in which God Himself became incarnate. As if the sorrows and stupidities of the human condition could overwhelm me, now I realize what we all are. And if only everybody could realize this! But it cannot be explained.

There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun."

"Then it was as if I suddenly saw the secret beauty of their hearts, the depths of their hearts, where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in God's eyes. If only they could all see themselves as they really are. If only we could see each other that way all the time."

When you visit that spot today, it still seems like an ordinary sort of place, until you know the story of what happened there. Everyone has something of the divine within, if only the eyes of our hearts could see.

Is this not what happened to Saul on an ordinary day when he had his famous conversion experience? "Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" said the Lord. "What you are doing to these least ones, you were doing to me?" This experience changed his life forever and formed St. Paul's theology of the "living body of Christ," that we are joined together as one, have responsibility for one another, and share in the joys and struggles of one another.

Let's be alert to how the Spirit of God speaks to us in the ordinary.

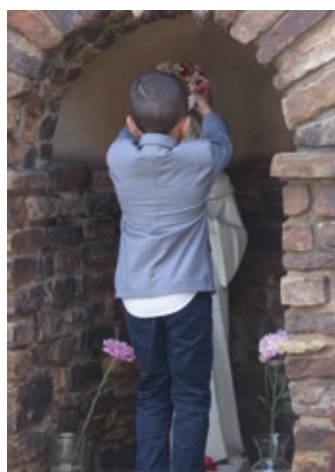
All It Takes is a Smile and a Flower

By Brenda Pierce

A small breeze stirred beneath the tree my family and I had gathered under to honor Mary. Under that tree God's blessing poured out in a matter of minutes. Kelley Hedges, a parishioner, moved through the crowd handing out flowers to the children which she has done many times in the past. She handed my younger granddaughter, Lauren, a large clustered Easter Lily. Lauren handed the lily to my older granddaughter, Emily. In the crowd my granddaughters and I noticed a smiling Ben Payne, Lauren's Faith Formation classmate, looking in our direction. His smile was contagious. Emily looked over at me and shrugged her shoulders as if she wanted to ask a question. When she had the answer, she handed me the lily. I in turn stepped over and handed Ben the lily. He eagerly accepted. A parishioner, whose name I don't know, walked up from behind and handed an orange blossom to a little girl standing near Ben. I believed her to be his little sister. With flowers in hand, they rushed to the grotto to honor Mary.

God bestows blessings on us all! Some blessings He pours out in a matter of minutes.

All it took was a smile and a flower.



*Spencer Howard had the honor of placing the crown on Mary.
Mary Crowning photos by Donna Duffy*

Celebrations!



Ron & Jackie Jones celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on May 2!



Donna Murphy was honored when she was awarded the Bishop John Jeremiah McRaith Catechetical Leader Award in Madisonville at the annual catechetical banquet on May 17, 2019! Donna is pictured with her husband, Deacon Richard Murphy, and flanked by Bishop Medley and Fr. Jerry Riney.

Holy Week



Bishop Medley confers the Sacrament of Confirmation on Lauren Rummage.



Bishop Medley carries the Blessed Sacrament in the procession during Holy Thursday Mass, flanked by an honor guard comprised of our parish Eucharistic Ministers.



Bishop Medley washes the foot of Lauren Rummage on Holy Thursday.



Deacon Dirck Curry and Altar Server Doug Payne attend to the cross during the Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday.



Bishop Medley blesses the Easter Fire at the beginning of the Easter Vigil Mass; also pictured are Altar Server Tom Kurtz, Deacon Richard Murphy and Seminarian Corey Bruns.



Easter Vigil Altar Servers take a moment for a photo with Seminarian Corey Bruns, who served as our MC for Holy Week. Front Row: Jack Calhoun, Michael Calhoun, Tom Kurtz, Luke Reffitt, Lindsey Warren, Joseph Kurtz, Kolbe Reffitt. Back Row: Corey Bruns, Jacob Warren, Max Kurtz, Landon Reffitt, Doug Payne. We appreciate ALL of our SSC Altar Servers!



Congratulations to (left to right) Isaac Lambert, Cece Hemingway, Jakob Wellman, Sarah Mills, Layne Rummage, and Lauren Rummage, who received sacraments at the Easter Vigil!

EMBRACING THE WORLD IN CHARITY

By Harry Bellew

In 1581, St. Vincent de Paul was born in France. He dedicated himself to a vocation of serving the poor. With St. Louise de Marillac (born in France in 1591), they founded the Daughters of Charity and began the “Vincentian Family.” Several hundred years had passed since their death when the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was founded in Paris by Frederic Ozanam, who was only 19, and Sister Rosalie Rendu, who was a Daughter of Charity. The Society has since grown into a world-wide organization.

“Because you see Christ in his poor, I know you will approach each one you visit with humility as His servant. Always remember, that if we had been through the hardships they have had to meet—if our childhood had been one of constant want—perhaps, we too, would have given away to envy and hatred, as I must admit have many of the poor in this quarter. But be kind and love, for love is your first gift to the poor. They will appreciate your kindness and your love more than all else you bring them.” - Sister Rosalie Rendu

The Society came to the United States in 1845 at the “Old Catholic Cathedral” in St. Louis, MO. Chapters popped up and the Society spread rapidly in the larger cities, eventually reaching to smaller cities. The growth was largely influenced by immigrants who were already familiar with the concept from European countries.

Members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul are Catholic lay people inspired by Gospel values. This work leads women and men to join together to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are needy and suffering in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul. As a reflection of the whole family of God, members, who are known as Vincentians, are drawn from every ethnic and cultural background, age group, and economic level. Vincentians are united in an international society of charity by their spirit of poverty, humility and sharing, which is nourished by prayer and reflection, mutually supportive gatherings and adherence to a basic Rule. The Society collaborates with other people of good will in relieving need and addressing its causes, making no distinction in those served because, in them, Vincentians see the face of Christ.*

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is composed of women and men who seek their personal holiness through works of charity. In this essential way, the Society differs from charitable associations or agencies whose principal objective is not the spiritual advancement of their members but the doing of good for someone else.*

The Saint Stephen Cathedral Conference was started in 1936 by a group of still familiar Daviess County Catholic names: Hayden



(3), Hill (2), Wimsatt, Boarman, Head, Mudd, Fogle, Smith, Wood and others. The current Vincentian volunteers staff the Cathedral Parish Office four mornings a week and over the course of a year will serve approximately 500 individuals providing food, rent assistance, utility payment assistance, gasoline vouchers, and various other forms of help. We are able to provide assistance because of the extreme generosity of our parishioners. The SVdP Store is still open and active, helping with clothing, shoes, housewares, furniture and small appliances, and recently began selling new mattresses and boxsprings.

The Vincentian virtues include simplicity, humility, gentleness, selflessness and zeal. Consider helping the Society by volunteering. This is a very special ministry.

* <https://www.svdpusa.org/About-Us/Mission-and-Values>

Welcome New Parishioners!

Aaron and Hayden Morris (son Jack)

Alicia Stewart

Chris Coffey (college students Christopher and Adriana)

Daniel and Emily Evans (children Lillian and Renick)

David and Paula Aud

Hannah Tipton

Helen Hardy (daughter Elizabeth)

Jacob Evans

John and Katie Lynn (daughter Anna)

Julie Ferguson (sons Lincoln and Simon)

Kara Baughman and Troy Schwartz (children Abby and

Molly Baughman)

Kasey Roby (daughters Brynlee, Presley and Zoey)

Kevin and Kristin Dorth (daughters Lillian and Evelyn)

Lee and Hannah Blanton (daughter Victoriah)

Marissa Matthews (son Creek)

Mark and Jessica Lusk (children Harper and Hudson)

Mary Goatee

Michael and Jennifer Harris (daughter Madeline)

Patrick Morton

Rick and Freda Rhodes

Ryan and Olivia Payne

Taylor Spencer

Teena Barber

Travis and Nicole Robbins (children Amelia and Austin)

Winthrop (Windy) and Diana Winthrop

David Clouse (son Marcus)

Chris and Krista Camp (children Caroline, Elliott,

Madeline, and Natalie)

Jennifer Alvey (sons Reece and Jackson)

Fish Fry



Photos by Donna Duffy

Go and Do the Same

By Laurie Hicks and
Beni Howell

As we end our celebration of Easter, we are reminded that shortly before Judas's betrayal, Jesus told his disciples that the poor would always be in this world but that He would not (Matthew 26:11).

Did you know that members of our parish serve the poor almost on a daily basis? Even on the weekends? Saint Stephen Cathedral has an on-site emergency food pantry for the homeless and those on very limited income. Our parishioners are so generous as the coffers have never left the pantry empty. Dozens of people are helped weekly with utility and rent assistance. We have a team of volunteer "cooks" that serve a meal at the Daniel Pitino Shelter every 3rd Sunday of the month. They cook and serve a meal and sometimes bring the food with them if the pantry is empty at the Shelter. Our Stephen Ministry provides a companion to those suffering from the loss of a loved one or other trials in their lives. We have three teams that serve meals for the families of those who are buried from Saint Stephen.

Saint Stephen Cathedral is also blessed with a team of volunteers that serve as overnight companions to the men who are housed at Saint Benedict's Men's Shelter. Laurie Hicks heads this team. She says, "St. Ben's is the only emergency shelter for men in Owensboro. It opened part time (Nov-March) in 2005, then became a year-round shelter in 2010. It is open from 8:00pm to 8:00am every day and relies heavily on volunteers to provide the dinner meal and companions for the night in order to provide this year-round service."

Our parish was one of the first to volunteer as a team, providing the meal (for 60 men) and the companions, who work in 4 hour shifts, on the 3rd Friday of every month, since 2013-2014. The Corporal Works of Mercy include feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, and sheltering the homeless. "I am blessed to be able to assist men in our community and provide this humble service. It is obvious God works through these men and through our dedicated volunteers. I am also blessed with fellow parishioners who give their time to serve these men and our God," Laurie stated. Those who serve as companions include



Mike Weafer, Bob Stone, Vernon Goode, Russell Vaughn, Deacon Richard Murphy, Deacon Dirck Curry, Martha House, Samantha and Duncan Kaai, Pat Padgett, Nathan Reffitt, Larry Lyon, Mark Heinz and Judy and Steve Carrico. Our meal team leaders are Mary Beth and Phil Hurley, Lupe Ellis, and the Currys. Many parishioners help prepare the food outside and bring it into the shelter, including Kathleen and Todd Johnson, Amanda and Nathan Reffitt, Moggie Riney and more.

The "Impact Report" put out by the Shelter in January shows St. Benedict's sheltered 507 men in the fiscal 2017-2018 year and during the "white flag" times (when temperatures are excessively high or low) they served an additional 157 men, women, and children. All are welcomed when the white flag is out. St. Benedict's has transitional housing and programs for those men who want to improve their lives. Twenty men have benefitted from these programs and an additional 75 men have been placed in substance abuse programs. Seventeen men were placed into Mental Healthcare Facilities. This shelter is serving men from Daviess, Warren, and Henderson Counties and also men from elsewhere in Kentucky, "Welcoming All as Christ."

The story of the Good Samaritan is a familiar one. This question was put to Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" Only in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 10:25-37) we hear of a traveler who is stripped of clothing, beaten, and left half dead alongside the road. First a priest and then a Levite comes by, but both avoid the man. Finally, a Samaritan happens upon the traveler. Samaritans and Jews despised each other, but the Samaritan helps the injured man. Jesus' conclusion to this story is to ask who did the right and proper thing—Jesus asked, "Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" It is the man who shows mercy to the injured man—that is, the Samaritan. Then Jesus says, "go and do the same." What will you do?

Parish Long-Range Planning: *Where are We Going?*

By Father Jerry Riney

An Overview

In 2018, Saint Stephen Cathedral Parish was asked, along with Holy Spirit Parish in Bowling Green and Saint Thomas More Parish in Paducah, to participate in a diocesan pilot program sponsored by Liturgical Publications, Inc. (LPi). Our parish selected long-range planning as our focus; Mr. Tracy Earl Welliver, Director of Parish Community & Engagement for LPi, is providing coaching and guidance through this process. There is no cost to our parish for the services provided by LPi. The result will be a multi-year plan to help us continue to devote attention to areas of strength in our parish as well as to focus attention on areas needing improvement.

Why do Parishes Need a Long-Range Plan?

Did you know that 75% of parishes operate with no long-range plan? A plan is essential in moving from ‘maintenance to mission,’ since it is easy to fall into a pattern of doing the same things from year to year. If we are to grow and to become more effective in leading God’s people, we need to chart a course, to create a plan inspired by the Holy Spirit and in consideration of the Mission Statement of our church: The Catholic Community of Saint Stephen Cathedral serves as the Mother Church for the Diocese of Owensboro to welcome, evangelize, and worship in the name of Jesus Christ.

First Steps

On Saturday, April 6, a group of parishioners met in the Community Center to begin the process of long-range planning. Tracy Welliver served as our facilitator. The first item on the agenda was to review parish demographics as well those of the Owensboro community. Next, we reviewed the results our parish survey, the purpose of which was to assess the spiritual health of our faith community. The survey was open for approximately 6 weeks and was promoted through the bulletin, website, Facebook, and pulpit announcements. Paper copies were available for those without computer access. A total of 251 people accessed the survey; since the goal set for our parish was 150, this was a positive response.

The full results of the survey will be published at a future date. The great news is that most of the results were very positive, and yet the results also revealed some areas that warrant discussion and improvement. Here are a few results:

- While 45.1% of responses indicated parish membership of more than 20 years, a combined total of 54.9% indicated membership of “less than 2 years” “5-10 years” and “10-20 years”. This shows that not only are we blessed with many long-time members, but also that our parish is growing.
- A combined 90.4% answered “All the Time” or “Most of the Time” to the question “How often do I pray outside of Mass”? What an encouraging sign that prayer is a priority in the lives of our parishioners! Similarly, a combined 96% responded “All the Time” or “Most of the Time” to the question “Does my faith seem to affect all aspects of my life?”
- Conversely, it should be noted that while a combined 67% of responses were “All the Time” or “Most of the Time” for the question “How often do I share my talents with the parish?” a total of 31.6% answered “seldom”, “never”, or “not sure.” These results reflect a need for conversation about ways to encourage everyone to share their talents with our parish and greater community.
- Still another question, “Do I feel what I give makes any real difference in my parish?” had a combined response of 79% who indicated “All the Time” or “Most of the Time”, but a total of 21% answered “Seldom”, “Never”, or “Not Sure”. These results indicate a need for parish leadership to find ways of communicating better to donors that ALL giving makes a difference.

The next step was Goal Theme Identification, in which attendees were invited to express their opinions in two areas of our parish: Strengths in which to continue supporting and investing, and Concerns to consider. This exercise helped identify areas for specific goal-setting:

Formation/Evangelization	Ownership/Belonging
Vocations	Liturgy/Music
Safer Campus	Investing in Young Families
Communication of Vision	Pastor’s Group*
Outreach	Welcoming/Community
Encouragement of Gifts	

Tracy then explained Parish Performance Management, a method for creation of goals for each identified theme and a path for having a “plan for the plan.” Each area of focus will have a small group of parishioners who will work to set goals and stay on task through to goal(s) completion. Before the



meeting concluded, Tracy asked those in attendance to consider prayerfully whether they could commit to working in one or more of the groups.

**Pastor's Group will focus on other areas deemed important by the pastor.* It is possible that a few of the identified themes will overlap or be combined in the interest of efficiency. Father Jerry and members of the Pastor's Group may invite individuals to work on goals for those themes.

What's Next?

While the meeting was a positive first step, the work of planning is just beginning! The success of a long-range plan will be achieved through prayer, continued support and participation from parish leaders and the engagement of the parish at large, ongoing communication regarding the process, and a firm commitment to achieving the goals set forth.

Theme groups will meet to identify and create a draft set of goals which will be submitted to the Pastor for review and approval. Once the goals are approved, theme groups will be reaching out to more parishioners to participate in the process of working together to achieve goals. It is important to remember that the number of goals for each theme is not as important as the strength and viability of the goals.

Updates to the planning process will be provided to the parish along the way. Our parish family is blessed to have so many members who love our church and have a genuine interest in the continued growth and success of Saint Stephen Cathedral now and into the future. If you are asked to participate to help achieve the long-range goals set for our parish, we hope you will pray about it and take the opportunity to become more involved in our faith community.

Blessings of hope and joy,
Father W. Jerry Riney

Entrust your works to the Lord and your plans will succeed.
~ Proverbs 16:3

Youth 2000

By Crissy Stevenson

March 8-10, Saint Stephen Cathedral had 24 youth who attended our Diocesan Youth 2000 Retreat at Brescia University. This Eucharistic-Centered Retreat has been in our diocese for 22 years. Students have the opportunity to attend daily Mass, receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, pray the Rosary & Divine Mercy Chaplet, and experience Eucharistic Adoration. In addition to these prayer experiences, participants hear different talks on The Eucharist; Who is Jesus Christ?; Reconciliation; The Holy Spirit; and Mary, Star of Evangelization.

On Saturday, participants are broken into groups based on age and gender. They go to Faith & Morals Panels where they have the opportunity to ask questions and hear answers about what the Catholic Church teaches in different areas of life. It is very important for our young people to have opportunities to hear the rich teachings of our church and how they can apply them to their lives.

One of the highlights of the weekend takes place on Saturday Evening during a Eucharistic Prayer Service. Students are invited to an encounter with Jesus through this prayer experience when the Monstrance is walked around the room for everyone to have a moment for a one-on-one experience with Jesus. For many, this is extremely powerful and the presence of the Lord was felt walking through the room that night among us.



Baptisms



Ford Olson Ivey, son of Jay and Anna Ivey, was baptized on April 27, 2019 (godparents Bo and Jodi Ivey).



Olive Kenedy Hamilton, daughter of Casey and Alex Hamilton, was baptized on March 3, 2019 (godparents Wade and Neena Gaynor).



Anna Ruth Lynn, daughter of John and Katherine Lynn, was baptized February 24, 2019 (godparents Corey Bruns and Molly Rhodes).



Joseph Brooks Riney, son of Evan and Ally Riney, was baptized on February 24, 2019 (godparents Kevin and Kelsey Clouse).



Hudson Matthew Lusk, son of Mark and Jessica Lusk, was baptized on March 3, 2019 (godparents Michael and Donna Richard).



Victoriah Blake Blanton, daughter of Hannah Jo and Lee Blanton, was baptized on February 24, 2019 (godparents Duane Harper and Sarah Rice).



George Lawrence Ivey, son of Bo and Jodi Ivey, was baptized on April 27, 2019 (godparents Jared Johnson and Hayden Morris).

Share the Love

By Pam Weafer

During the month of February at Cathedral Preschool we talk a lot about love. At our weekly religion sessions with Winkie Bear, we discussed the many things God has put in our lives that we love: our families, our friends, and even ourselves! Of course there was love flowing abundantly at our Valentine Parties, but we also talked about loving all of God's people, including those less fortunate and those different from us. We decided to 'Share the Love' this year with a food drive to help stock the Saint Stephen Cathedral Food Pantry.



The generosity of the Cathedral Preschool parents and staff was overwhelming. We lined our hallways with food items over a span of 2 weeks. We wanted to let the students be involved, so they did the "hard work" of carrying all the items over to the food pantry. Not a complaint was heard as the children loaded bags with all the food items and carried them across the parking lot on quite a chilly day. The experience was truly an act of love for everyone.





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