

A quarterly publication of the
Saint Stephen Cathedral parish



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and more!

Epiphany Vespers and Potluck

Our 7th Annual Epiphany Vespers & International Potluck was held on January 5, beginning with Vespers (evening prayer) in the church. The uplifting service included candlelight, beautiful music, scripture, and an inspiring message from Father Jerry.

Afterwards, we gathered in the Community Center for an international potluck where folks shared a variety of tasty dishes from their country of origin. Dessert included a traditional Epiphany king cake —congratulations to parishioners Leo Padgett and Kim Harris who each found a “baby” in their slice of cake! The event also featured a visit from the Three Kings who journeyed through the Community Center accompanied by the singing of “We Three Kings.”



New this year was the playing of Bunco after dinner. Players of all ages enjoyed the friendly competition! Our annual Epiphany Vespers and International Potluck is a wonderful way to continue to celebrate the Christmas season and enjoy an evening with fellow parishioners. If you missed it, we hope you will make plans to attend in January 2021.

Thanks to all who attended and to everyone who made this celebration a success: Director of Music James Wells and the Saint Stephen Cathedral Choir for leading the beautiful Vespers music; Lupe Ellis and Theresa Ray who helped with potluck

(Continued on next page)

Epiphany Vespers and Potluck

(Continued from page 1)

preparations; Bern Tooley who always keeps our Community Center looking lovely; Lupe Ellis and Amanda Reffitt, our king cake bakers; Hannah Bland and Crissy Stevenson, Bunco game planners and leaders; and our Epiphany Kings, Kolbe Reffitt, Jude Carrico, and Breandan Murphy.

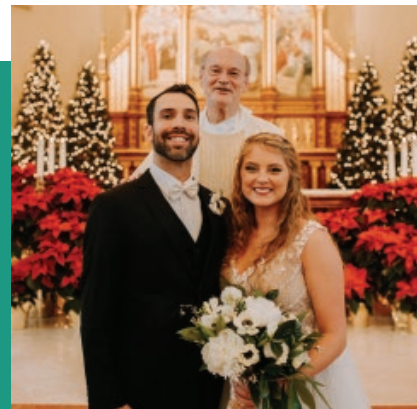
Congratulations were also extended to Father Sinoj, who celebrated his 12th Anniversary of Ordination. Congratulations again, Father Sinoj; and thank you for being with us at Saint Stephen Cathedral!



Our pastor's competitive side emerged during rousing games of Bunco! Pictured are (clockwise): Father Jerry, Yvonne Seaton, Marie Fuchs, Mary Bryan Booth.



Bunco is a game that's fun for the young and young-at-heart. We hope to offer another Bunco parish event in the coming months!



Mike West and Anna McNulty (daughter of John and Emily McNulty) were joined in the sacrament of marriage on December 28, 2019.

Baptisms



Emily Camp was baptized on December 29, 2019 with Father Mike Williams presiding. Pictured are Father Mike Williams; Krista, Chris, and Emily Camp; godparents, Stephen and Stephanie Heitz; and Father Jerry Riney.



Scarlet Ann Howard was baptized on February 26, 2020 with Father Jerry Riney presiding. Pictured are Bryan and Molly Howard, Father Jerry Riney, and big sister, Lily.



Xander Christian Shoulta was baptized on November 17, 2019 with Fr. John Vaughan presiding. Pictured are Fr. John Vaughan, Natalie Killingsworth, Melissa Shoulta, Xander Shoulta, Charles Shoulta, and Bradley Shoulta and family.

Rite of Acceptance

By Rick Rhodes

On January 19th, at the 9:00 AM Mass, we celebrated The Rite of Acceptance and Welcome with 21 people wishing to become full members of our Catholic faith. This was the first “Rite” of the RCIA Journey of Faith and the first public ritual. In the Rite of Acceptance and Welcome, the Catechumens (those not baptized) and the Candidates (those already baptized in another faith tradition or as an infant in the Catholic Church) are officially welcomed by the Church as disciples, members (but not yet full members) of the household of faith. During the Rite, they are literally marked with the cross of Christ as God’s own and as a sign of their new way of life and commitment to Jesus and our Catholic faith. Their sponsors sign them with the cross on the forehead, heart, hands, feet, and on parts signifying all the senses. Their sponsor then presents them with a cross around their neck. Please keep these 21 people in your prayers as they continue their Journey with Jesus, not only to Easter but throughout their lives until they hear Jesus say, “Well done good and faithful servant.”



Pictured from left to right

Candidates: Will McCrady, Emily Faught, Diane Fulkerson, Randy Thorpe, Sarah Eastlund, Aubrey Goatee, and Joe Harris.

Catechumens: Jay Reeves, Joe Stewart, Carolyn Hagedorn, Erik Oglesby,
Sponsors: Dale Cecil, Wilma Stallings, Jennifer Welch, Mary Goatee, Rita Robinson, Karen Danhauer, Tom Ed Booth, Alex Johnson, Bob Stone, Lisa Cecil and Isaac Lambert.



Pictured from left to right

Catechumens: Kyle Hatfield, Aerial Thorpe and Geoff Nelson.

Candidates: Kim Harris, Susan Sherman, Eva Stone, Mark Calitri, Ken Ross, Matt Lisby and Kent Short.

Sponsors: Bill McCarty, Molly Welch, Jacob Fisher, Robin Booth, Donna Murphy, Cecilia McCarty, Jessica Lusk, David Danhauer, Aaron Overbeck, John Lynn and Peyton Booth.

Bishop Medley's 10th Anniversary

On Monday evening, February 17, people from across the Diocese of Owensboro gathered at Saint Stephen Cathedral for a special vespers service to celebrate Bishop Medley's 10th anniversary as our bishop. Congratulations Bishop Medley; God's blessings, and thank you for being our shepherd!

Princess Party

On Sunday, February 16, 24 little ladies grades preschool to fourth, gathered at Saint Stephen Cathedral to have a Princess Party. They learned about how they are princesses because they are daughters of God and that Mary is our Queen. They participated in princess crafts such as making crowns and jewelry. They ate snacks, dressed up as princesses, and prayed together. Moms, grandmothers, aunts, godmothers, and sisters were all invited to come and take part in the festivities. Everyone involved had a blast!



One craft table had the girls coloring images of Mary and making Mary paper dolls. L-R Gianna Reffitt, Mary Knoop, Maggie Knoop, Bethany Stiff, Kadence Stiff.



Sisters Kennedy (Left) and Harper (Right) Mills pose for a picture with flowers that they made.



Olivia Reffitt and Hannah Bland

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Maggie and Ava Knoop



Children's Minister Hannah Bland reading a story to all of the princesses.



Shelby Pagan and grandmother Susan Bartlett



The princesses made flowers that they presented to Mary the Queen.

National Catholic Youth Conference

The National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) was held in Indianapolis in November. The theme was "Blessed, Broken, Given." Several of our youth and adults were able to attend.



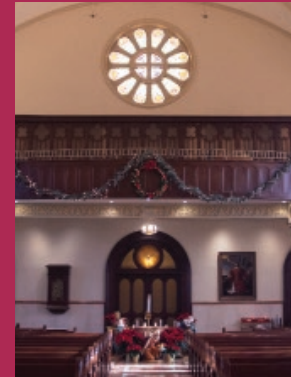
Katherine Caudill, Bailey Padgett, Suzanne Padgett, Crissy Stevenson, Amanda Reffitt, Lisa Ward, Taylor Norton
Back Left: Landon Reffitt, Kayla Snyder, Macy Ward, Terry Ward



Final NCYC Mass with over 20,000 participants in Lucas Oil Stadium

Christmas 2019

Photos by Corey Bruns
and Donna Tarantino



Pizza with the Priests & Sisters

Sunday, March 23 our Youth Ministry Program had Pizza with the Priests & Sisters for our 7-12 grade students. Special thanks to Fr. Jerry, Fr. Sinoj, Sr. Darlene Presley, Sr. Monica Seaton, Sr. Consolata Ojemeh, Sr. Lim & Sr. Lanh for coming and sharing their vocational story with the students and spending time answering questions.



First Reconciliation

Congratulations to our First Reconciliation candidates: Jude Carrico, Parker Calitri, Preston Calitri, Zane Hodskins, Paul David Knoop, Nicholas Lisby, Landon Marks, Duncan Owens, Stella Padgett, Vera Payne, Scarlett Ray, Olivia Reffitt and their families! We celebrated God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Sunday, January 19, 2020, at Saint Stephen Cathedral. Special thanks to Hannah Bland, Director of Children's Ministries!

Come and Meet Jesus in the Paschal Triduum

By Father Jerry Riney

As I pondered a topic for this article, I re-read a booklet called *Glory in the Cross: A Journey through the Paschal Triduum*, written by an acquaintance of mine, Corinna Laughlin. Corinna is the pastoral assistant for liturgy at St. James Cathedral in Seattle and a gifted writer. I was again so inspired by her words that I have decided to share an excerpt from the booklet. If you did not receive a copy last year, there are some available at the doors of church. I encourage everyone to read it and be inspired too!



To glory in the Cross is to glory in the dying and rising of Christ—the Paschal Mystery—which is the heart of all liturgical prayer. Every time we celebrate Mass, we celebrate the Paschal Mystery. When we honor Mary or the saints, what we are really celebrating is their sharing in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. In fact, whenever the Church comes together for prayer, we celebrate the Paschal Mystery. Why? Because, as St. Paul said, “you too must think of yourselves as [being] dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus” (Romans 6:11). The Paschal Mystery marks the life of every Christian. Christ’s dying and rising reveal to us our true identity and our destiny. We are sharers in the Paschal Mystery. Christ is risen, and we will rise with him. The Church never tires of celebrating this amazing reality.

The Sacred Paschal Triduum, the Three Days, is a special time to focus on this central mystery of Christ. On the evening of Holy Thursday, we leave Lent behind and begin a new liturgical season, the Paschal Triduum. The word Triduum is from the Latin for “three days.” Because the liturgical “day” begins the evening before, the “three days” stretch over four days, from Holy Thursday evening, through Good Friday and Holy Saturday, ending on the evening of Easter Sunday. This shortest of our liturgical seasons is also the most important. During these days the Church invites us to go deeper into the central mystery of our faith. The Triduum is really one great prayer the Church offers to God. Even though our only obligation is to participate in one of the Easter Masses (the

Easter Vigil or Easter Sunday Mass), to miss out on Holy Thursday or Good Friday is to deprive ourselves of something truly extraordinary. The liturgy of these holy days immerses us in words, sights, and sounds that shape and inspire our praying, our thinking, and our living.

Participating in the Triduum is not an intensive seminar or a time to learn about Jesus. This is an opportunity to meet Jesus. Like the woman who anointed the feet of Jesus a few days before he died, we are invited to pour out the treasure of our love, our prayer, and our time, in order to focus on Christ alone. We set aside other concerns and activities—some important, others not so important—in order to pray together with the Church and as the Church.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection

- Have you ever participated in all three days of the Triduum—Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday? What memories remain with you from these liturgies?
- Do you have a cross in your home or around your neck? What does it mean to you?
- Do you sometimes find it hard to “glory in the cross?” Why?

*An excerpt from *Glory in the Cross: A Journey through the Paschal Triduum* by Corinna Laughlin*

My Journey of Faith

By Madeleine McCormick Reeves

“Pain and suffering have come into your life; but remember pain, sorrow and suffering are but the kiss of Jesus; a sign that you have come so close to him that he can kiss you.” - Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta

I am a wife, mother, daughter, sister, aunt, and godmother. I wear many titles just like so many others. My testimony begins with my first title, daughter. I was raised in a close-knit, Catholic home in Owensboro, Kentucky. My parents, Bill and Maire McCormick, instilled in my siblings and me the importance of Mass, the Eucharist, praying, confession, offering our discomforts to the souls in purgatory, and the Rosary. I have so many memories from my childhood that center around our Catholic faith: praying before meals while holding hands around the table; Mom blessing us each night with holy water after our nightly prayers; never missing Mass on Sunday; etc. It was ingrained in us at a young age to practice good morals and to pray to God for everything. My parents made many sacrifices, which included sending my siblings, Will, Bridget, and Veronica, and me to Catholic schools from preschool through high school. If it were not for the firm foundation that my parents laid for me throughout my childhood and teenage years, I may have stayed on the road that I stumbled on for a few years.

After graduating from high school, I went away to college; from that time to my late 20s, I struggled and felt lost. Mentally and verbally abusive relationships, partying, and alcohol were the culprits for so many dark years. I never forgot my faith, and my heart knew that our God would always welcome me back home. The desire to go to confession, ask for forgiveness, and turn my back on the sinful lifestyle I was living was there. The struggles I was enduring led to depression, self-doubt, and a feeling of unworthiness, especially unworthy of the purest love I have ever known. It was hard to pray or go to Mass without feeling like a hypocrite. These were lies from Satan trying to pull me further from the Church.



The devil preys on us in our weakest state. I felt a voice within begging me to overcome this deep valley. My soul needed to confide in the Lord. One evening, with the help of my older sister, Bridget, I met with a local Father of Mercy priest. He spoke to me with compassion and truth that calmed my worries and self-doubt. This moment was my turning point, and I will never forget that evening and the weight of years of hurt and sin that were lifted. My soul was awakened, and I was ready to be cleansed. I realized that no matter how hard life can get or how deep in sin we may fall, our God is forgiving and ready to lead us back to the path to heaven with Him. This is something I preached at many youth group meetings, retreats, and Catholic leadership conferences while in high school. It felt like coming home, believing in this again and living it.

Fast forward to my title as wife and mother. My goal is to ensure that my husband, son, and I all go to heaven. My husband, Jay, is currently in RCIA and will be baptized, make his First Communion, and be confirmed this Easter. God has used me as a vessel, opening his eyes to our beautiful faith and leading him towards a relationship with Christ and a prayer life that he did not know before. Watching my husband grow has further rooted my faith. He is now on fire with love for our Lord; and seeing his excitement build for receiving the sacraments is incredible to watch. Two people— my husband and I—have been brought back to Jesus.

*“Trust in the Lord forever, for the
Lord God is an everlasting rock.”
Isaiah 26:4*

Growing up in Saint Stephen Cathedral, I was involved in our youth group and served as a lector and Eucharistic Minister. About a year ago, I decided that I wanted to get involved with the church again. I found my strengths again and wanted to share them. The Backpack Ministry to me was a no brainer. This parish group packs food and drinks for a group of kids on the weekends who may otherwise not have food. Knowing that this small task on my end makes a huge impact on these children made me want to do more. One of the most fulfilling ministries that I enjoy is our Jail Ministry. Once or twice a month, another Catholic volunteer and I visit with imprisoned women to share the Mass readings and break open the Word. We discuss their interpretations of the readings. I have never met a more creative and intelligent group of women. Their understanding of the Bible is incredible. I feel God's presence with me when I am there. These women would typically be looked down upon because, like I was, most of them are lost within a dark valley and feel like this is their place forever. I tell myself before I go into the jail that if I can open at least one person's heart to our Lord's love and forgiveness, then I did my job. There is a sense of relatability that I feel with them, which gives me a stronger drive to take their hand and show them there is hope.

These are the doors God has opened for me, doors that would not have opened if I had continued to believe the lies that the devil was working so hard to have me believe. The Mass and improving my prayer life have improved my quality of life. If you are reading this and are struggling in your spiritual life, my advice is simple: TRUST. Trust that God will never abandon you. Trust that His love is unceasing. Trust in His understanding and forgiveness. I encourage you to always believe that you are worthy of Him. By keeping God in the center of your life, your home, and your marriage, you will only grow closer to Him.

Youth Group



On Sunday, December 15, several parish families, along with members of the Special People Adoring Caring Evangelizing (SPACE) group, spread some holiday cheer by Christmas caroling at Hermitage Nursing Home and a parish family's home.



Parish Recognition and Blessing of those receiving Sacraments this year



Birthright

By Joyce Gruenewald

“Happy Birthday to You!” —The most celebrated song in the world today. Birthdays are an occasion to reflect, give thanks, and celebrate the gift of LIFE! Birthright is a pro-life organization, offering a range of services designed to support and protect all life, especially that of the mother and child. The Birthright charter states, “It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth, and the right of every child to be born.” The agency is fully funded by donations and staffed by trained volunteers, serving over 4,500 women and babies annually in the Western Kentucky area. Birthright of Owensboro offers free and confidential pregnancy tests, referrals and guidance. Women are counseled about pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, prenatal care, parenting skills and childcare.

Birthright of Owensboro was founded in 1983 under the guidance of Most Reverend Bishop John McRaith. Birthright had already become important to Bishop McRaith during his ministry in Minnesota. Saint Pope John Paul II said, “The ultimate test of your greatness is the way you treat every human being, but especially the weakest and most defenseless ones.” At the Birthright of Owensboro, there is a placard over the mantle that simply states: “Love is Spoken Here.”

When I visited the Birthright home, I was reminded of a quote from Mother Teresa, “If you judge people, you have no time to love them.” Director Terri LaHugh shines her light and love on many mothers through the Birthright ministry. She has been the Director of the Birthright of Owensboro for the past

20 years. She volunteers her time and talents, along with a staff of six volunteers. She describes the organization as giving help and purpose to women at a critical time in their life.

Terri says that many women need someone to talk to about their pregnancy as they may feel alone and frightened. Many are given referrals for pre-natal care, medical and financial assistance, continuing education, and legal and financial advice. Clients are served with compassion, care and commitment; help is ongoing and inclusive.

Additionally, Birthright assists mothers with diapers, formula, maternity clothes and clothing for baby and toddlers up to 6T. Baby blankets, layettes and other necessities are also provided upon the baby’s birth. Much of the clothing is donated by local, Catholic families. Many of the new items and diapers are purchased with donations, mainly from the Baby Bottle Fund Drive or the Giving Tree at Christmas. No government funds are accepted; the Baby Bottle Fund Drive from local parishes in Daviess and Hancock counties provides Birthright with most operating funds. St. Stephen Cathedral parishioners donated \$2,810 in the most recent Baby Bottle fundraiser.

Birthright is located at 512 W. 7th St. and is open Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 12 pm, or by appointment. Volunteers are greatly needed. If you are interested in visiting Birthright, would like to volunteer your time or donate items, please call 270-926-7561.



Catholic Schools Week at Cathedral Preschool

By Pam Weafer

Catholic Schools Week is always a special time for us at the Cathedral Preschool. The week began with a Blessing Service for each preschool child and their family and the teachers by Father Will Thompson and Father Jason McClure. Each student received their blessing as they heard their name called in our special song, "Circle of Love."

During Catholic Schools Week, we are reminded of why we are here: To teach each one of our little ones about the love of Jesus Christ and how to share it. We have a picture on the wall that reads:

Be it known to all who enter here that
CHRIST

Is the reason for this school.

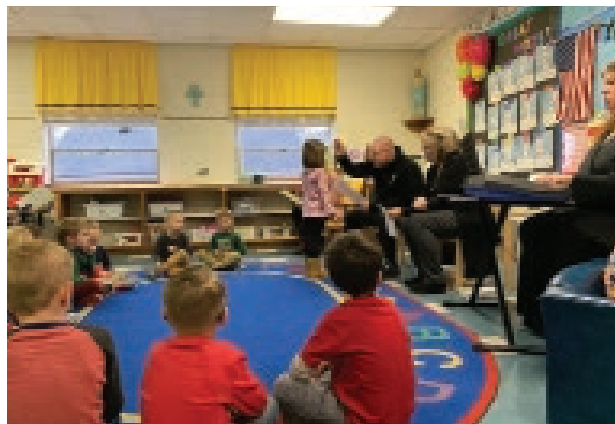
He is the unseen but ever present teacher in its classes.

He is the model of its faculty
and the inspiration of its students.

Author Unknown

We explain to the children that Jesus is the reason for our school. We concluded the week with a pizza party, which was enjoyed by all!

Registration for the 2020-2021 school year is open now! We have preschool classes for three, four, and five year olds. After-school care is also available. Visit our website (www.cathedralpreschool.com) or call 270-926-1652 for information.



Father Jason McClure and Father Will Thompson visit the preschool and offer blessings for the students during Catholic Schools Week..



Cathedral Preschool students enjoy a pizza party to celebrate Catholic Schools Week!



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Welcome New Parishioners!

Chase Barker & Taylor Allen

Mark & Devon Calitri, children Chloe, Parker & Preston

Mark & Marilyn Crump

Larry & Dianne Fulkerson

Terry Graves

Carolyn Hagedorn

Jody & Denise Hamilton

Scott & Michelle Ingram, children Haley & Beau

Mike & Maryann Joyce

Alyssa Kath

Jonathan & Lauren Patton, children Eli, Jack, Christopher & Kate

Chris & Janet Reid

Jacob & Bridget Reid, daughters Payton, Charlie, Ryleigh & Hayden

Scot & Susan Sherman

Jason & Jamie Thompson, son Caleb

Beverly Velotta

Martina Wedding

Save the Date!



Vacation Bible School

June 15-18