

FROM THE HEART OF THE PASTOR

Dear Family,

After months of hard work and preparation — it's almost time for our parish's first ever St. Joseph Altar! If you haven't already, consider inviting friends and family to join us for 10 am Mass and the Altar. For details about festivities on Sunday, see the flyer that is inserted in the bulletin this weekend.

A GRATEFUL PASTOR!

Our St. Joseph Altar has truly been a "labor of love," offered up to St. Joseph. The altar (along with the spaghetti lunch, goody bags, over 6,000 cookies, and much more) represents many, many hours of work from over 40 parish volunteers.

I have fond memories attending St. Joseph altars at Fatima parish when I was young, and I'm honored to be the first pastor to bring this devotion to St. Stephen. But most of all, I'm grateful to everyone who has helped to make this altar a reality — especially Mrs. Mary Etta Taylor. Mary Etta has given countless hours of thought, prayer, and work to our altar, and I owe her a great debt of gratitude.

Over the past few months, I've watched as the St. Joseph Altar has built community and friendships in our parish. I know you will agree: we, as St. Stephen Parish, will have so much to be proud of on March 19th!

In preparation for the St. Joseph Altar, we have undertaken three projects to improve the Parish Hall:

NEW BRICK PAVERS AND SEATING OUTSIDE OF HALL

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the sidewalk outside of the hall has been expanded with brick pavers. New benches and planters have also been donated to be placed on top of the brick pavers. This will provide a place for parishioners to visit outside at parish functions — and for our Early Learning students to sit. I'm very grateful for this generous gift!

HALL DOORS AND METAL REPAIRED AND REPAINTED

The parish hall exterior doors are in need of repair — the veneer is peeling off and they have not been repainted in many years. Similarly, the paint on the metal framing around the doors and windows on the parish hall is flaking and rusting. I'm grateful to Paul Tholen for taking on the job of sanding, priming, and painting the doors and metal framing.

STATUES HUNG IN PARISH HALL

Three statues (Our Lady, St. Anthony of Padua, and St. Jude) which are from the original 1898 church have been placed on plaster wall brackets in the Parish Hall. I'm grateful to Fereale Richard for hanging these wall brackets and placing the statues. These images of Our Lady and the saints will help remind us of the sacred at parish functions.

With gratitude, Fr. Istre

RESTORING ST. STEPHEN Honoring 125 Years of Faith and Family

We, the St. Stephen Parish Family, owe a debt of gratitude to the men and women who helped to make our parish what it is today. With the "Restoring St. Stephen" Campaign, we intend to honor this legacy of faith by undertaking urgently needed repairs to the House of God.

In the coming weeks, I will be coming to you with a more formal appeal, ways to give to this new fundraising campaign, and more information about the work to be done (including renderings of the project). Until that time, we will begin taking up a second collection once a month for the RESTORING ST. STEPHEN FUND — formerly called the building fund. I'm very grateful to the many parishioners who — already sensing the pressing need for repairs — have donated towards this effort.

THE RESTORING ST. STEPHEN FUND
(total donations and second collections to date):

\$ 184,989.00

*Thank you for your generosity,
honoring our legacy of faith!*

PHASE I

- Removal of current metal roof
- Assessment and repair of termite-damaged joists & roof decking
- Installation of new standing-seam metal roof
- Extending current roof line to cover the two lean-to sections that extend from the sacristy and servers' room
- Repair & bracing of termite-damaged beam in church
- Treatment, cleaning, and repainting of ceiling in sanctuary (as well as damaged portions of high altar reredos)
- Repair to faulty drainage around church and installation of gutters on new roof

**Current projected cost of Phase I:
\$500,000**

PHASE II

Addressing interior aesthetic concerns
(improved lighting, painting interior of church,
removal of carpet in sanctuary, etc.)



FINAL PREPARATIONS
For our March 19th
Saint Joseph Altar

AROUND THE PARISH

DEANERY MEETING LAST WEDNESDAY

Last Wednesday, we hosted 20 priests of the Southern Deanery of the Diocese of Lafayette for a deanery meeting. Bishop Deshotel was also in attendance, this is the first deanery meeting hosted at St. Stephen in over 40 years. Bishop asked me to extend his gratitude for a warm welcome!

FINAL LENTEN MISSION WITH FR LAVERGNE

On Wednesday Evening, we welcomed over 100 parishioners and guests for our final Lenten Mission with Fr. Korey LaVergne. Thanks to all who came to hear his powerful message!

TWO SPEAKERS IN SANCTUARY REPLACED

Last month, we discovered that the two white speakers in the sanctuary were not functioning at all. They were replaced and sound levels adjusted accordingly. This has helped those who sit near the front of church to hear more clearly.

SACRIFICIAL GIVING

Weekend Collection	\$7,038.00
Black & Indian Mission	\$243.00
Total Offertory Giving	\$7,281.00

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

Monday, March 13, 12:10 pm

Isaac & Irene Daigle, ATL

Tuesday, March 14, 12:10 pm

John Czajka

Wednesday, March 15, 12:10 pm

Frank Russo

Friday, March 17, 12:10 pm

Clarence Hebert, Jr., Clarence Hebert, Sr., AML,
Souls in purgatory

Saturday, March 18

4 pm M/M Herman Pellerin, Sr. fly. (L&D),
M/M E.J. Lemoine fly. (L&D), Miles Liner fly. (L&D),
John Tholen, Louis Boudreaux, Michael R. Adams,
Shirley Savoie, John Czajka, Earline Manfre,
Lester Beadle, Donovan LeBlanc, Cay Price,
Elaine Grant, Dana Robin

Sunday, March 19

7 am Calvin LeLeux fly. (L&D), Kenneth Garber, Sr.,
Sherel & Bonnie Martin, Jr.
10 am For St. Stephen Parishioners,
Lee Nini, Jr. fly. (L&D), Brenda White, Don Lasseigne
Earline & Mario Manfre fly. (L&D), Emily Bourgeois,
David Duhon II & fly. (L&D), Peter Vacarella,
Mae & Algie DeHart, Pearl & Rogers DeHart, Elaine Grant
6:30 pm Carolyn & Ernest Parro, John Czajka

*We will take up a Second Collection for The Restoring
St. Stephen Fund The First Weekend of Each Month*

*The next second collection will be:
The Weekend of April 1st and 2nd*

DATE / TIME	READERS	EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF COMMUNION	ROSARY
March 18, 4:00 p.m.	Claire Guarisco	Barbara LeLeux	Alison Wilson
March 19, 7:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 6:30 p.m.	Susan Blanchard Laura Dozar Anne Theriot	Briant Dozar Brian Theriot	