

ST. STEPHEN

CATHOLIC CHURCH

44 Britton Street, West Salem, Ohio 44287



Parish Contact Information

Address: 44 Britton Street
Phone: 419-853-4946
Email: info@ststephen.ws

Presbyteral Moderator:

Fr. Rod Kreidler
pastor@stedwardashland.org

Parochial Vicar

Fr. Jim Winings
jwinings@stedwardashland.org

Parish Life Coordinator

Deacon Pete Foradori
deaconpete@ststephen.ws

Parish Secretary

Denise Behary
secretary@ststephen.ws

PSR Director

Stephanie Arnold

Organists

Patricia Foradori
Laura Fryman

Maintenance

Ron Boehm
Logan Garman

Parish Council

Christina King
Danielle Stieglmeyer
Robert Williams

Marlene Zeigler
Christy Johnson
Tom Kilner

Finance Council

Sharon Gebura
Jim Linn
Todd McKee

Joyce Smith
Joe Dempsey

Baptism of Children:

Please contact the parish office before the birth of your first child to prepare for this sacrament.

Baptism of Adults

(Order of Christian Initiation of Adults or OCIA)
The process for becoming a Roman Catholic for adults and older children who have not been baptized or have been baptized in a different tradition. If you or someone you know is interested in learning about the Catholic Faith, please contact the parish office.

First Communion

Celebrated every year after the children have completed sacramental preparation.

Confirmation

Celebrated every other year for those in the eighth and ninth grades.

Marriages

Please consult with the Priest or Deacon at least six months before the desired date is set.

Holy Orders

Contact the parish office for information about the priesthood or the diaconate. We will also provide information about vowed religious life for men and women.

Anointing of the Sick

As needed, and as requested.

Social Media

Please find us on Facebook or on our website: ststephen.ws

Our Family of Ministry

St. Edward

Ashland

stedwardashland.org
419-289-7224

Weekday Mass:

Mon, Tue, Thu, & Fri
8:00am (7:35am Rosary)
Wednesday 1:15pm

Weekend Mass:

Saturday Vigil 4:30pm
Sunday 8:30am, 11:00am

1st Saturday: 8:00am
(7:35am Rosary)

Confession:

Saturday 3-4:00pm

St. Stephen

West Salem

ststephen.ws
419-853-4946

Weekday Mass:

Mon & Thu 8:00am
Wednesday 4:00pm

Weekend Mass:

Saturday Vigil 4:00pm
Sunday 10:30am

Confession:

Saturday 3-3:45pm

Adoration:

Wednesday 1-8:00pm

St. Peter

Loudonville

loudonvillecatholic.org
419-994-4396

Weekday Mass:

Tuesday 8:00am
Friday 12:00noon

Weekend Mass:

Saturday Vigil 5:00pm
Sunday 9:00am

Confession:

Saturday 4-4:30pm

Adoration:

2nd Monday of Month
7-8:00pm

Ashland University

Newman Center

ashlandcatholic.org
nccm@ashland.edu
419-289-5481

** Located in the Lower Chapel on campus,
only when college is in session.

Weekend Mass:

Sunday 4:30pm
(except 9/21, 10/19 & 11/30)

Confession:

Sunday 4-4:30pm

Newman Nights:

Wednesday 7-8:30pm

Adoration:

Wed 8:45-9:45pm

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025

A Word from Fr. Jim:

I remember when I was working at McMaster-Carr, a fellow Christian employee once asked me why Catholics celebrate Christmas at all. I was surprised by his question. I had never thought that a Christian would take offense to the celebration of Christ's birth! But he insisted that since Christ should be celebrated every day, setting aside one day of the year was unnecessary.

Perhaps you've heard similar arguments. Some claim Christmas is really a pagan holiday tied to the winter solstice, or that things like Christmas trees are pagan symbols that Christians should avoid. In our increasingly secular culture, many people no longer connect Christmas with Christ at all. For them it's mainly about lights, music, presents, and a bit of cheer during the darkest and coldest days of winter.

Many objections to the celebration of Christmas are, at their core, objections to the logic of the Incarnation itself. Each year at Christmas, we celebrate God's taking on flesh. We remember that God uses visible, tangible things to communicate invisible grace. We are not pure spirits but are embodied and sacramental. We need sights, sounds, tastes, smells, symbols and rituals. While we should remember Christ every day, the liturgical year gives us sacred time, moments to pause, focus, and intentionally celebrate the great mysteries of Christ's life.

As for the so-called "pagan" elements? They don't undermine Christmas; in many ways they help reveal its meaning. When Christianity spread through the ancient world, missionaries didn't erase everything people already understood. Instead, they transformed it. In 601 AD, Pope Gregory the Great instructed missionaries not to destroy pagan temples but to purify and repurpose them for worship of the true God. He argues that Scripture shows God doing something similar, taking ancient sacrificial practices and redirecting them toward true worship.

The Catechism reminds us that the Church recognizes seeds of truth and goodness in other religions as a "preparation for the Gospel" (CCC 843). Even today, secular Christmas celebrations still retain vestiges of Christian truth: light overcoming darkness, joy entering the world through giving, and peace offered to all.

As we approach Christmas, may we look beyond the wrapping paper and decorations to the heart of the feast: God has taken on flesh. He has entered our world and transformed everything. That is a feast that is certainly worth celebrating and remembering!

Mass Schedule

Saturday, December 20	4:00pm	For the People
Sunday, December 21	10:30am	Dianne Pochasa +
Monday, December 22	8:00am	Carrie Daddona +
Wednesday, December 24	4:00pm	Stoskopf & Corrigan Families
Thursday, December 25	9:00am	Ronald Bourdess +
Saturday, December 27	4:00pm	For the People
Sunday, December 28	10:30am	Nick Belovics +

Readings for the Week of December 21, 2025

Sunday	Fourth Sunday of Advent
Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Rm 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24	
Monday	1 Sm 1:24-28; 1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd; Lk 1:46-56
Tuesday	Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14; Lk 1:57-66
Wednesday	2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29; Lk 1:67-79
Thursday	The Nativity of the Lord
<i>Vigil Mass:</i> Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 or Mt 1:18-25	
<i>Mass during the Day:</i> Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 or Jn 1:1-5, 9-14	
Friday	Feast of Saint Stephen, First Martyr
Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17; Mt 10:17-22	
Saturday	Feast of Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist
1 Jn 1:14; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a and 2-8	
Sunday	Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14; Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5; Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23	

The Week Ahead

Saturday, December 20	
3:00pm	Reconciliation
4:00pm	Mass
7:00pm	AA
Sunday, December 21	
Fourth Sunday of Advent	
9:15am	PSR
9:30am	Adult Advent Study
9:45am	Rosary
10:30am	Mass
Offertory Counter Team 3	
Monday, December 22	
8:00am	Mass
6:30pm	Church decorating for Christmas
Tuesday, December 23	
Wednesday, December 24	
1:00-8:00pm	Adoration
4:00pm	Christmas Eve Mass
5:30pm	NO MEALS & MORE
Thursday, December 25	
Christmas Day	
8:15am	Rosary
9:00am	Mass
Office Closed	
Friday, December 26	
Office Closed	
Saturday, December 27	
3:00pm	Reconciliation
4:00pm	Mass
7:00pm	AA
Sunday, December 28	
Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph	
9:15am	NO PSR
9:45am	Rosary
10:30am	Mass
Offertory Counter Team 4	



CHRISTMAS ALTAR FLOWERS

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

WALTER & IRENE ARTH

MICHAEL E. BEHARY

MILTON FESTA

DECEASED MEMBERS OF THE FORADORI &

DOLLOWITCH FAMILIES

THOMAS GRUBE

JOHN & FRANCES GEBURA

ROBERT HANKINSON

BOB JACK

BILL & PEGGY JURKOWSKI

ANNIE & FRANK KALUZA

LISA KALUZA

DECEASED MEMBERS OF THE KESSLER FAMILY

NAMAU & THELMA KING

HENRY & HELEN KLAMERT

STELLA & RAY MACKIN

THERESA, JACK, & NANCY MOFFETT

DECEASED MEMBERS OF THE PAULO FAMILY

EDUARDO RAPISTA

DECEASED MEMBERS OF THE ROSINSKI FAMILY

GEORGE & MARY ROSS

LINDA ROSS

ANN RUDDOCK

DECEASED MEMBERS OF THE SMITH FAMILY

HOWARD & MARY SPARKS

TOM & AUDREY SPARKS

ELMER STOLL

JOHN & ELIZABETH VANDERAAR

DANIEL & STELLA VEZBER

JOHN & LENA WALKO

IN HONOR OF:

RICHARD GUENTHER

ANNA HABURAY

MICHAEL HABURAY

KAY KELLING-OWEN

BILL RUDDOCK





Please Remember the Sick in Your Prayers: Mighty and Everlasting God, the eternal salvation of those who believe in You, hear us on behalf of Your servants who are sick, for whom we humbly beg the help of Your mercy, so that, being restored to health, they may render thanks to You in Your Church. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Christopher Adamson, Richard Adamson, Nikita Arnold, Ron Boehm, Ed Brazis, Pat Brown, Kerry Cullin, Jim Emmert, Laura Fryman, Sandra Green, Richard Guenther, Ingrid Hankinson, Joan Johnson, Carol Jones, Margie Keep, Kay Kelling-Owen, Laurel King, June Kost, Lois Norton, Jaimie Packard, Mia Preston, Betty Ross, Heather Smith, and those on our prayer board.

Collection Report

December 14, 2025:

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Offertory:	\$1,687.00	\$2,020.00	-\$333.00
Parish Use Only	\$520.00	\$960.00	-\$440.00
Total:	\$2,207.00	\$2,980.00	-\$773.00
Immaculate Conception Retirement Fund	\$55.00		
for Religious	\$1,053.00		

Happy Birthday!!!

Be sure to wish a "Happy Birthday" to the following members of our parish!!

William Foster (December 22),
Terry DeRodes (December 27)



Mary's Plea:

Mary was given to mankind as OUR MOTHER by Jesus as He hung on the cross. He said, "Woman, behold your Son," and then He said to John, "Behold your Mother." John represented us...all of mankind. From that moment on, he took her into his home and cared for her. Let us bring Mary our Mother into our lives and homes and ask her to pray for us and help us on our journey to Heaven.

Church Decorating:

We will be decorating the church for Christmas on Monday, December 22nd at 6:30pm. Bring your favorite Christmas cookies to share. Join us for fellowship and help us prepare for the birth of our Savior.

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday, 1:00-8:00pm

"We pay the Blessed Sacrament the supreme homage of divine adoration and worship (latría), because He who is there, present, is the God of heaven and earth, the all-holy Word-made-flesh, our first beginning and our last end."



- Fr. Richard Foley



First Saturday Devotion: The next First Saturday Devotion will be at 3:00pm on Saturday, January 3rd. Everyone is invited to attend. Crissy King is organizing the endeavor. She has pamphlets available with more information. She also can be reached at 216-308-1434.

Year-End Contribution Statements:

If you would like a statement of your contributions to St. Stephen's in 2025, please sign up on the sheet in the Gathering Room or call the office at 419-853-4946.

Heartfelt Gratitude for Your Generosity!:

"Thank you very much for your donations, always," says Sister Olivia Bellegante, 93, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in St. Louis, Missouri. Your gift directly impacts thousands of senior religious, providing the support they need in their later years. Learn more at retiredreligious.org.



Meals & More:

There will be NO Meals & More on Wednesday, December 24 and Wednesday, December 31.



New to the Parish?

We welcome all newcomers to our parish and encourage everyone to register and get involved. If you need to register or update your information, clip the form below from the bulletin, complete the information, and drop it in the offertory basket. Someone from the office will reach out to you.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I am new to St. Stephen: _____ Updating Info _____

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St. Stephen Parish



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Deacon Pete and
Patricia Foradori

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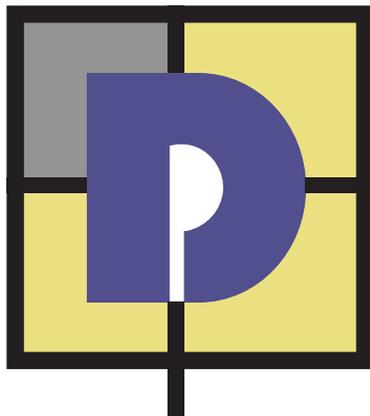
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