

ST. STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR PARISH

January 24, 2021 • 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

THEY ABANDONED THEIR NETS *AND* FOLLOWED JESUS.
~ MARK 1:18



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If you are new to St. Stephen Protomartyr Parish or just visiting — WELCOME!
For more information or to register in the parish, please call or email the parish office.

PARISH OFFICE 3949 Wilmington, St. Louis, MO 63116 • **Sts. Mary & Joseph Chapel** 6304 Minnesota, St. Louis, MO 63111
www.saintstephenstl.org @sspstl @stsmariandjosephchapel @StStephenProtomartyr @StStephenSTL @sspstl

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Greg Sturgill, Principal — greg.sturgill@saintstephenstl.org • 314-752-4700

Amanda Quinn, Administrative Assistant — amanda.quinn@saintstephenstl.org • 314-752-4700

STEWARDSHIP: SHARING TIME, TALENT, TREASURE, and PRAYER

"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." - Mark 1:17

Jesus' call to "Follow me" is a call to all Christians!

The call is in the here and now, in our present circumstances, not when we think we are "ready" or have everything in order. Good stewardship of our God-given gifts means that things aren't always going to go according to our schedule and that God has a much better plan in store for each of us.

SUNDAY CONTRIBUTION

January 17 Contribution	\$ 2,733.00
Online giving contribution	\$ 3,190.00
Total weekly contribution	\$ 5,923.00
R & I	\$ 314.00
Tuition Assistance	\$ 985.00
St. Vincent de Paul, SSP	\$ 135.00
Christmas	\$ 100.00
1st Offering	\$ 60.00
<i>St. Louis Review</i>	\$ 554.00

Special collection in January is for The St. Louis Review.

Anyone needing a copy of their contribution statement for 2020 is asked to contact **June Tessin** at june.tessin@saintstephenstl.org or 314-481-1133, Option #3. Unless you request to have it mailed, you can pick up the statement at the parish office during regular business hours.

Note: If your contributions are **exclusively** through Online Giving, you can access a report of your year-end giving there. Go to www.osonlinegiving.com/saint-stephen-stl, log in, and click on My Account to see available tax statements by calendar year. (This report would not include any contributions by cash or check.)

THE ST. LOUIS REVIEW

The *St. Louis Review* is your faith resource access to local, national, and international news. All regular contributors to their home parish receive a subscription the Review.



If you are not a parish subscriber, contact the parish office or make a parish contribution with your request to receive the *St. Louis Review* in your home.

With the parish subscription you have print and online access because of parish contributions. There is no expiration date with your parish subscription access as long as you make regular contributions in your parish.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Monday, Conversion of St. Paul: Acts 22:3-16;
Ps 117:1bc, 2; Mk 16:15-18

Tuesday, Sts. Timothy & Titus: 2 Tm 1:1-8; Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 7-8a, 10; Mk 3:31-35

Wednesday: Heb 10:11-18; Ps 110:1, 2, 3, 4; Mk 4:1-20

Thursday, St. Thomas Aquinas: Heb 10:19-25;
Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6; Mk 4:21-25

Friday: Heb 10:32-39; Ps 37:3-4, 5-6, 23-24, 39-40;
Mk 4:26-34

Saturday: Heb 11:1-2, 8-19; (Ps) Lk 1:69-70, 71-72, 73-75; Mk 4:35-41

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time: Dt 18:15-20; Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 7-9; 1 Cor 7:32-35; Mk 1:21-28

THIS WEEK AT ST. STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR

Monday January 25	Tuesday January 26	Wednesday January 27	Thursday January 28	Friday January 29	Saturday January 30	Sunday January 31
	Mass 8 a.m.	Mass With Students 8 a.m.	Mass 8 a.m.	Mass With Students 8 a.m.	Mass 4 p.m.	Mass 9 a.m.
					CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK KICKOFF	

NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear friends,

I send a sincere thank you to all who sent cards and best wishes for the celebration of my 30th anniversary in the priesthood.

The notes and messages that were sent — **more than 320 of them!** — brought to mind many wonderful memories. Over these many years I have been blessed to serve with and minister to so many good people.

Reading the cards gave me a glance down Memory Lane. For example, one message pointed out that this couple was now celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary. This was one of the first couples I had united in marriage. They also included photos of their grown children. A subtle reminder of how time has passed.

The Lord has been ever so good to me over the years, and each of you reading this note have helped to make the years a blessed and pleasant journey.

Peace,




BAPTIZED IN CHRIST

We joyfully welcome as the newest member of our community of faith **John Christopher Drete**, son of Chris and Elizabeth Drete, who was baptized on **Jan. 17, 2021.**

Congratulations!



WELCOME!

Please extend a warm welcome to the newest members of our parish, **Rich and Barb Kummer**. So glad you've joined us!



MORNING REFLECTIONS

For the last few years during the Lenten season, **Mary Regan** has been sharing reflections on the day's readings on our parish Facebook page. When we started up with Flocknote last spring, Mary began sending those Lenten reflections via Flocknote as well.



Once we began sheltering in place due to COVID-19, it was decided that the Lenten daily reflections would continue beyond Lent and go year-round. Several parishioners have since joined Mary on the Morning Reflections "staff." Each person shares their perspective on the daily readings once or twice a month. We'd like to recognize and thank them for participating in this special ministry!

Bridgett Blake
Steve Butz
Pat Carosello
Christian Clerc
Barb Crockett
Nancy Doerhoff
Larry Driscoll
Mary Ellen Holdenried

Pam Holmes
Father Ron
Leigh Manalang
Carol Prag
Ann Rotermund
Michelle Rusch
Gary Stoff
Greg Sturgill

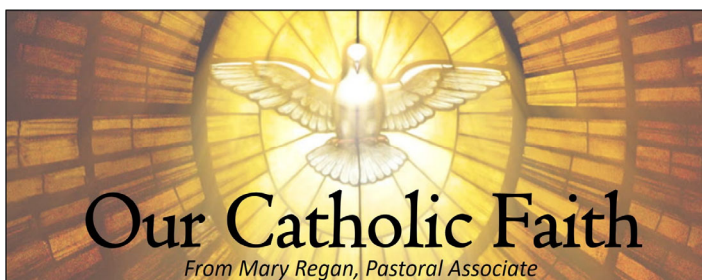
If you are not already receiving these Morning Reflections, you are invited to sign up at StStephenProtomartyr.flocknote.com/SSPDailyReflect.

SSP ANGELS NETWORK CHECK-IN

Last March, after we were asked to shelter in place, we set up a network of **SSP Angels** to pair parishioners with others in the parish and school community. The idea was to touch base, exchange cards and notes, and just be available to each other during a time of isolation.

We think it's worthwhile to remind others of this tool and maybe encourage people to check in with their "person" or "people" if they have not done so lately. There have been some address changes, and sadly, some of our parishioners have passed away since we set up the network. You have been contacted individually to make sure you are aware of such changes with a person you are already paired with.

And all are again invited to sign up to be paired with a person — or an additional person! — if you've not already done so. Visit the signup at www.signupgenius.com/go/9040848afaa2daafa7-sspangel.



Incense

Incense has been used in worship since ancient times and was associated with Jewish worship. It was often combined with burning sacrifices. It was burned on an altar of incense or in a censer. Among pagans, incense was offered to idols as an important part of worship. It was also used to keep demons away. The emperor was honored with incense as a sign of his divinity.

The use of incense has been part of the church's rituals since the beginning of Christianity, as early Christians adopted the use of incense from their Jewish worship. Among Christians, it has been used to purify, to bless, and to symbolize the motion of prayer upwards to God. Veneration is shown by incensing, as in the incensing of the altar, the Book of Gospels, the gifts of bread and wine, the assembly, and the body (or cremated remains) of the deceased during a funeral.

*Let my prayer be incense before you;
my uplifted hands an evening offering.* Psalm 141:2

If you have a question, contact **Mary** at 314-481-1133, #2, or mary.regan@saintstephenstl.org.

EIGHTH-GRADE PLAY

The show must go on! Each year our 8th grade class performs a play to raise funds for their Mystery Day and graduation party. This year's play is called "Virtually Ever After."



Students will be contributing their roles remotely and then assembling that material into a video to be live-streamed the weekend of February 5, to cap off Catholic Schools Week. Stay tuned for more information about performance time(s) and ticket sales. Visit www.saintstephenstl.org/8th-grade-play.

NEWS ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINE

The **St. Louis City Department of Health** has announced that when it receives COVID-19 vaccine supplies, it will follow the phased distribution established by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. City residents are encouraged to sign up at stlouisdph.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_08qM4vOqB5dJniR to be updated about vaccine availability.



The **Department of Veterans Affairs** is providing the COVID-19 vaccine to veterans and VA health care personnel, as it becomes available. Visit www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine for more information.

PROPERTY TAX CREDIT

If any senior residents of the City of St. Louis are looking for help with their Property Tax Credit (or Circuit Breaker, as it's popularly called), you are advised to contact one of these agencies:

- St. Louis Area Agency on Aging (SLAAA) at 314-612-5918 is offering assistance by telephone this year.
- Lutheran Senior Services has a social worker who will complete your Property Tax Credit at your home. She will also complete a benefits checklist for St. Louis City to determine if you're eligible for any other benefits. She can email and fax your claim to the Missouri Department of Revenue or give you instructions on mailing it. If interested, please call Donna Adams at 314-446-2472. She wears a mask and gloves, and tries to keep six feet of distance.

TRUST IN FOLLOWING GOD

Human beings seem to be hardwired to want to know what's going to happen next. This is how dramas and reality television can grip us so tightly — we simply have to stick around and watch the rest to see what's going

to happen. I find my own children sometimes asking, "So what are we going to do today, Mommy?" even though we have a fairly simple and consistent schedule each week. There seems to be a thirst to feel just a little bit in control by knowing what's coming next. I remember feeling this whenever we moved to a new city as a military family, navigating unfamiliar roads. My phone's GPS was never far from my hand as I drove, needing to know which turn to take next to feel comfortable driving in a new place.

The readings today call us to something radically different. In the first reading, God calls Jonah, but what is striking is that the call seems to imply that Jonah isn't given all the information right away. "Set out for the great city of Nineveh and announce to it the message that I will tell you." God doesn't say, "Announce the message I've already mapped out for you word by word so you can say yes, fully knowing every turn this journey will take." God simply says that He will tell him. So, even if it was brief, there is a sense that Jonah had a moment of just having to trust God and taking Him at His word, not knowing exactly what would come next.

What would it be like in Nineveh? How long would it take the people to turn back to God? However, this wasn't what Jonah needed to do or know to fulfill God's plan. He simply needed to act. He just needed to say yes and move forward with trust.

In the gospel, we hear the call of the Apostles, which takes on this same tone. Jesus beckons them to simply follow him. This call doesn't come after a long convincing discourse on how following him will practically take place. There are no lists of steps they need to complete before they can officially be his Apostles. There is just a radical call to drop their very livelihood and, in that moment, decide without knowing the course whether they will follow Jesus or not. The roads they will end up traveling with the Lord are unknown to them, and that isn't the point. The point is that they are called by God, and in that moment, they have a decision to trust the one who is



calling them, or to hesitate and feel the need to be in control and know exactly which way this "yes" will take them.

In both readings, there is another worldly response by the prophet and Apostles. Rather than following a base gut reaction to want to know all the details and what would come next, they boldly follow the call of God and trust that He would take care of the rest. This is the same call that Jesus is asking of us today. In our everyday lives, will we trust God in what He sends us, or will we try to control everything?

St. Paul gives us the encouragement we need to decide in the second reading. "The time is running out." His admonition is urgent, reminding us that deciding to follow Jesus isn't something we calculate and plan every detail before acting on, like other things in life. It's a call we respond to with trust and faith because God is good and only desires our good. The world we live in is not stable. It will not satisfy the deepest longings of our hearts. It will not provide us with what our souls need to live. Jesus is saying to you and to me, "Come, follow me." It is up to us to let go of our inclination to maintain control of every little bit of how our lives will unfold. God is trustworthy and true, and when He calls us, He will provide all the means necessary for our happiness and holiness.

Let's be bold like the examples in the readings this weekend. Jesus is calling to us right now — today! Let's answer that call by whatever form it comes. It could be to put down the phone during meals and be present to family. It might be to stop making excuses and help serve at the soup kitchen downtown. Maybe it's to finally confess that really difficult sin that we've been struggling with. Or maybe it's reaching out to a person who looks lonely. Whatever it is, big or small, let us have the courage to let go of our own plans and simply act by responding to Jesus' call, "Come, follow me" with deep trust in our unfathomably loving God.

Angie Windnagle
From LPi Connect!

Stay tuned in to our COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS

WEBSITE www.saintstephenstl.org

- **School:** www.saintstephenstl.org/school
FACTS is our parents' main source of the nitty-gritty, but here you can find more general information.
- **Livestream:** www.saintstephenstl.org/live-stream
Go here to see any of our live streams in real time, including Masses and other events; after their live airing, all videos are available in the archive, at the bottom of the page.

YOUTUBE www.youtube.com/ststephenprotomartyr

Includes all live-streamed videos, as well as prayers / songs / meditations, school-related videos, and past Masses. Subscribe to be notified of new videos.

FLOCKNOTE StStephenProtomartyr.flocknote.com

Our main parish communication tool. Sign up for whichever groups are of interest; unsubscribe at any time. Receive notes via email and/or text.

- **Daily Reflections:** Reflections on the day's readings from Mary Regan and parishioners.
- **Nightly News:** Born of sheltering in place, parish news and a reflection.
- **Weekly Bulletin:** Our weekly church bulletin.
- **Monthly Update:** Encapsulation of news & happenings over the past month.
- **News Alerts:** Urgent news; used rarely.
- **Prayer Tree:** Prayer requests from our community.

FACEBOOK

- **Parish:** www.facebook.com/sspstl
- **School:** www.facebook.com/SSPCatholicSchool
- **Alumni:** www.facebook.com/groups/StStephenAlumni
Public group of graduates of St. Stephen and anyone else who's interested.
- **PTO:** www.facebook.com/groups/SSPPTO
Private group limited to current school parents and staff. Go to group to request to join.

Questions? Contact **Stephanie Wobbe** at stephanie.wobbe@saintstephenstl.org or 314-660-1548.

YOUNG ADULT PRO-LIFE HOLY HOUR

Join young adults (aged 19-39) throughout the Archdiocese for this annual event to pray for an end to abortion and promote a greater respect for all life. The event begins with a talk by **Brian Westbrook** (Coalition for Life St. Louis) at 7 p.m. in the Cathedral followed by Adoration, the Rosary, and an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Call 314-792-7555 or email stlya@archstl.org for more information.



COVENANT NETWORK

By now, you probably have packed up all your Christmas decorations and



stored them for next year. We hope you haven't put your faith on the shelf. Faith is part of your daily life and, in this secular world, it is vital to have encouragement for the journey. Let Covenant Network help you with your daily dose of Truth with our inspiring programming.

Tune into KHOJ radio AM 1460 or listen on our free app or at OurCatholicRadio.org.

IN SEARCH OF CLEANING SUPPLIES

Help local families move from homelessness to housing with needed cleaning supplies. **St. Patrick Center** is seeking donations of the following items for clients moving into apartments and homes: mops, buckets, brooms, all-purpose cleaner, bathroom cleaner, dish soap, paper towels and toilet paper.

For more information, contact **Katie Joseph** at kjoseph@stppatrickcenter.org or 314-802-1976.

PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Join Archbishop Rozanski and our St. Louis Christian communities in prayer for unity as we strive to abide in God's love in order to bear much fruit (cf. John 15).

This prayer will allow us to virtually enter over a dozen churches in the St. Louis area as we pray together for Christ's unity among us.

Sunday, Jan. 31, 2021, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., via Zoom

You can find more details & the join link at archstl.org/ecumenical-interreligious-affairs/events or call **James Fowlkes-Comminellis** at 314-792-7177.

January 24, 2021

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, January 25

Private Mass

Tuesday, January 26

8 a.m. — Dale Baumann

Wednesday, January 27

8 a.m. — Stephen Monaco

Thursday, January 28

8 a.m. — Joseph Heaghney

Friday, January 29

8 a.m. — Lois McClellan

Saturday, January 30

4 p.m. — Ernie Sciaroni

Sunday, January 31

9 a.m. — Jean Westrich

PLEASE PRAY

for our sick and recovering ...

Joshua Aasgaard	Harley Gardner	Steve Moylan
Liz Bentrup	Jan Haffer	Grace Phillips
Ann Dosenbach	Paul Heidbrier	Bernard Vance
Larry Esswein	Tim Krueger	Virginia Zenthoefer
Beverly Gardner	Thomas Lorenz	

for our homebound ...

Jack Heffernan	Albertine Honious	Art Petersen
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for family members serving in the military ...

Derek Hirtz	Ryan O'Neil	Dylan Schulte
Sam May	Brian Schoellhorn	Mitch Sollmann
Tristan Moylan	Chris Schrader	

DEVOTIONS

Please contact the parish office if you would like to pray privately in the church.

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

SAINT  STEPHEN
Saint Stephen Protomartyr Parish

Parish Office Hours

314-481-1133

Monday through Thursday: 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Friday: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Closed Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays

Bulletin Article Deadline

Monday at 12 p.m. prior to the weekend bulletin.

Sacramental Celebrations

Eucharist

Make a reservation to attend **weekend** Masses via the link on our parish website or call Mary at 314-481-1133, option 2

Saturday: Mass, 4 p.m.

Sunday: Mass, 9 a.m.

Tuesday-Friday: Mass, 8 a.m. (no reservations required)

Reconciliation

Please call Father Ron to make an appointment.

Infant and Child Baptism

Baptisms are celebrated after any weekend Mass.

Parents are asked to call Mary Regan at 314-481-1133, #2, to arrange a date and time.

Adult Initiation / Reception into the Catholic Church

Any adult who would like to know more about our Catholic faith, and/or who is interested in becoming a member of the Catholic Church, please call the parish office.

Marriage

Please contact at least six months prior to the planned date of marriage.

Anointing of the Sick

We have a communal celebration of this sacrament at the weekend liturgies in the fall and in the spring. If you would like to be anointed before entering the hospital or if you are homebound, please call the office.

Parish School of Religion

PSR formal classes in our Catholic Faith

Children: 4 yrs. through 8th grade and high school

Located on the campus of St. John the Baptist Parish.

Call the PSR Director at 314-773-3070.

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For further information, please call the Parish Office.

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