

# ST. STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR PARISH

Immaculate Heart of Mary + St. John the Baptist + St. Stephen Protomartyr

## WEEKLY BULLETIN: December 14, 2025

### Welcome!

We are so glad that you have joined us for Mass. You matter to God, and you matter to us.

If you haven't been to a Catholic Mass, before, know that we use several different postures for prayer: standing, sitting, and kneeling. You can follow along and do what everyone else does, standing when they stand, and so on.

We believe that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist, so we kneel to express adoration of God-With-Us. If it is hard for you to kneel, you can sit instead.

At Communion, if you are not Catholic or not ready to receive the Eucharist, you can come forward with your arms folded to receive a blessing instead

*God Bless You!*

### Our Churches

St. Stephen Protomartyr (SSP) 3949 Wilmington, St. Louis, MO 63116  
Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) 4092 Blow, St. Louis, MO 63116  
St. John the Baptist (SJB) 4200 Delor, St. Louis, MO 63116

### Masses

Saturdays 4pm @ SSP  
Sundays 7am @ SJB • 10am @ IHM • 4:30 @ SSP  
Weekdays 6:30am @ SJB  
Monday, Wednesday, Saturday 8am @ IHM  
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8am @ SSP

### Main Office

3949 WILMINGTON AVE., ST. LOUIS, MO 63116  
MONDAY-THURSDAY 8AM-3PM  
314-481-1133 • [WWW.SSPSTL.ORG](http://WWW.SSPSTL.ORG)

### St. Stephen Protomartyr School

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### Maintenance Team

Jim Sciaroni, Maintenance Mgr  
Arturo Cruz, Nate Scott, Fidencio Tomas, Mercy Job

Please join us in singing the entrance hymn. The lyrics for the music chosen for 10 AM Mass are printed below, all other Mass lyrics can be found in the *Breaking Bread* hymnal

## ENTRANCE SONG

*Please Stand*

### JOYFUL JOYFUL WE ADORE THEE

1. Joyful, joyful, we adore You, God of glory, Lord of love; Hearts unfold like flow'r's before You, Op'ning to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away; Giver of immortal gladness, Fill us with the light of day

2. All Thy works with joy surround Thee, Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays, Stars and angels sing around Thee, Center of unbroken praise. Field and forest, vale and mountain, Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea, Singing bird and flowing fountain Call us to rejoice in Thee.

3. Thou art giving and forgiving, Ever blessing, ever blest, Wellspring of the joy of living, Ocean depth of happy rest! Thou our Father, Christ our Brother, All who live in love are Thine; Teach us how to love each other, Lift us to the joy divine.

4. Mortals, join the happy chorus, Which the morning stars began; Father love is reigning o'er us, Brother love binds man to man. Ever singing, march we onward, Victors in the midst of strife, Joyful music leads us Sunward In the triumph song of life.

## GREETING

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

**And with your spirit.**

## PENITENTIAL RITE

**Lord, have mercy.**

**Christ, have mercy.**

**Lord, have mercy.**

### How We Pray

When the priest quietly prays "Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin" while washing his hands at the altar, he isn't performing a practical cleaning. It's a ritual purification that reminds us that the one offering the sacrifice must also seek God's mercy. This silent prayer connects the Mass to the ancient priestly rituals of the Temple, where purification came before sacrifice.

## FIRST READING (Isaiah 35)

*Please Be Seated*

The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom. They will bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song. The glory of Lebanon will be given to them, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God. Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak, say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared; then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the mute will sing. Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy; they will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee.

*The word of the Lord*

**Thanks be to God.**

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM (PSALM 146)

**Lord, come and save us.**

1. The LORD God keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets captives free.

2. The LORD gives sight to the blind; the LORD raises up those who were bowed down. The LORD loves the just; the LORD protects strangers.

3. The fatherless and the widow he sustains, but the way of the wicked he thwarts. The LORD shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, through all generations.

### How We Pray

At the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer, when the priest says "Lift up your hearts" ("Sursum Corda"), the Church teaches that we are not just being encouraged emotionally—liturgically, we are being invited to enter the heavenly liturgy. In that moment, the earthly Mass is united with the eternal worship of heaven, meaning we are praying alongside angels, saints, and all who have gone before us.

## SECOND READING (JAMES 5)

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not complain, brothers and sisters, about one another, that you may not be judged. Behold, the Judge is standing before the gates. Take as an example of hardship and patience, brothers and sisters, the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

*The word of the Lord*

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Please Stand**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor.

## GOSPEL (MATTHEW 11)

The Lord be with you.

And with your Spirit

A reading from the holy Gospel according to

Matthew

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." As they were going off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? Then what did you go out to see? Someone dressed in fine clothing? Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces. Then why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you. Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

*The Gospel of The Lord*

**Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ**

## HOMILY

The priest will now preach the homily, explaining the day's Scriptures and applying them to life today.

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

**Please Stand**

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

We pray to the Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

## OFFERTORY SONG

**Please Be Seated**

**PATIENCE, PEOPLE**

**Patience people, till the Lord is come.**

1. See the farmer await the yield of the soil. He watches it in winter and in spring rain. Patience, people, for the Lord is coming.

2. You have seen the purpose of the Lord. You know his compassion and his mercy. Patience, people, for the Lord is coming.

3. Steady your hearts for the Lord is close at hand. And do not grumble one against the other. Patience, people, for the Lord is coming.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Please Stand

Pray, brothers and sisters that my sacrifice and yours, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.  
**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right and just.**

## HOLY

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and Earth are full, full of your glory.

Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.  
Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

## MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION

We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection, until you come again.

## OUR FATHER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin, and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope, and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

**For the Kingdom the power and the glory are yours now and forever.**

### How We Pray

During the Gloria, when we say “We praise You, we bless You, we adore You, we glorify You,” the Church is intentionally stacking multiple forms of praise. This isn’t poetic repetition—each verb corresponds to a distinct biblical way of worshiping God. The Gloria is one of the oldest Christian hymns still used at Mass, and praying it unites us with the earliest generations of believers who proclaimed God’s glory using these very same words.

## SIGN OF PEACE

At this time the congregation will offer one another a sign of peace; some embracing, some shaking hands, etc. This gesture flows from Christ’s teaching to make peace with others as we approach the altar.

## LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
grant us peace

*Please Kneel*

Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world; blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

## COMMUNION

At this time the congregation will come forward to receive the Blessed Sacrament in communion. If you are not Catholic or are not prepared to receive the Eucharist you are invited to cross your hands over your chest and come forward for a blessing.

## COMMUNION SONG 1

### BUILD MY LIFE

1. Worthy of every song we could ever sing Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe We live for You, oh, we live for You

2. Jesus, the Name above every other name Jesus, the only One who could ever save Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe We live for You, we live for You

**Holy, there is no one like You There is none beside You Open up my eyes in wonder And show me who You are And fill me with Your heart And lead me in Your love to those around me**

**Bridge.** And I will build my life upon Your love It is a firm foundation And I will put my trust in You alone And I will not be shaken And I will build my life upon Your love It is a firm foundation And I will put my trust in You alone And I will not be shaken

## FINAL BLESSING

The Lord be with you.  
**And with your spirit.**  
Bow your heads for the blessing.  
The response after each prayer is: **Amen.**  
The Mass is ended, go in peace.  
Thanks be to God.



**Seeking Eucharistic Ministers for Christmas Masses**  
We are looking for Eucharistic Ministers to serve at our upcoming Christmas liturgies. Volunteers are needed for the Christmas Eve Masses at 4:00 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, 5:00 p.m. at St. Stephen Protomartyr, and 10:00 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary. We also need ministers for the Christmas Day Masses at 8:00 a.m. at St. John the Baptist and 10:00 a.m. at St. Stephen Protomartyr. If you are able to serve, we would be grateful for your help in making our celebrations prayerful and welcoming.

Today is Gaudete Sunday, a day for extra joy as we notice that Christmas is coming close. Our Advent Novena starts this week on Wednesday December 17 at 7 pm at SSP church and continues each evening at 7 pm till Tuesday December 23. It's an experience of quiet prayer and song that's perfect for rest and peace either at the end of a busy holiday-preparing day or before a busy holiday-preparing night!

We're doing two new things this year to help welcome as many people as possible to pray with us for Christmas. First, we'll live stream the 5 pm Mass on December 24 at SSP. You can find the livestream using the usual features on our website. Second, we'll have a shuttle running from the parking lot of Borgmeyer Dental at Wilmington and Leona to the doors of SSP Church before the 5 pm Mass on December 24. If you are an SSP insider, take advantage of this opportunity to avoid the usual scramble for parking on Wilmington. We're able to offer these upgrades to our Christmas hospitality thanks to the Drs. Borgmeyer, the Holy Name Society, and our hardworking staff.

Finally, a reminder: on January 4, we start our experimental Mass schedule, adding a Sunday 8:30 am Mass at SSP to our existing schedule of weekend Masses. God bless you!

## CLOSING SONG

### CITY OF GOD

1. Awake from your slumber! Arise from your sleep!  
A new day is dawning for all those who weep  
The people in darkness have seen a great light  
The Lord of our longing has conquered the night

**Let us build the city of God May our tears be turned  
into dancing! For the Lord, our light and our love  
Has turned the night into day!**

2. We are sons of the morning; we are daughters of day.  
The One who has loved us has brightened our way.  
The Lord of all kindness has called us to be a light  
for his people to set their hearts free.

3. God is light; in him there is no darkness. Let us walk in his light, his children, one and all. O comfort my people; make gentle your words. Proclaim to my city the day of her birth.

## Daily Readings

**Mon:** Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a, Psalm 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9, Psalm 85:8, Matthew 21:23-27, **Tues:** Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13, Psalm 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23, Matthew 21:28-32, **Wed:** Genesis 49:2, 8-10, Psalm 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17, Matthew 1:1-17, **Thurs:** Jeremiah 23:5-8, Psalm 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19, Matthew 1:18-25, **Fri:** Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a, Psalm 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17, Luke 1:5-25, **Sat:** Isaiah 7:10-14, Psalm 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6, Luke 1:26-38

## PASTOR'S NOTE

I thought you should know...





**Join ST. STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR  
at  
LIGHT UP GLENNON**  
Updated date: Monday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm



WITH CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES  
AT SSM CARDINAL GLENNON DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON!

Location:  
Cardinal Glennon Hospital  
1465 S Grand Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63104

Register Today!



Event does not require Prevent and Protect

Learn More about Light Up Glennon-[glennon.org/light-up-glennon/](http://glennon.org/light-up-glennon/)



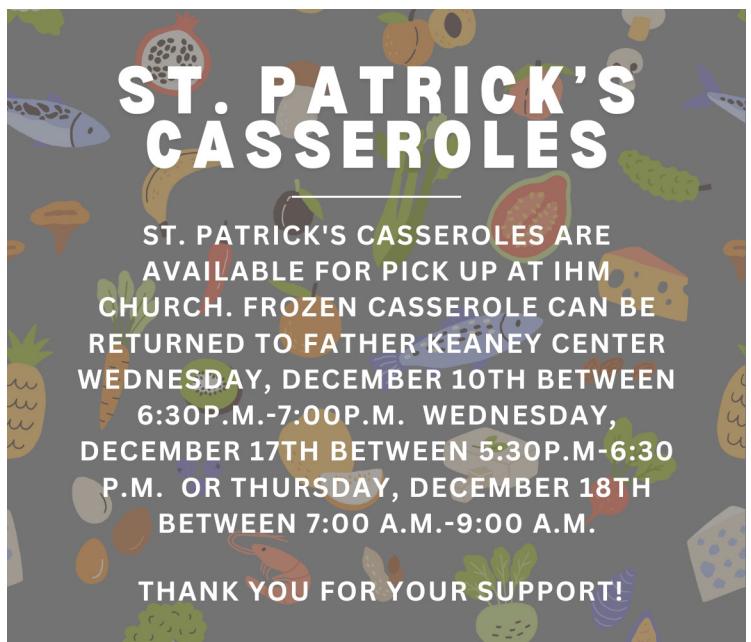
Thank you for the donations made at Thanksgiving Day Mass to the St. Vincent DePaul society. Your generosity on that day and throughout the year helps many people in the parish boundaries keep their lights and heat on in their homes. Food donations go to our pantries to help our neighbors in need when household food supplies get low.

Thank you for the gift cards donated to the Giving tree to help families have a merry Christmas.

Your generosity, kindness and prayers help maintain what our members do for others.

Bless you!

Barbara Vineyard, president SVDP



*Advent*  
**NOVENA**

All are invited to attend our Advent Novena, which will take place from 12/17 through 12/23, starting at 7pm, at St. Stephen Protomartyr Church.



**LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER**

...for our sick and recovering and their caregivers — Frank Gion, Buddy Horrell, Kathleen Moody, Denise Trull, Garry Winter, Rev Ronald Chochol, Quinn Mattingly, Gary Stoff, Grace Forti, Kathy Ruggeri, Margie (Niebling) Yanko, Mary Bentrup Gherardini, Paula Bonn, JoAnn Welby, Joseph Thang, Pat Merz... and those who are homebound or no longer living in their homes.

**HAVE A BULLETIN SUBMISSION?**

Email [bulletin@sspstl.org](mailto:bulletin@sspstl.org) or call 314-481-1133, x303. Items must be received by Monday before 8 a.m.

## MASSES, CELEBRANTS & INTENTIONS

SSP = St. Stephen Protomartyr Church  
 IHM = Immaculate Heart of Mary Church  
 SJB = St. John the Baptist Church

### Monday, December 15

SJB 6:30am Fr. Aaron Nord Ante Dizdar  
 IHM 8:00am Fr. Tim Foley Nick Beffa+

### Tuesday, December 16

SJB 6:30am Fr. Aaron Nord Intentions of the Holy Father  
 SSP 8:00am Fr. Tim Foley Margie Niebling Yanko (health)

### Wednesday, December 17

SJB 6:30am Fr. Aaron Nord Intentions of the Holy Father  
 IHM 8:00am Fr. Tim Foley Irv Haislar +

### Thursday, December 18

SJB 6:30am Fr. Tim Foley Poor Souls in Purgatory +  
 SSP 8:00am Fr. Aaron Nord Intentions of the Holy Father  
 IHM 6:00pm Confessions

### Friday, December 19

SJB 6:30am Fr. Aaron Nord Intentions of the Holy Father  
 SSP 8:00am Fr. Tim Foley Margie Niebling Yanko (health)  
 SJB 6 pm Confession with Adoration

### Saturday, December 20

IHM 8:00am Fr. Aaron Nord Rich Kage+  
 SSP 3:00pm Confessions  
 SSP 4:00pm Fr. Tim Foley Howard Neels +

### Sunday, December 21

SJB 7:00am Fr. Aaron Nord Jimmy Feser  
 SJB 7:45am Confessions  
 IHM 9:30am Confessions, 9:35am Rosary  
 IHM 10:00am Fr. Tim Foley Tobias Eileen Book +  
 SSP 4:30pm Fr. Aaron Nord Kim Dengler + Kerre  
 Reynolds (Living) Twins

## MASS MINISTERS, DECEMBER 20 - DECEMBER 21

	Altar Server	LECTORS
SAT 4pm SSP CHURCH	Reagan Joly Sean Finney	Sandy Gaydos Cathy Kveton
SUN 7am SJB CHURCH	John Benz	Agnes Baca Thom Pancella
SUN 10am IHM CHURCH	Lazaro Navarro John Lian	Mary Raber Becky Will
SUN 4:30pm SSP CHURCH	Bryce McMahon Lily Minor	Erin Goedeker Leigh Manalang

CALENDAR	
For more information, please refer to — or subscribe to — our calendar at <a href="http://www.sspstl.org/ssp-calendars">www.sspstl.org/ssp-calendars</a> or call the parish office at 314-481-1133.	
Mon. Dec 15	10am Weekly Bible Study @ SJB Conference Room 1pm Plarn Group @ IHM Rectory Basement
Tues. Dec 16	9am Exercise and Balance Class @ IHM Cafeteria 10am Quilters @ IHM Rectory Meeting Room 1pm Men's Small Group Meeting @ IHM Rectory Basement 6pm Our Mother of Perpetual Help Devotions @ IHM Chapel 6pm The Well Small Group @ SJB 6pm Boy Scout Troop 179 Meeting @ IHM Cafeteria 6:15pm Lectio Divina @ IHM Chapel 7:30pm Men's Club Meeting @ SJB Cafeteria
Wed. Dec 17	9am Senior Group Christmas Party @ SJB Parish Center 10am Morning Advent Bible Study @ IHM Rector Meeting Room 7pm Evening Advent Bible Study @ SJB Conference Room 7pm Advent Novena @ SSP
Thurs. Dec 18	8am Quilters @ SJB Quilters Room 6pm Weekly Bible Study Group 2 @ SJB Conference Room 6pm Eucharistic Adoration @ IHM Church 7pm Advent Novena @ SSP
Fri. Dec 19	9am Exercise @ IHM Cafeteria 6pm Benediction and Rosary @ SJB 6pm The Potter's House Small Group @ IHM Rectory Basement 7pm Advent Novena @ SSP
Sat. Dec 20	7pm Advent Novena @ SSP
Sun. Dec 21	8am Small Group Bible Study @ SJB 10am Children's Liturgy of the Word @ IHM 11am Fellowship Sunday @ Father Keaney Center 11:30am Christmas Choir Practice @ SSP 11:30am OCIA Class @ IHM Rectory Meeting Room 4:30pm Children's Liturgy of the Word @ SSP 4:30pm Sacred Sparks @ SSP Rectory 7pm Advent Novena @ SSP

Interested in more parish events and local opportunities? Join our Flocknote community: <https://saintstephenstl.org/weekly-update>



## CONTRIBUTIONS

December 1- December 7, 2025

General Parish Funds..... \$22,527.28  
 Archdiocesan Collections..... \$960.00  
 St. Vincent de Paul Society ..... \$1,787.00  
 22% of these funds were donated online  
 Sign up for online giving at  
[www.osvhub.com/saint-stephen-stl](http://www.osvhub.com/saint-stephen-stl)

## NEED EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE?

The St. Vincent de Paul Society is here to help. Call 314-289-6101, x1181, if you or someone you know needs emergency assistance with utilities or food. A Vincentian will return your call within one to two days. All calls are confidential.