

Sunday, December 16, 2012
3rd Sunday of Advent
Gaudete Sunday



Sun. 16 December 3rd Sunday of Advent, I Class

8:30 am †Norma Lucio
 10:30 am Pro Populo
 1:00 pm David Solton

3:00 pm Vespers & Benediction

Mon. 17 December, Greater Feria of Advent, II Class

7:00 am Holy Souls in Purgatory
 12:15 pm Chester Patch IV

Tues. 18 December, Greater Feria of Advent, II Class

7:00 am Rev. Nicholas Duggan
 6:30 pm Patricia Patch

Wed. 19 December, Ember Wednesday of Advent, II Class

7:00 am Madeline Soder
 12:15 pm †Marie & †Frank Cammarota

Thurs. 20 December, Greater Feria of Advent, II Class

7:00 am †Romeo Vitug
 6:30 pm Confraternity of St. Peter

Fri. 21 December, St. Thomas, Apostle, II Class

7 am Souls in Purgatory
 12:15 pm Carol Cummings
 6:30 pm Fr. John Lyons, OMV

Sat. 22 December, Ember Saturday of Advent, II Class

7:00 am †Rev. Gerald P. McCort, S.J.
 9:00 am †Rev. Camille J. Prat, S.J.

Sun. 23 December, 4th Sunday of Advent

8:30 am Angela Patch
 10:30 am Pro Populo
 1:00 pm †Msgr. Schons

3:00 pm Vespers & Benediction

Sick Calls

If anyone is in need of the Sacrament (i.e. homebound) please call the parish office. If it is an **emergency**, outside of office hours, dial (916) 455-5114, then press 1, leave a message, and the priest-on-call will be paged immediately.

...In Memoriam

†Mark Trachera; †Fr. Lawrence Ryan (Sacramento Diocese);
 †Joseph Cortese; †Frank Farinha; †Cesar Chaves;
 †Msgr. Gerard Schons; †Rodolfo Servande; †Felice Johnson;
 †Jim Chun; †Aida Apaza; †Bessie Perez; †Robert Perez;
 †Richard Becker; †George Phillips; †Harriet Morton; †Nick Franusich

Important Upcoming Dates

Dec. 18—Chesterton Meeting
 Dec. 20—CSP Advent Evening of Recollection
 Dec. 25—Christmas
 Dec. 26—St. Stephen Day—High Mass—Guild Award Ceremony
 Jan. 1—Octave Day of Christmas (Sunday schedule)
 Jan. 5—Blessing of Epiphany Water 10:00 am
 Jan. 6—Epiphany
 Jan. 12—1st Communion Class
 Jan. 26—Walk for Life
 Jan. 27—St. Maximilian Kolbe—Saint of Auschwitz Live Performance
 Feb.2—Skating Party
 April 14—Confirmation
 May 11—First Holy Communion
 June 1—Ordinations in Nebraska
 June 16—22—Camp Sacred Heart

Seeking God in Love

Faith “is like the feet wherewith the soul journeys to God, and love is the guide that directs it.” Charity follows faith; in this life, faith and charity, as it were, go at an equal pace: the one depends on the other, one progresses with the progress of the other, and both of them immerse the soul deeper and deeper into God. A soul who believes with its whole strength that God is truly God, that He is the supreme Being to whom we all belong and that He is worthy of all our love, will have an ardent desire for Him, and in it will be fulfilled the words of St. John of the Cross: “The soul will merit the revelation by love of that which faith holds within itself.” That is, faith will make us believe in the greatness, mercy and infinite charity of God, but love will make us taste and experience them: this happens especially during contemplative prayer in which God draws the soul to Himself. However, even prescinding from this experience, we ought to exercise ourselves in love in order to go to God “by steps of love.”

Jesus Himself commanded us to practice this virtue in the highest degree: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength.” St. Paul exhorts us to “walk in love,” and St. Thomas teaches that “love is the life of the soul.” However, the love that is charity is pure benevolence toward God; its intensity depends upon its purity, that is, this love must consist in the one desire of pleasing God and doing His will, without seeking personal satisfaction.

The love which will lead us to God does not consist in sentiment; it is an act of the will. To love is to “will good;” to love God, is to “will good to God,” The good which we can desire for God is that which Jesus Himself taught us to ask of our heavenly Father: “Hallowed be Thy name; Thy will be done.” Since God is the infinite good upon which everything depends, the good that He desires and that by which He is pleased is none other than His own glory and the accomplishment of His holy will.

We love God, then, to the degree in which we apply ourselves to do His will, without any personal preoccupations or self-seeking. St. John of the Cross says that if a soul looks for sweetness and delight in God, “it would not then love God purely, above all things.” In fact, together with Him the soul would also be seeking some personal satisfaction, because its heart would be divided between love of God and love of itself; and therefore, it would be unable to “set the strength of the will upon Him.” Hence, the Saint concludes, it should “have that hunger and thirst for God alone, and desire not to be satisfied with aught else.” A soul which, moment by moment and in all its actions, seeks nothing but the will of God, is really seeking God in love and is uniting itself effectively to Him, even though it feels no consolation. But because it is always true that “if a soul is seeking God, its Beloved is seeking it much more.” He may sometimes draw it to Himself, making it taste the sweetness of His love and the joy of belonging entirely to Him. However, not even then may the soul stop to relish these consolations, but humbly accepting them, it should use them to give itself to God with greater resolution and generosity.

(“Divine Intimacy” by Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, OCD)

Christmas Mass Schedule

11:15 P.M. Hymns and Carols
12:00 Midnight Solemn Mass
8:30 A.M. Low Mass
10:30 A.M. Solemn Mass
1:00 P.M. Low Mass with organ

Advent Evening of Recollection

Don’t miss out on the spiritual benefits of our CSP Evening of Recollection on Thursday, Dec. 20th. This recollection is open to all and will be a great preparation for the solemn Feast of Christmas.

The evening will begin with Holy Mass at 6:30 and will include a sermon, conference after Mass, Confraternity prayers and will conclude with Compline.

As always, confession will be available before Mass.

The Catholic Guide to Depression

By Aaron Kheriaty, MD with Fr. John Cihak

Countless Christians—including scores of saints—have suffered profound, pervasive sorrow that modern psychiatrists call “depression.” Then, as now great faith and even fervent spiritual practices have generally failed to ease this wearying desolation of soul.

In these pages, experienced Catholic psychiatrist Aaron Kheriaty reviews the effective ways that have recently been devised to deal with this grave and sometimes deadly affliction—ways that are not only consistent with the teachings of the Church, but even rooted in many of those teachings.

Extensive clinical experience treating patients with depression has shown Dr. Kheriaty that the confessional can’t cure neuroses, nor can the couch forgive sins. Healing comes only when we integrate the legitimate discoveries of modern psychology and pharmacology with spiritual direction and the sacraments, giving particular attention to the wisdom of the Church Fathers and the saints. . . . Which is just what Dr. Kheriaty does in this thoughtful, compassionate, spiritually wise book: *The Catholic Guide to Depression*.

Here, with the expert help of Dr. Kheriaty, you’ll learn how to distinguish from similar-looking but fundamentally different mental states such as guilt, sloth, the darkness of sin, and the sublime desolation called “dark night of the soul” that is, in fact, a privileged spiritual trial sent to good souls as a special gift from God.

You’ll come to know how to identify the various types of depression and come to understand the interplay of their often manifold causes, biological, psychological, behavioral, cultural, and, yes, moral.

Then you’ll learn about exciting breakthroughs in pharmacological and other medical treatments, the benefits and limitations of psychotherapy, the critical place that spiritual direction must have in your healing, and the vital role that hope—Christian hope—can play in driving our depression.

For those less-frequent cases when the pains of depression can’t be fully banished by the combined efforts of science and spirituality, Dr. Kheriaty shows how pain—like the unavoidable sufferings of Jesus on the Cross—can be made redemptive for yourself and for others.

Finally, to this masterful, hope-filled work Dr. Kheriaty has appended a list of resources for further reading, a set of prayers for those times when the anguish of depression grows great, and even an address by Pope John Paul II about depression.

Written by a faithful Catholic psychiatrist committed to the teachings of the Church, *The Catholic Guide to Depression* provides help and consolation to anyone suffering from this grave spiritual affliction. And it affords friends, loved ones, pastors, and spiritual directors the knowledge they need to give depressed persons the understanding, help, and comfort they so desperately need.

(available at St. Stephen’s Bookstore)



Saint Andrew Christmas Novena

Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. In that hour, vouchsafe, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my desires, through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother. Amen. (Novena begins on the Feast of St. Andrew, November 30 and is to be said 15 times each day.)

~Christmas Gift Ideas~

Our book and gift store at St. Stephens is filled with beautiful and meaningful gifts which would be perfect for Christmas! Everything from statues to our St. Stephen Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Mystic Monk Coffee, sterling & gold filled medals, just to name a few things. The shop is open several hours every day, so be sure to stop in and check things out. For more information call 916-223-3112.

Gift Certificates are available too!

Walk for Life—January 26, 2013

Bus tickets are available. Remember: A FULL BUS IS A PAID FOR BUS. Contact Mike—916-335-4553 or Kathleen—916-204-9125.

Saint Francis Xavier Mission Trip 2013

After the great success of last summer’s trip to the Dominican Republic, we would like to announce our trip to Piura, Peru August 2-14, 2013. The trip is under the direction of seminarians from Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary and the chaplaincy of Fr. Rhone Lillard, F.S.S.P. Young men and women ages 16-21 can apply by visiting www.sfxmission.com. The registration deadline is January 21st. Space on the trip is limited and will be granted on a first come first serve basis. Please also visit the website to learn more about the project and find out how you can become an auxiliary member of our trip through your donations. Contact: SFXMission@gmail.com or (402) 882-0029.

Registration for 1st Communion Class

Registration is now open for 1st Communion classes which will begin January 12, 2013. Forms are available in the parish office or bookstore. Please sign up as soon as possible. The usual age for 1st Communion is 7 years old.

New to St. Stephen’s?

Please stop by the office or bookstore and pick up a registration form. It is very helpful for us to have contact information for your family, even if you cannot come to St. Stephen’s every week.

If you do not have envelopes and would like them you can pick up a box in the bookstore. The use of envelopes is very helpful for our bookkeeping system.

Please Keep in Your Prayers ...

Mike Hayes, Jim Carlson, Kaehler Family, Mike McGrath, Barbara Graichen, Patricia Becker, Munsill Family, Michael Gould; Sister Marie Jeanne, Elizabeth Pierini; Charles Cantoni, Hayden Garcia, Mitzi Vandenburg, John Reyes; Lori Bates; Fred & Terry Bose; Ed Wedinsky; Ken Taylor, Carmen Brown, Peter Van Steyn, Elizabeth Van Steyn