

Sunday, July 27, 2014
7th Sunday after Pentecost



Sun. 27 July	7th Sunday after Pentecost, II Class
8:30 am	Tom & Monique Rance
10:30 am	Pro Populo
1:00 pm	Gomez Family
3:00 pm	Vespers & Benediction
Mon. 28 July	SS. Nazarius & Celsus, Martyrs, III Class
7:00 am	†Dorice Madden
12:15 pm	Anne Dabat
Tues. 29 July	St. Martha, Virgin, III Class
7:00 am	Melia Aranas
6:30 pm	Confraternity of St. Peter
Wed. 30 July	SS. Abdon & Sennen, Martyrs, IV Class
7:00 am	Trina, Lily, Julia & Clare Pilegaard
12:15 pm	Jean Haun & Family
Thurs. 31 July	St. Ignatius Loyola, Confessor, III Class
7:00 am	Teresa & Mark Pilegaard & Family
6:30 pm	Klaus & Sallie Barber
Fri. 1 Aug.	Holy Machabees, Martyrs, IV Class
7:00 am	†Alice Marie Becker
9:00 am	†Betty Efflamdt
12:15 pm	Judith Dragon
Sat. 2 Aug.	St. Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor, III Class
7:00 am	†Blanca Gaeta
9:00 am	FSSP
Sun. 3 Aug.	8th Sunday after Pentecost, II Class
8:30 am	Adeline Le Bigot & Family
10:30 am	Pro Populo
1:00 pm	†Eleanor Matthews
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, and the priest-on-call will be paged immediately.

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.

...In Memoriam

†Charles Cantoni, †Manuel Nino, †Margaret Correa,
 †Cindy Yumoto, †Fr. Vladimir Kozina, †Philip Rutschow,
 †Jennie Tomasi

Important Upcoming Dates

August 3—Patronal Feast—Pig Roast & Square Dance
 August 13—Fatima Procession
 August 15—Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
 August 23—English Martyrs Pilgrimage
 September 6—Girls' Club resumes
 October 18—26th Anniversary of the FSSP
 October 31—All Saints Eve Party

The Power of Faith

Jesus has said: "All things are possible to him that believeth." It would seem that before an act of living faith, blind, unconditional faith, God does not know how to resist and considers Himself almost obliged to grant our requests. The Gospel tells us this on every page: before Jesus performed a miracle, He always asked for an act of faith. "Do you believe that I can do this unto you?"; and when faith was sincere, the miracle took place immediately. "Be of good heart, daughter," He said to the woman who was troubled with an issue of blood, "thy faith hath made thee whole." Jesus never said, "My omnipotence has saved you, has cured you," but *your faith*, as if to make us understand that faith is the indispensable condition that He requires if we are to benefit from His omnipotence. He, the Almighty, will use His omnipotence only for the benefit of those who firmly believe in Him. This is why the divine Master refused to perform in Nazareth the many miracles He performed elsewhere. The more lively our faith, the more powerful it is with the very power of God. "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed," Jesus affirmed, "you shall say to this mountain, 'Remove from hence hither,' and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you." These words are true, literally true, like everything in the Gospel; if they are not effectual for us, it is only because our faith is very weak. How many difficulties we meet with in life which are for us real mountains to move! Difficulties in the spiritual life: faults we cannot overcome, virtues we cannot seem to acquire; difficulties in our everyday life: insufficient means of support, duties which surpass our ability or our strength... And we stop, discouraged, at the foot of these mountains: "It is impossible, I cannot do it!" It would take only a little faith like a grain of mustard seed, which is very tiny indeed. But provided that faith is living, capable of sprouting like the mustard seed, provided that faith is certain, resolute, supernatural, and that it counts only on God and trusts in His Name alone, this faith will confront every difficulty whatsoever with courage. Oh! If we could only have such faith! "Nothing is impossible to him that believeth."

Although the difficulties we encounter may be serious ones, discouragement is never justified. We become discouraged because we reflect on our powerlessness: on one side, we remember our past failures, and on the other, we place before ourselves the prospect of situations which are beyond our strength, making them appear like insurmountable mountains which crush, smother and paralyze us. But a soul who has faith in God, who is sure of its God, well knows how to find a way to escape from these straits, and makes use of its own impotence and difficulties as a springboard to plunge into God by a strong, determined act of faith.

God sometimes permits us to find ourselves in very difficult situations which cannot be solved by human means. He permits us to undergo painful spiritual trials, resulting in states of real anguish, and He permits this for the sole purpose of forcing us to practice the virtue of faith, which in certain cases can and must become heroic. We must believe in Him, in His all-powerful omnipotence; believe in His word. Yet, even if our faith were strong, God could still test it as Jesus did that of the Canaanite woman. If he does, we must imitate her: we must not give up, nor cease to believe, but believe even more firmly, so that He will be forced to answer us as He did that humble woman: "Great is thy faith; be it done to thee as thou wilt."

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

How To Make a Good Confession

The end of sorrow, both natural and supernatural, is correction, change. Supernatural sorrow must wean the soul from sin and turn it to God; it must, in other words, work repentance, for to repent is to change. The punishment of sin is meant to deter from sin. It is first corrective and then penal.

Sorrow, therefore, is a divine power when it restrains the soul from sin; in short, when it "worketh penance, steadfast unto salvation." The soul honestly appraising its past sins and their consequences cannot but be deeply touched with a sorrow prolific of perennial penitence. Holy Scripture insists on lifelong repentance. "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord." "With fear and trembling work out your salvation."

One thought underlies all these texts; they express one dominant truth. And this momentarily significant verity that comes out of them all is the idea of constant repentance. For what are sorrow, humiliation, fear, and trembling but emanations of a deep and lasting realization of sin? They are at once the most becoming livery and the most powerful panoply of penitents, and their striking feature is their enduring character.

An inquiry into the cause of penitence reveals the same truth. Penitence is born of a consciousness of sin, and a consciousness of sin deepens with the passing of life. Repentance, therefore, intensifies as we grow older. This progressive development that we experience of the knowledge of sin is seen also in Sacred Scripture. As in ourselves, so in the Bible, the depths of sin are only gradually unfolded.

In a most remarkably simple way, the Scriptures describe the first sin in the garden. It is spoken of as an act of little moment despite the far-reaching and appalling effects of its commission. The sacred writer manifests no surprise at human or divine issues, because he is revealing the God who, since He cannot change, beholds all things with infinite calm and eternal equanimity.

Besides, the Old Testament treats of sin as affecting man socially rather than individually. The anger of God kindled by it and evoking His terrible chastisements, the harrowing effects produced by it in the world, its diffusively virulent nature, its antagonism to God—these unspeakable consequences are stressed rather than the nature of sin in itself and its effect upon man's soul.

The social aspect of sin likewise forms the burden of the Ten Commandments. The greater part of the Gospels themselves deals only with the external results of sin: its hideous deformity, its hateful selfishness, as contrasted with God's infinite love and His eternal beneficence.

Even more graphically than the books of the Old Testament do the Gospels describe these outward effects, because the light of God's incarnate presence is focused upon them. Only in the letters of the apostles, especially those of St. Paul, is the nature of sin thoroughly analyzed, its intrinsic malice clearly shown, and its deadly effect upon man's soul brought to light.

"I see," says the great apostle, "another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin that is in my members." Again, he says: "I do not that good which I will, but the evil which I hate." And again: "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, for these are contrary one to another; so that you do not the things that you would."

Just as man's disobedience is first simply stated, and its external effect and internal malice afterward vividly described, in the same progressive manner does sin reveal itself to the soul. The commission of the first actual sin is a mere insignificant commonplace, inspiring no reasonable shame or analysis of its cause nor any deep realization of its full enormity. As we grow older, we begin to feel the actual consequences of sin, the evils flowing from it that afflict us and those we love. Gradually the knowledge of its real nature, the secret disorder wrought by it, and the ruin and desolation that it brings into the soul unfold themselves to the mind.

(*How To Make a Good Confession* by John A. Kane)

The Finding of the Relics of St. Stephen Annual Pig Roast & Square Dance

Tickets are on sale after all Sunday Masses: \$10/individual and \$25/family.

Please prayerfully consider volunteering for one of the BBQ events, serving food, helping in a booth, or clean-up. Sign-up sheets are available in the vestibule of the church. **This is our biggest event of the year— everyone's help is needed! God bless you!**

Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary Rosa Mystica & Little Flowers

Registration is now open for Rosa Mystica (ages 9-14) & Little Flowers (ages 5-8). Forms are available at the Parish Office, bookstore, or by e-mail. The **deadline** for registration is August 1st and **space is limited**.

Registration forms are also available for the Sodality of Our Lady, (ages 14 & up)

First Blessings

If you haven't received the First Blessing of Fr. Akers, please ask him when you see him around the church grounds. Priests may give their "First Blessing" for the first year of their priesthood. Don't miss the opportunity!

Confraternity of St. Peter 2014 Pilgrimage English Martyrs

"Our Lady's Dowry" a glorious title that England was commonly known by in the Middle Ages. Visit the shrines and sites hallowed by the saints and martyrs of England's past and be a part of the closing events of the largest Traditional pilgrimage in the UK, to witness the ancient Faith anew! There are still a few seats available for the August 23—September 1, 2014 trip. For more information call Tish at 916-223-3112 or visit the website www.syversentouring.com/confraternity.

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~ Summer Dress Code ~

Please recall that everyone is expected to dress with modesty and in a way befitting the house of God. Our choice of clothing is an expression of our worship; it may also affect the ability of others to worship. Dress should conceal rather than reveal. There is a sign in the vestibule that gives more details regarding proper dress. It is further expected that modesty in dress be maintained on the church grounds at all times.

We do request that the correction of visitors in this matter be left to the priests or their delegates.

Please Keep in Your Prayers ...

Mike Hayes, Jim Carlson, Kaehler Family, Mike McGrath, Barbara Graichen, Munsill Family, Sister Marie Jeanne, Mitzi Vandenburg, John Reyes, Dr. Gerald Foy, Carlos Aldana, Liliana, Luz & Cesar Morales, Richard Corbin, Robert Nunez, Renee Burns, Sue McGrath, Lorraine Peterson, John Patrick Corr,