

Sunday, August 10, 2014
9th Sunday after Pentecost



Sun. 10 Aug.	9th Sunday after Pentecost, II Class
8:30 am	Maureen Meyer & family
10:30 am	Pro Populo
1:00 pm	†Charles Van Hecke
3:00 pm	Vespers & Benediction
Mon. 11 Aug.	SS. Tiburtius & Susanna, Virgin, Martyrs, IV Class
7:00 am	Lucy Mae Egan
12:15 pm	†Jonan Sneeringer
Tues. 12 Aug.	St. Clare, Virgin, III Class
7:00 am	Dixon Haun & Family
6:30 pm	†Abbey Mae
Wed. 13 Aug.	SS. Hippolytus & Cassian, Martyrs, IV Class
7:00 am	Confraternity of Saint Peter
12:15 pm	Mr. & Mrs. Delgado
6:30 pm	Private Intention
Thurs. 14 Aug.	Vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, II Class
7:00 am	†Jonan Sneeringer
6:30 pm	Robin & Nicole Grag
Fri. 15 Aug.	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I Class
7:00 am	†Jeanette Carruesco
12:15 pm	Carolyn Perez
7:00 pm	†Father Kozina
Sat. 16 Aug.	St. Joachim, Father of the Blessed Virgin Mary, II Class
7:00 am	Holly Hollingsworth
9:00 am	†Maureen Nazarkewich-Batkis
Sun. 17 Aug.	10th Sunday after Pentecost, II Class
8:30 am	Dittmer Family
10:30 am	Pro Populo
1:00 pm	Angela & Joe Patch
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 13—Fatima Procession—after 6:30 pm Mass
August 15—Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary—Holy Day of Obligation
 August 23—English Martyrs Pilgrimage
 September 6—Girls' Club resumes
 September 7—Confirmation Classes begin
 October 18—26th Anniversary of the FSSP
 October 31—All Saints Eve Party

The Precept of Charity

"Virtue lies in the golden mean." This maxim which is so exact for the moral virtues, cannot be applied to the theological virtues, which, having an infinite object, can have no limit. The measure of our faith, hope, and charity is to believe, to hope, and to love without measure. However much we love God, we can never love Him too much, nor can we love Him as much as He is lovable. By its very nature then, the precept of charity admits of no limit and we could never say, "I shall love God up to a certain point and that will be enough," for by doing so, we would renounce tending toward the perfection of charity, which consists in loving God in a way that is as nearly proportionate as possible to His infinite loveliness. This is why it is necessary never to stop in the practice of charity, employing all our strength that it may continually increase in our soul. Because the precept of charity concerns the love of God—the infinite, supreme Good—it possesses an absolute character: "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." If we, so little and so limited, do not employ in the love of God all the little that we have and are, how can we truly tend toward the perfection of charity? If it is not in our power to love God as much as He deserves to be loved, it is, however, possible for us to strive to love Him with our whole strength, and this is exactly the perfection of love which God asks of us.

Furthermore, even human love is by its nature "totalitarian." The more intimate and intense a friendship, the more it demands the exclusive gift of the heart; and when a friend begins to make reservations or to give his affection to others, the friendship loses its vigor, grows cold, and may even vanish. Therefore, we must guard against any coldness in our friendship with God, being careful to keep for Him alone the first fruits of our heart and to employ ourself wholly in loving Him with all our strength. It is true that only in heaven will we be able to love God with all our strength and in such a way that our love tends *always* and *actually* toward Him. Although this absolute totality and stability in love is not possible to us here on earth, it is possible for us to make an act of love each time that we will to do so. It is always in our power to unite our whole being—heart, affections, will, and desires—to God by an act of love.

Jesus has said: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me;" hence, the precept of charity commands us to love God above all things. However, this precept can be interpreted in two ways. To love God more than any creature to the point of being ready to give up everything rather than offend God gravely is the first degree of charity. It is indispensable for all who desire to be friends of God and to possess His grace, and therefore, it is required of all. But in a more profound sense, to love God above all things means to prefer Him to everything else, not only to what might be an occasion of mortal or venial sin, but even to all that does not fully correspond to His good pleasure. This is the degree of perfect charity toward which every soul aspiring to intimate friendship with God must tend. This degree requires absolute renouncement and absolute purity, that is, the total absence of every shadow of sin or attachment to creatures. The exercise of perfect charity requires, therefore, a work of total purification, a work that is accomplished only by charity: "Charity causes emptiness in the will with respect to all things, since it obliges us to love God above them all."

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

Saint Anna Wang (1886-1900)

When China was intent on ridding the country of Westerners and Chinese Christians during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, China made it known that "The government has banned the practice of Western religions. If you renounce your religion, you will be set free; if you refuse, we will kill you." This was said to Anna Wang, whose stepmother had renounced the Faith and had urged Anna to do the same.

Anna refused to submit to the threat by stating: "I believe in God. I am a Christian. I do not renounce God. Jesus save me!"

Anna was to witness the killing of many mothers and their children, even a number of infants. Her response was to kneel in fervent prayer before the carnage. With one of the Boxers standing over her, she was again given the choice of death or the rejection of the Catholic Faith. Anna steadfastly refused, saying, "I prefer to die rather than give up my Faith."

Enraged by her response, the soldier hacked off her right arm and asked her again, "Do you deny your religion?" In spite of her pain, Anna remained silent. She was struck again and then was promptly decapitated. Before the final blow, she was heard to say: "The door of Heaven is open" and to whisper the name of Jesus three times.

The heroic nature of Anna's ordeal is to be admired. This 14-year-old girl bravely reaffirmed her Catholic Faith while she was enduring unspeakable pain and was being covered with blood.

Of all the martyrs of the Boxer rebellion, Anna Wang seems to be the best known. Together with 120 other Christian martyrs, she was canonized by Pope John Paul II on October 1, 2000.

(*Saints for the Sick* by Joan Carroll Cruz)

Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for young ladies ages 14-20, begins Saturday, Sept 6th and generally meets the First Saturdays of the year through May. From *The Catholic Girl's Guide*, by Fr. Lasance: *The Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or the Congregation of the Children of Mary, has for its object to assemble its members at the feet of the Mother of God, to dedicate them in a very special manner to the veneration and service of the Blessed Virgin, and to place them under her particular patronage and protection both in life and at the hour of death.* Thus, the main focus is to deepen our spiritual lives through the patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Meetings consist of prayers, activities (like altar linens and flowers), and a spiritual talk. The year will include reading assignments from the Fr. Lasance Girl's Guide and other activities, like singing Christmas carols at a nursing home. Participants will be expected to follow the Sodality Handbook, a copy of which is available in the bookstore. Please review the handbook and sign up in the bookstore. For additional information, please email Miss Amy Rutschow at amy_rutschow@sbcglobal.net.

~ 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 & Ceasar Morales, Richard Corbin, Robert Nunez, Renee Burns, Sue McGrath, Lorraine Peterson, John Patrick Corr, Ron Carlon

Explorer Scout Information: August 10th

We are looking for a few good young people, ages 8 to adult, to become members of the Federation of North American Explorers. These members will be asked to commit to a program that will help them develop into men and women of character, virtue, service, leadership and spiritual strength. They will learn new skills and experience outdoor activities.

The Explorer training will start this fall and last a lifetime. Of course, not all are called to make the promise of an Explorer Scout; however it could be for our son or daughter. A short presentation will be given after each Mass on Sunday, August 10th with a chance for you to ask questions. Please join us. Visit www.ststephenfne.wordpress.com for more information.

Confirmation Classes to Begin September 7th

Registration is now open for Confirmation classes. Those ages 12 and over by next spring may register. **Baptism Certificates** are required prior to the first class.

Registration forms are available in the bookstore.

Classes will be held at 12:30 every Sunday in one of the classrooms.

Reminder—Chesterton Society meeting: August 19th at 7:30pm

We will be reading:
 "What's Wrong With the World"
 & "The Resurrection of Fr. Brown"
 All are welcome!

The Living God

One day Jesus' disciples came to their Master and said, "Lord, teach us how to pray, as John did for his disciples." A significant moment: Jesus was asked to tell them how to do the most intimate and the greatest thing possible, how to come to God, how to receive the things that come from God and to take to Him the things of man. He was to show them what they were to pray for and the state of mind in which they should pray.

So He taught them the Our Father. It is not simply one prayer among many, but the basic pattern of all Christian prayer, the embodiment of all the objects of prayer, and the expression of the attitude of mind that should condition all prayer.

This prayer contains a strange clause: "Thy will be done." Have you ever tried to realize fully what that means? To begin with, it obviously means that the will of the Father is great and precious, something we are to desire in the earnest act of prayer. That is sufficiently remarkable in itself. We are not in the habit of regarding as precious the will of God that confronts us so gravely and often so troublesomely and admonishingly.

But one is even more amazed by the further consideration that arises from this clause: I am to pray that the will of God may be done; it is therefore possible for it not to be done! Isn't God almighty? Isn't His will a reality? And yet here I am asked to pray that His will may be done! What a strange concern this is in which I am called to share: to help see that the will of God is done. Is His will so frail and in danger of not being fulfilled?

The whole affair seems even more astonishing when one reflects that His will is apparently so precious and so exposed to danger that God Himself, the strongest power there is, is called upon to see that His own will is done. Man prays to God that His will may be done. Isn't that curious? This clause in the Lord's Prayer reveals a whole pattern of reality that implies that the will of God is both glorious and frail at the same time: it reveals the weakness of the will of God in the world and the fact that it is entrusted to the care of man. Yet this same man prays to God for help, and so his concern enters into cooperation with the victorious omnipotence of God. Do you now sense the mystery of the living God?
 (*The Living God* by Romano Guardini)