

Sunday, January 11, 2015
The Holy Family



- Sun. 11 Jan. The Holy Family, II Class**
 8:30 am †Charles Cantoni
 10:30 am Pro Populo
 1:00 pm Barbara Ryan
 3:00 pm Vespers & Benediction
- Mon. 12 Jan. Feria of 1st Sunday after Epiphany, IV Class**
 7:00 am Luke & MeLinda Miller
 12:15 pm Ed Wedinsky
- Tues. 13 Jan. Commemoration of the Baptism of the Lord, II Class**
 7:00 am †Fernando Costales
 6:30 pm Hailey Rain
- Wed. 14 Jan. St. Hilary, Bishop, Confessor & Doctor, III Class**
 7:00 am Priests of FSSP
 12:15 pm Perez Family Living & Deceased
- Thurs. 15 Jan. St. Paul, the First Hermit, Confessor, III Class**
 7:00 am Suffering Souls in Purgatory
 6:30 pm †Julia Costales
- Fri. 16 Jan. St. Marcellus I, Pope & Martyr, III Class**
 7:00 am Philipa Ortiz
 12:15 pm †Narciso Costales
 6:30 pm Sean Pope Family
- Sat. 17 Jan. St. Anthony, Abbott, III Class**
 7:00 am Loretta Cantoni
 9:00 am †Christopher Bardet
- Sun. 18 Jan. The 2nd Sunday after Epiphany, II Class**
 8:30 am Souls of Departed Priests
 10:30 am Pro Populo
 1:00 pm Weston James Pope
 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.

Important Upcoming Dates

- January 15—CSP Evening of Recollection
 January 20—Chesterton Society Meeting
 January 24—11th Annual Walk For Life
 January 30—High School Youth Group
 February 2—Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 6:30 pm High Mass
 February 18—Ash Wednesday
 April 13—Confirmation at 6:30 pm
 May 2—May Procession & Solemn Mass
 May 10—First Holy Communion
 May 30—FSSP Priestly Ordinations
 June 21-27—Camp Sacred Heart

Jesus The True Vine

Jesus is the “one Mediator between God and men”; however, He did not will to effect the work of our redemption independently of us, but used it as a means of strengthening the bond between Himself and us. This is the wonderful mystery of our incorporation in Christ, the mystery which Our Lord Himself revealed to His apostle the night before His Passion. “I am the true vine; and My Father is the husbandman... Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me.”

Jesus strongly affirms that there is no redemption, no supernatural life, no grace-life for one who does not live in Him, who is not grafted onto Him. He points to the vine: the shoots will not live and bear fruit unless they remain attached to the trunk. Jesus wishes to actualize this close connection between Himself and us, a connection which is necessary for our salvation and sanctification. We cannot receive the least degree of grace except through Christ's mediation, even as the smallest drop of sap cannot reach a branch which is detached from the tree.

Moreover, Jesus declares that, if we abide in Him, we shall not only have supernatural life, but we shall become the recipients of special attention from our heavenly Father, the “Husbandman” of the mystical vine. In fact, our heavenly Father acknowledges us as His adopted children, loves us as such, and takes care of us, precisely to the degree in which He sees in us Christ, His only-begotten, His well-beloved Son. The grace of adoption, then, is wholly dependent upon our union with Christ, a union so close that we form, as it were, a “living part” of Him, as the branch forms a living part of the vine.

“Abide in Me.” We can only abide in a place where we are already. Jesus tells us to “abide” in Him because we have been grafted onto Him. This spiritual engrafting, and accomplished fact, was made possible for all men by Christ's death on the Cross, and it became effective for each one of us at the time of our Baptism. Christ grafted us into Himself at the cost of His precious Blood. Therefore, we “are” in Him, but He insists further that we “abide” in Him and bring forth fruit.

Baptism is sufficient to graft us into Christ, and one degree of grace will permit us to abide in Him like living branches, but we should not be content with this union only. We must show our gratitude for the immense gift we have received by endeavoring to become more and more firmly grafted into Christ. We must “live” this union with Christ, making Him the center, the sun of our interior life. “Abide in Me” is not a chance expression. Christ wished to show us that our life in Him requires our personal collaboration with Him, that we are to employ all our strength, our mind, our will, and our heart that we may live in Him and by Him. The more we try to abide in Christ, the deeper our little branch will grow into Him, because it will be nourished more abundantly by the sap of grace.

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

...In Memoriam

Please pray for all our Beloved Dead listed in our Memorial Book in the sanctuary.

Names are placed there at the beginning of each new year.

Guide Your Children and Shape Their Character

As the father is the head of the family, the mother is its heart. Just as Pope Pius XI speaks of the father as “strong in faith and manly in virtues,” he speaks of a mother as “pure and devoted.” Elsewhere he says, “As the father occupies the chief place in ruling, so the mother may and ought to claim for herself the chief place in love.”

But the Holy Father speaks of supernatural love, not of the tender maternal love-instinct upon which the supernatural is built. Natural love, which is excellent in itself, and offers the possibility of untold good, may even at times be a hindrance when you are imprudent and cannot keep your children truly obedient, cannot refuse what is harmful, and cannot punish if necessary. It may be abused if it is made a wedge to separate the children from their father.

Supernatural love exercises the strongest appeal. Of it are born piety, modesty, purity, and fear of the Lord—all learned at the mother's knee.

Every person has a supernatural destiny, to be worked out in time. He must be educated for what he must be and what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created. That education is the result of the combined efforts of both parents. But in his youngest years, the child is almost exclusively under the mother's guidance. Your efforts are to produce effects that will have their final reckoning in eternity.

Although your educational influence is of a nature entirely different from that of the father, your vocation as mother is equal in importance to your husband's. Most adults attest that mothers have had far more to do with the shaping of their character than fathers have. But so necessary are both that if either is lacking for any cause whatever, the education of the children is seriously, and sometimes fatally, handicapped.

As far as possible, be at home with your children. As you nourished your child before he was capable of eating solid food, so in the early formative years, nature has determined that you must nourish your child in virtue.

(*The Catholic Family Handbook* by Lawrence B. Lovasik)

Epiphany Chalk Blessing

The house's main door lintel is marked with the blessed chalk by the father of the household in the following manner:

- 20+C+M+B+15 while saying the following prayer:
 The Three Wise Men
 C Caspar
 M Melchior
 B & Balthasaar, followed the star of God's Son who became Man
 20 Two-thousand
 15 and fifteen years ago
 + May Christ
 + Bless our home
 + and remain with us
 + through the new year.

Almighty God, incline Thine ear. Bless us and all who are gathered here. Send Thy holy angel who will defend us, and fill with grace all who dwell here. Amen.

Saint Francis Xavier Mission Trips

- Guadalajara, Mexico: 3/28-4/11 *Application deadline - 1/23
- Piura, Peru: July 28—Aug. 10 *Application deadline - 2/9
- Piura, Peru: Aug. 14—24 *Application deadline - 2/9
www.sfxmission.com SFXMission@gmail.com

High School Youth Group

Beginning Friday, January 30, a High School Youth Group will meet on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month. Meeting begins with the 6:30 pm Mass followed by a light dinner, theological talk and group discussion, and games. Service projects and other social events will be included. Parents will be needed as volunteers. Contact Fr. Akers for more information.

Our Mother

Children, especially when they are small, give very little thought to what they should do for their parents and are much more concerned about what they hope to get from them. As children, we tend to be very self-interested, although our mothers do not seem to mind really, because they have so much love in their hearts and they love with the best kind of affection: that which gives without expecting anything in return.

The same is true of Mary. If we find there have been times when we failed to be gentle and kind towards this good Mother of ours, we should feel sorry. I ask you now, as I ask myself, how are we honoring her?

Let us return once again to our everyday experience and see how we behave with our earthly mothers. What does a mother want most of all from her children, from those who are flesh of her flesh and blood of her blood? Her greatest desire is to have them close to her. When the children grow up and it is no longer possible to have them beside her, she waits impatiently for news from them, and everything that happens to them, from the slightest illness to the most important events, concerns her deeply.

Look: in the eyes of our Mother Mary we never cease to be little, because she opens to us the way to the Kingdom of Heaven, which will only be given to those who become little children. We should never separate ourselves from our Lady. How should we honor her? By keeping close to her, talking to her, showing her that we love her, pondering in our hearts the scenes of her life on earth and telling her about our struggles, successes, and failures...

(*Friends of God* by St. Josemaria Escriva)

Evening of Recollection Confraternity of St. Peter
January 15, 2015

Don't miss out on the spiritual benefits of our CSP Evening of Recollection on Thursday, January 15, beginning with Holy Mass at 6:30 pm. Each month we are given a wonderful sermon and conference along with Holy Mass and CSP prayers.

The Confraternity of St. Peter is a group of lay men and women united to the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter.

For more information visit www.confraternityofstpeter.com or call the parish office 916-455-5114.

Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary

If you are interested in buying candles to be blessed on the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary stop by the bookstore and let us know. We will have 100% beeswax candles for purchase, you may also bring your own candles to be blessed. Make sure you bring them early (6:20 pm or earlier).

The blessing of candles will take place at the beginning of the 6:30 pm Mass on Feb. 2nd, we will then process into the church for Holy Mass. You will be able to pick your candles up following the Mass.

Reminder— Chesterton Society Meeting:
January 20th at 7:30pm

We will be reading:
Orthodoxy: "What's Wrong With the World" - Part III
 "Education, or the Mistake About the Child"
Fr. Brown: "The Curse of the Golden Cross"
 All are welcome!

11th Annual Walk for Life—Save the Date!

Saturday, January 24, 2015
 Bus tickets are still available — contact Mike at 916-335-4553 or Kathleen at 916-204-9125.

Please Keep in Your Prayers ...

Mike Hayes, Jim Carlson, Kaehler Family, Mike McGrath, Barbara Graichen, Munsill Family, Carlos Aldana, Liliana, Luz & Cesar Morales, Richard Corbin, Renee Burns, Sue McGrath, Ron Carlon, Michael Cuellar, Heather Cuellar, Joan Blackburn, Luis Salazar, Norman Sayles, Lorraine Peterson, Sandy Sneary, Jeannemarie Crabtree