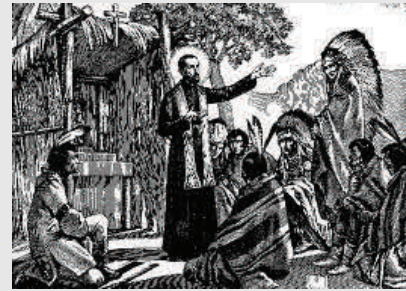


Sunday, September 23, 2012
17th Sunday after Pentecost



Sun. 23 September, 17th Sunday after Pentecost, II Class

8:30 am †Msgr. Schons
 10:30 am Pro Populo
 1:00 pm †Rose Picciolo

3:00 pm Vespers & Benediction

Mon. 24 September, Our Lady of Ransom, IV Class

7:00 am †Fernando Costales
 12:15 pm Fr. James Doran, OMV

Tues. 25 September, Feria, IV Class

7:00 am †Geri Johnson
 6:30 pm †Trespolo Paranaque

Wed. 26 September, North American Martyrs, III Class

7:00 am †Joe Comparato
 12:15 pm Paulo Sibaja

Thurs. 27 September, SS. Cosmas & Damian, Martyrs, III Class

7:00 am †Julia Costales
 6:30 pm Janet Champagne

Fri. 28 September, St. Wenceslaus, Duke & Martyr, III Class

7:00 am Fr. James Doran, OMV
 12:15 pm Natalie Solari & Family
 6:30 pm Nancy Butchy

Sat. 29 September, Dedication of St. Michael the Archangel, I Class

7:00 am †Narciso Costales
 9:00 am Syndee Lopez & Family

Sun. 30 September, 18th Sunday after Pentecost, II Class

8:30 am †Terio Costales
 10:30 am Pro Populo
 1:00 pm Angela 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, 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

Important Upcoming Dates

Oct. 13—Confirmation Class
 Oct. 13—Fatima Procession
 Oct. 18—24th Anniversary of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter
 Oct. 27—*Salute to Life* Dinner & Auction
 Oct. 31—All Saints Eve Party
 Nov. 1—All Saints Day - Holy Day
 Nov. 2—All Souls Day
 Nov. 22—Thanksgiving Day

Blessed are the Clean of Heart

The beatitude: “Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God,” corresponds to the gift of understanding. There is a purity of heart which is the indispensable condition for receiving an abundant inflowing of the gift of understanding; it is the purity that results, not only from the absence of sin, but also from the absence of the slightest earthly affection. In fact, God does not communicate Himself fully to a creature whose heart is not absolutely pure; that is, one whose entire capacity for affection is not reserved for Him. As long as we have any attachment to creatures, any seeking for the affection of others, any complacency in feeling that we are loved by them, our heart is not pure enough to enjoy the divine communications. Therefore, before allowing a soul to penetrate His divine mysteries, God subjects it to a purification of the affections by means of detachments and sacrifices, sometimes at the cost of blood, but which, if generously accepted, will eventually detach the heart from creatures and leave it entirely free for its Creator. If God makes us pass through this trial, let us not draw back or try to evade His action, but let us cooperate with it, being fully persuaded that He reserves the fullness of His gifts and of His light for those souls alone who are free from any shadow of creatures, those hearts which belong entirely to Him. In this sense it may well be said that the sight of God is the reward promised to the pure of heart. In fact, if the heart retains any attachment, even slight, to creatures, the intellect remains clouded, and “has no more capacity for receiving enlightenment from the wisdom of God than has the air, when it is dark, for receiving enlightenment from the sun... Oh! Exclaims St. John of the Cross, “if men but knew how great is the blessing of divine light whereof they are deprived by this blindness which proceeds from their affections and desires!” Indeed, when the heart is pure, then the intellect, like a clear glass, can be completely penetrated by the light of the Holy Spirit.

There is another purity of heart which is not just a disposition to receive the gift of understanding, but is the fruit of this gift. Here the word “heart” is used in its broader meaning of spirit and mind, which is its usual meaning in Holy Scripture.

Our minds are so dull that we can always err in understanding divine things, either by imagining them in a material way, measuring them by worldly standards, or by interpreting them according to our personal views, considering only one aspect, and ignoring others which are essential, and so on. This dullness of mind, unfortunately, has been the source of many heresies in the Church. The gift of understanding, giving us the light of the Holy Spirit Himself, purifies our minds from these errors and frees them from the illusions of the imagination, as well as from other false interpretations. By means of this purity of mind, the gift of understanding insures the integrity of our faith, enabling us to penetrate the objective reality of the divine mysteries, and giving us the real meaning of God’s law, of the commandments, and the counsels. On the other hand, this gift, which allows us to penetrate the divine mysteries by the infused light of the Holy Spirit, makes us clearly understand that God cannot be enclosed in our dull imaginations nor in our limited ideas, but that He is infinitely superior to anything we can think or imagine about Him. St. John of the Cross says, “Since God is inaccessible, see that thou concern not thyself with how much thy faculties can comprehend and they senses can perceive, that thou be not satisfied with less and that thy soul lose not the agility that is needful for one that would attain to Him.”

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

Instruction on the On Only Saving Faith

These words of the great Apostle of the Gentiles show clearly, that it is not a matter of indifference, what faith or religion we profess. Yet in our times so poor in faith, we often hear the assertion from so-called enlightened men: “It is all the same to what religion we belong, we can be saved in any, if we only believe in God and live uprightly.” This assertion is impious! Consider, my dear Christians, there is but one God, and this one God has sent only one Redeemer, and this one Redeemer has preached but one doctrine, and has established but one Church. Had God wished that there should be more than one Church, then Christ would have founded them, nay, He would not have preached a new doctrine, established a new, Christian Church; for the Jews also believed in one God. But Jesus cast aside Paganism and Judaism, promulgated a new religion, and founded a new Church. Nowhere does He speak of Churches, but always of one Church. He says that we must hear this Church and does not add, that if we will not hear this Church, we may hear some other. He speaks of only one shepherd, one flock, and one fold, into which all men are to be brought. In the same manner he speaks always of one kingdom upon earth, just as there is only one kingdom in heaven; of only one master of the house and one family, of one field and one vineyard, whereby He referred to His Church; of one rock, upon which He would build His Church. On the day before His death, He prayed fervently to His Heavenly Father, that all who believe in Him, might be and remain one, as He and the Father are one, and He gave His disciples the express command to preach His gospel to all nations, and to teach them all things, whatsoever He has commanded them. This command the apostles carried out exactly. Everywhere they preached one and the same doctrine, establishing in all places Christian communities, which were all united by the bond of the same faith. Their principal care was to prevent schisms in faith, they warned the faithful against heresy, commanded all originators of such to be avoided, and anathematized those who preached a gospel different from theirs. As the apostles, so did their successors. All the holy Fathers speak with burning love of the necessary unity of faith, and deny those all claim to salvation who remain knowingly in schism and separation from the true Church of Christ.

(Excerpts from “The Church’s Year” by Fr. Leonard Goffine)

Confraternity Prayer for Priests

V. Remember, O Lord, Thy congregation.
 R. Which Thou hast possessed from the beginning.
 Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus, born to give testimony to the Truth, Thou who lovest unto the end those whom Thou has chosen, kindly hear our prayers for our pastors. Thou who knowest all things, knowest that they love Thee and can do all things in Thee who strengthens them. Sanctify them in Truth. Pour into them, we beseech Thee, the Spirit whom Thou didst give to Thy apostles, who would make them, in all things, like unto Thee. Receive the homage of love which they offer up to Thee, who hast graciously received the threefold confession of Peter. And so that a pure oblation may everywhere be offered without ceasing unto the Most Holy Trinity, graciously enrich their number and keep them in Thy love, who art one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, to whom be glory and honor forever. Amen.

Sunday Vespers/Benediction

Sunday Vespers takes place **every Sunday at 3:00pm** followed by Benediction. Pamphlets are available in church entrance. “*All should come to our Churches and there sing the praises of God, and be enriched with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament*” - Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei

Devotion to St. Michael
Most Suitable for Our Times

Lucifer has placed his stamp upon the present age. Open and secret revolt against God and His Church, the spirit of criticism, unbelief and immorality are spreading. The arrogant boast of Lucifer, “I will be like the Most High!” re-echoes everywhere. Puffed up with their discoveries and the progress in material science, men loudly proclaim their self-sufficiency and deny the existence of a Supreme Being. Governments and secret societies, plotting against God and striving to blot out from homes and schools, from offices and factories, all traces of Christianity, show plainly whose standard they follow. Never before in the world’s history were God’s rights so blasphemously mocked and denied, or the rights of man so arrogantly asserted, as they are today.

These frightful evils must convince us that we must turn to St. Michael, the Archangel, that glorious prince of Heaven who rendered all glory to God, conquering Lucifer and casting him into the abyss.

Already three centuries ago, St. Francis de Sales wrote: “Veneration of St. Michael is the great remedy against despising the rights of God, against insubordination, skepticism and infidelity” - vices which are perhaps more prevalent now than ever before.

Surely, it is time for Christians to “rise from sleep” and to offer vigorous resistance to the enemies of salvation. The weapons in this conflict are not the arms of civil warfare, but the spiritual weapons of prayer and penance, increased fidelity to the Commandments of God, and frequent reception of the Sacraments. And surely we can choose no better leader in this conflict than the powerful captain who led the faithful Angels to victory.

Let us, then, with confident trust invoke the aid and the protection of this mighty Archangel whose shield bears the inscription: “MI-CHA-EL” - *Quis ut Deus*” - “Who is like unto God?”

(Booklet available in St. Stephen’s Bookstore.)

Help Needed!

Help is needed cleaning the bathrooms during the week. If you can spare an hour or two each week to help this would be much appreciated.

We are also in need of help with the yard work, etc. Please let us know if you might be able to give a little time to keep our parish neat and clean.

Theatre Classes

(ages 8—18)

Theatre classes, \$150.00 for 23—25 classes in St. Stephen’s auditorium (South Sutter Charter School funds accepted). Bernadette Celestin, St. Stephen’s parishioner, BA Theatre Arts. Begins October 1st—Registration: September 16th - 30th. For more information 916-637-9945 or brofmary@yahoo.com

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.

Salute to Life Dinner—October 27th

If you are interested in sharing a table with St. Stephen parishioners / priests, put your name on the list in the parish office. Cost is \$125.00 per person.

Please Keep in Your Prayers ...

Mike Hayes, Jim Carlson, Kaehler Family, Mike McGrath, Barbara Graichen, Patricia Becker, Munsill Family, Benny Stinson, Michael Gould; Sister Marie Jeanne, Elizabeth Pierini, ; Charles Cantoni, Hayden Garcia, Mitzi Vandenburg, John Reyes; Lori Bates; Fred & Terry Bose; Ed Wedinsky, George Phillips