

**Sunday, March 3, 2013
3rd Sunday of Lent**



Sun. 3 March, 3rd Sunday in Lent, II Class

8:30 am Eric Reslock, Sr.
10:30 am Pro Populo
1:00 pm Ursula Uclaray

3:00 pm Vespers & Benediction

Mon. 4 March, Feria of Lent, III Class

7:00 am Wynette Sills
12:15 pm †Derdra Marie Garrett

Tues. 5 March, Feria of Lent, III Class

7:00 am †Jonan Sneeringer
6:30 pm Deborah Ann Pacheco

Wed. 6 March, Feria of Lent, III Class

7:00 am Suffering Souls in Purgatory
12:15 pm Elizabeth Pierini

Thurs. 7 March, St. Thomas Aquinas, Confessor & Doctor; Patron, II Class

7:00 am Madilyn Kelly
6:30 pm St. Monica Sodality

Fri. 8 March, Feria of Lent, III Class

7:00 am Phillips & Azevedo Family living & deceased & Lee Valieate
12:15 pm Perez Family living & deceased
6:30 pm Andrew Grimes

Stations of the Cross after 12:15 & 6:30 pm Masses

Sat. 9 March, Feria of Lent, III Class

7:00 am †Harriette J. Morton
9:00 am Mike McGrath, Sr.

Sun. 10 March, 4th Sunday of Lent, (Laetare Sunday), I Class

8:30 am Edward Wedinsky
10:30 am Pro Populo
1:00 pm †George Phillips

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

†Ray Keller, †Elin Frances Terra, †Martha Robison,
†Gabriel Vargas, †Olympia Gonzalez,

Important Upcoming Dates

March 7—Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas
March 8 & 9—Lenten Recollection (Preached by Fr. Harkins)
March 18—Transferred Feast of St. Patrick
March 19—Feast of St. Joseph
March 29—Good Friday
March 31—Easter Sunday
April 14—Confirmation
May 4—May Procession
May 11—First Holy Communion
June 1—Ordinations in Nebraska
June 16-22—Camp Sacred Heart
July 8—12 Annual Parish Retreat (Preached by Fr. Goodwin)
Aug. 4—Finding of the Relics of St. Stephen—Pig Roast & Square Dance

The Power of Jesus

On the first Sunday in Lent, the Church showed us Jesus in His struggle with the devil, but while she presented Him to us then in an attitude of humble defense before the devil's temptations, today we see Him in an attitude of attack which culminates in a glorious victory.

The Gospel tells us that there was a poor man possessed by the devil and he "was dumb." By a single act of His divine power Jesus "cast out the devil," and when he went out, "the dumb spoke, and the multitudes were in admiration at it. But the enemy, as if to avenge his defeat, insinuates into the minds of the Pharisees the shameful calumny: "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils." Jesus is accused of being possessed by the devil and of having received from the devil power to free the possessed man. Our Lord, however, wills to completely unmask the enemy and with clear logic replies that Satan cannot give Him such power, because thereby Satan himself would be helping to destroy his own kingdom. No, it cannot be so: Jesus drives out devils by "the finger of God," by divine virtue. If Satan is powerful and his satellites join with him in the struggle to rule over man, Jesus is still more powerful and will overcome him and snatch away his prey. He has come to destroy the kingdom of Satan and to establish the kingdom of God.

If in these days God still permits the devil to carry on his evil work against individuals and society, Jesus by His death on the Cross has already paid the price of our victor. This treasure is at our disposal. Through the virtue and grace of Christ, every Christian has the power to overcome the enemy's attacks. The triumph of evil should not disturb us, for it is only an apparent victory. The might of Jesus is stronger and He is the one and only victor.

We must work in union with Jesus that His victory over evil may be our own. In today's Gospel the Master Himself shows us several aspects of this collaboration.

"Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation;" in these words Our Lord tells us that union is the secret of victory—union with Him above all, for without Him we can do nothing, but also union with our neighbor. If we would work for the triumph of good, let us collaborate—one heart and one soul—with each other. We can often labor with much more efficacy in achieving good if we give up our own personal ideas and act in perfect harmony with others. It may even be necessary sometimes to renounce opinions, plans, and ways which are better in themselves. Let us not be deceived; unity is always to be preferred. Division never leads to victory.

"He that is not with Me is against Me," Jesus adds. Christianity does not tolerate indifference. He who is not firmly on Christ's side, working with Him for the extension of His kingdom, by this very fact is opposed to Him and to what is good. He is an enemy of Christ and a partisan of evil. To omit the good one could do and ought to do is evil, and is consenting to the extension of evil.

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

Peter: A Lesson on Falling and Rising

The most interesting drama in all the world is the drama of the human soul. Were it not endowed with freedom, it might go out to war and enterprise alone and unheeded; but master of its choice, unlike the sun and stones, it can use time and things to decide its destiny, its eternity, and its judgment. Though there are many phases to these dramas, perhaps the most interesting of them all is the psychology of a fall and resurrection.

More concretely, how do some souls lose their faith, and by what steps do they later on recover it? The answer to such questions is to be found in the story of the apostle Peter, whose name appears first in the gospel narrative, and who might appropriately be called "The Fisherman Philosopher," for he asked Divine Wisdom more questions than any other of His followers. For example, "To whom shall we go?" "Where are you going?" "Why cannot I follow you?" "What shall this man do?"

To this searching intellectualist of Galilee, who was born Simon and whose name was changed to Peter, and who from the bitterness of his spirit cried out, "Depart from, O Lord, for I am a sinful man," we go to study the steps by which he fell and the stages by which he returned. There seem to have been five stages in Peter's fall.

1. *Neglect of Prayer.* No soul ever fell away from God without giving up prayer. Prayer is that which establishes contact with Divine Power and opens the invisible resources of heaven. However dark the way, when we pray, temptation can never master us.

2. *The Substitution of Action for Prayer.* Most souls still feeling the necessity of doing something for God and the Church turn to the solace of activity. Instead of going from prayer to action, they neglect the prayer and become busy about many things.

3. *Lukewarmness.* Experience soon proves that religious activity without prayer soon degenerates into indifference.

4. *Satisfaction of Material Wants, Feelings, and Emotions.* Once the divine fades in life, the material begins to assert itself. The excessive dedication to luxury and refinement is always an indication of the inner poverty of the spirit.

5. *Human Respect.* The last stage in the fall is human respect, when we deny our faith or are ashamed of it under ridicule or scorn.

(*Read about how Peter fell by these five steps and his conversion in "The Characters of the Passion" by Fulton Sheen*)

**Lenten Mission
March 8th & 9th**

Fr. Simon Harkins will come to St. Stephens to preach our Lenten Mission. The mission will begin with Holy Mass at 6:30 pm on Friday, March 8th. The second day begins with Holy Mass at 9:00 am on March 9th. Both days will include a conference, rosary, opportunity for Confession and Benediction.

Fr. Harkins will also offer the High Mass on Sunday, March 10th and preach at that Mass.

This is a wonderful opportunity to prepare for Easter, please take advantage of it.

Invite your relatives and friends, perhaps those who have not been practicing their faith or even those who have never been to Mass before.

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.

Scripture is a Gift From God...

But only through the Catholic Church can you experience the fullness of the Christian Faith.

In arguments both lucid and thorough, Benedictine Abbott Basil Christopher Butler shows why the Bible can never be the sole criterion of faith nor serve as a sufficient foundation for the full Christian life to which Jesus calls us.

Butler reminds us that Jesus did not reveal himself to us by means of any written documents whatsoever (the first inspired written texts—all the books of the New Testament—were penned decades after Jesus died).

For in His divine person, Jesus Himself was the final word of God's revelation: the living Jesus who walked among men and spoke to them—the Jesus who, before He returned to the Father, established His Church, endowed it with authority, and implemented the Sacraments as the continuation of His living presence among men. . . A living presence that He has sustained down through the ages even unto today.

Butler affirms that the books of the Old and New Testament are inspired—inspired but incomplete. As the Apostle John notes: "There are many other things Jesus did which, if they all were written, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain all the books that should be written.

Written decades after His death, the books of the New Testament do reveal much about Jesus, but they lack the living presence of His person and they have neither the continuing authority with which He endowed His Church nor the soul-saving efficacy of the Sacraments He instituted.

Although the books of the Bible are inspired by God, they are insufficient as the full measure of faith. There is only one source, shows Butler, where Christians can turn for the full truth of Jesus and the means of salvation He gave us: the Catholic Church, which He Himself established 2,000 years ago.

(*"Always Inspired"* by Basil Christopher Butler)

**"Holy Mass - Gate to Heaven"
2013 Annual Retreat—July 8—12**

Fr. Calvin Goodwin, FSSP will be preaching our retreat this year. It will be held at Christ the King Retreat Center. This is a silent retreat, each retreatant will have a private room/bath. If you would like to hold a space call the parish office or stop in the bookstore. Space is limited. For more information call 916-455-5114.

"In the fever and agitation of modern life, the need of meditation and spiritual repose impresses itself on Christian souls who desire to reflect on their eternal destiny, and direct their life in this world towards God."

**Confraternity of St. Peter FSSP Anniversary Pilgrimage
25 Years**

Travel to Rome, Italy to attend a Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving at the Fraternity of St. Peter's Rome Parish on the 25th anniversary of the order's founding. See the most important religious sites of the Eternal City and then travel south to visit the shrines of Pompei, Nettuno, Materdomini, Naples & Amalfi.

Highlights: General Audience with the Holy Father, Four Major Churches of Rome, Catacombs, Holy Staircase (Scalla Santa), Shrines of St. Gerard Majella, St. Maria Goretti & St. Philomena.; Rosary Basilica of Pompei (tomb of Bl. Bartolo Longo); Home of St. Guiseppe Moscati; tomb of St. Andrew the Apostle.

For more information call 916-223-3112 or visit the website @ www.syversentouring.com/confraternity

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 Vandenberg, John Reyes; Lori Bates; Ken Taylor, Peter Van Steyn, Elizabeth Van Steyn, Dr. Gerald Foy, John Walker