

St. Stephen Parish

6300 Browning Road - Pennsauken, NJ 08109



Pastoral Staff

Reverend Vincent Orum, AJ, Administrator
Reverend Thomas Kiely, In-Residence
Permanent Deacon Ernest Picknally
Sister Bernadette Mary Leahy, SSJ
Mrs. Patricia Higgins, Principal
Mrs. Adeline Gramlich, CRE

Parish Contact Information

Rectory: (856) 662-9338 Fax: (856) 662-4679
Convent: (856) 665-5227 School: (856) 662-5935

Email: eccllesia@comcast.net

Website: www.StStephensPennsauken.com

December 13, 2009 – Third Sunday of Advent

Mass Schedule

Daily: Monday thru Saturday – 9:00am

Weekend Obligation:

Saturday – 4:30pm (**Confessions 3:45pm-4:15pm**)

Sunday – 9:00am & 10:30am

Children's Liturgy: 3rd Sunday @ 10:30am

Holy Days: 9:00am & 7:00pm – 7:00pm Vigil

Miraculous Medal Novena – Every Thursday after 9am Mass.

Eucharistic Exposition – First Friday from 9:30am-7pm.

Baptism – Call the Rectory for arrangements.

Required Preparation is 1 class, 2nd Sunday @ Noon.

Baptism – 3rd Sunday of month @ Noon.

Reconciliation – Saturday from 3:45pm-4:15pm

Seasonal Services are announced in bulletin.

Anointing of the Sick/Eucharist

Call Rectory if someone is sick or housebound.

Marriage – arrangements must be made with a priest 1 year in advance. Only individually registered parishioners of one year or more are eligible to be married here and includes anyone still living at home with parents who should register individually.

Rectory Hours - Monday thru Friday 9am-4:30pm

Our Mission Statement

Saint Stephen Parish is a Catholic Faith Community called by God through Baptism. Our mission is to live the Gospel by loving and serving all our brothers and sisters.

Parish Membership – Moving INTO the parish all are asked to register as soon as possible.
Moving WITHIN or OUT – kindly notify rectory of changes.

Please consider remembering St. Stephen's in your Will or Estate Planning. There are financial benefits to do so while still alive and, in death, the spiritual reward of helping to continue the Church's mission of preaching Jesus Christ.

R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)

Anyone interested in becoming Catholic is invited to become part of the RCIA. This process begins with a journey of faith that culminates in full communion with the Church through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. This process is open to those who are not baptized, to those who have been baptized in other Christian denominations, or to baptized Catholics who have never received catechetical instruction or received Confirmation and First Communion. Further information is available by calling the Rectory.

Our Parish Family invites all of its members to participate fully in our spiritual and social life.



Family or Friends having a Mass celebrated for a loved one are encouraged to participate by bringing the gifts of bread and wine to the Priest at Mass. Please be in the church 10 minutes prior to Mass and identify yourselves to one of the Ushers. Please note that where there is no intention listed, the Mass is offered for the Universal Church.

MONDAY **December 14, 2009**
9:00am Good Intentions of Joseph Snipas r/b Mr. Snipas

TUESDAY **December 15, 2009**
9:00am Good Intentions of Joseph Snipas r/b Mr. Snipas

WEDNESDAY **December 16, 2009**
9:00am Good Intentions of Joseph Snipas r/b Mr. Snipas

THURSDAY **December 17, 2009**
9:00am + Novena Good Intentions of Joseph Snipas r/b Mr. Snipas
Elizabeth Hooks (12th Anniversary)
r/b Her Mother and Sister

FRIDAY **December 18, 2009**
9:00am Good Intentions of Joseph Snipas r/b Mr. Snipas

SATURDAY **December 19, 2009**
9:00am Good Intentions of the People of the Parish

4:30pm John O'Connor r/b Wife Florence & Family
Deana Marchione-Gelfond r/b Robert Scullin

SUNDAY **December 20, 2009**
9:00am Joseph Papiano r/b Jim Pennestri
Deceased Members of the Rocks Family r/b Family

10:30am Grace Moffett r/b Pat Petronis & Mary Novoa
Joseph Baratta r/b Jim Rotondo

The Sanctuary Candle this week

is in Memory of John J. & John R. Bielinski.

If you would like to contribute to the burning of a Sanctuary Candle in memory of a loved one, you may call the Rectory. Cost is \$10.

Dec. 5/6, 2009 Attendance/Collection	586/	\$6,741
Dec. 6/7, 2008 Attendance/Collection	489/	\$6,132
Budgeted Weekly Collection:		\$6,154
Actual Y-T-D Weekly Average:		\$5,720

Next Diocesan Special 2nd Collections:
December 13, 2009: "Retirement Fund for Religious"
January 24, 2010: "Propagation of the Faith"

Coming in 2010: Weekly Youth Mass Here!
Sundays @ 7:30pm w/ Fr. Chuck of CCHS



Please call the Rectory to let us know if your family member is in the hospital or homebound so that we may bring them Communion. This week remember to pray for:

Rose Alessandroni, Dolly Angelastro, Marion Borreggine, Vincent Buondonno, Evelyn Capocetta, Dorothy Coyle, Margaret Cummings, Esther DeMarco, Patricia Domer, Joe Flacco, John Heininger Jr., Thomas Holmes Sr., Jim Hutton, Rita Insley, Patricia James, Donna Krawchuk, Robert Leone, Nancy Loperfido, Vincent Marchese, Marie Melchiorre, Elena Melfi, John Meyer, Jennifer Osborn, Edith Parrissi, Cassandra Penttleton, Rita Picciano, Frank & Louise Pigliacelli, Jean Rooney, Rosemarie Rosolia, Raphael Rubin, William Sauer, Carmella Scrivani, Mary Jo Stedrak, Julian Terzini, Mary Terzini, Lillian Tomarchio, Daniel Topper, Adelaide Travia, Margaret Trifaro, Susan Verzilli, Anthony Vocale, John Von Alex, Jean Wenstrom.

Ministry Schedule for December 19/20

(Monthly Schedules are also posted on our website)

Saturday, 4:30pm

Altar Servers: K. Sullivan, E. Mattera, K. North
EM's: The Klecko's, The Pandola's, T. Angstman
Lectors: P. Krohn, D. Steinmetz

Sunday, 9:00am

Altar Servers: The Bowmans, W. McHugh
EM's: S. Marano, N. Schmidt, R. Leone, T. Modzier, M. Miller
Lectors: D. Heck, J. Bowman

Sunday, 10:30am (No Children's Mass until Christmas Eve)

Altar Servers: TBA.
EM's: L. Solano, C. Otto, L. Rosario, T. Mattera, K. Fagan
Lectors: TBA.

Stewardship Reflection

Stewardship Evokes Trust

"Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God." - Philippians 4:6-7

St. Paul reminds us that our God is an abundant God, the ultimate giver of gifts. He promises to give us all that we need. When we live Stewardship, and trust that God will take care of us, it is easier for us to share what we have been given.

This Week @ St. Stephen's

12/14-Monday-9am Mass, 7:30pm YAM
 12/15-Tuesday-9am Mass, 7pm Rosary, 7:15pm RCIA Rosary/Christmas
 12/16-Wednesday-9am Mass, 6:30pm CCD, **7pm Penitential Service**
 12/17-Thursday-9am Mass/Novena, 6:15pm Youth Music,
 7pm Rosary Makers, 7:15pm Choir
 12/18-Friday-9am Mass, **7pm Advent Evening of Reflection**
 12/19-Saturday-8am Men's Prayer Group, 9am Mass,
 3:45 Confession, 4:30pm Mass,
 12/20-Sunday-Masses at 9am & 10:30am, 11:30am A&E decor

Art & Environment Ministry

Anyone interested in donating flowers for the altar to mark an **Anniversary, Christening or Memorial Mass**, please contact Maria Haas at 665-8393. **All are welcome to join the A&E ministry by calling Maria at the number above.**

Art & Environment is seeking parishioners and student volunteers to help move Christmas artifacts from the rectory basement after the 10:30am Mass on Dec. 20th. All students will receive service hours upon request. Please call Maria Haas if you plan to attend at 856-665-8393.

Art & Environment has purchased two small and two large Christmas trees to be planted on the St. Stephen's campus after the holiday season. **Anyone who would like to make a donation for a tree to honor a deceased love one, please call Maria Haas @ 856-665-8393**

Tuesday Night Rosary

Please join us every Tuesday at 7:00pm in the church in response to Our Lady of Fatima's request to pray the rosary for peace in the world.

St. Stephen's Prayer Line

The Prayer Line belongs to you.

If you need someone to pray for you, you are at the right place.

Contact Connie @ 662-3819 for December requests.

"Therefore I tell you, all that you ask for in prayer, believe that you will receive it and it shall be yours." -Mark 11:24

Men of St. Stephen's

Please join us for our **Men's Scripture/Prayer Group**. We meet every Saturday morning at 8am for one-half hour in the Rectory Basement Meeting Room. **Info: Joe Fagan-662-5908.**

St. Stephen's Young Adult Ministry, ages 21-40, will begin its **Faith and Tradition Series** on Monday nights in the rectory meeting room. Please arrive at 7:15. Presentation is from 7:30-8:30. Join us for either a reflection on the upcoming week's Gospel or a presentation on a saint of the church.

Upcoming schedule:

December 14 - Scripture sharing (Luke 1:39-45)

Please contact Rose at 856.663.9342 for more information.

Ministry of Greeting & Hospitality

Anyone interested in joining the Ministry of Greeters, those who welcome parishioners and visitors to Mass every Sunday, are asked to call Mary Ann Meloni at 488-6143.

As we continue Advent, let us Journey with the

"People of Advent"

We approach Advent through Old Testament figures. Their stories assist us in relating to the human element captured in scripture. This year (Cycle C) the role of David, Zachary, John the Baptist and Elizabeth are featured.

December 12-13

On this, the Third Sunday of Advent, we hear John the Baptizer as he preaches to the crowds.

We join the People of Advent on their journey, making ready the way through this celebration of the Eucharist.

SAINT STEPHEN PARISH ADVENT EVENING OF REFLECTION

A special evening of prayer, reflection, and music will be held in church **THIS Friday, December 18, 2009, at 7:00 P.M.** Give yourself a gift this season by allowing the prayerful peace of this evening to calm your "jangled" nerves. In the past, our parishioners have said that such an evening has brought them great comfort. If you're harried by the demands of the season, or if you just need a break from the commercial Christmas that surrounds us, please plan to spend some time allowing Christ to enter your hearts in a true preparation for the real meaning of Christmas. We look forward to seeing you. Any questions may be directed to Mary Ann laure5302@comcast.net / 856-488-6143 or MarySue ms.link@comcast.net / 856-854-7120.

New Women's Bible Study!

St. Stephen's is beginning a new Women's Bible Study Group. If you are interested, please call Eileen Heides at 662-8046 or Email Eileen at heides@comcast.net. A meeting will be scheduled to decide which day and time of the week will be most convenient for this new women's study group to meet.

PTA Gift Card News

Congratulations to **Kathy Sullivan and Linda Hearn** (school parents) and **Patrick Magee and Terry Scavuzzo** (parishioners) for winning the drawings for a free AMC movie admission. Thank you to everyone for your support in this fundraiser, we raised \$1500 to help our school!

CCD News

We are still in need of ONE TEACHER, substitutes and teacher's aides. Please call Adeline Gramlich at 662-9338 if you are interested in joining our CCD Team!

Attention all 6th graders who will be 7th Graders this Sept: Our program of studies for Confirmation will be starting this Fall. This is a 2-year program. Confirmation will be held in the 8th Grade.

St. Stephen's Rosary Makers

You are cordially invited to join **The Rosary Makers** in their quest to make and distribute rosaries to missions throughout the world. The group meets at 7:00 pm on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month in Stonegate's meeting room. If you have been a member in the past, this would be a great time to rejoin.

All new members are welcome! This could be some time for yourself, and the chance to meet new people while helping to show your devotion to Mary, our Mother, and the Mother of our Savior. **Please consider giving two hours a month for such a wonderful cause.**

~~~~~

***Religious Face Rising Costs***

Data submitted to the National Religious Retirement Office reveals that the average annual cost of care for women and men religious, age 70 and over, has more than doubled since 1989.

**Current statistics put this figure at \$35,077 per person annually, with skilled care reaching nearly \$55,000.**

Your donation to the Retirement Fund for Religious provides critical support to religious institutes in meeting the escalating costs of elder care. Please pray for all religious and give generously to today's second collection. (

[www.retiredreligious.org](http://www.retiredreligious.org))

~~~~~

Parenting Pointers by Susan Vogt

As we wait for Christmas, it's a good time to develop the virtue of patience as a parent. Focus on being patient with your children this week, whether they are infants who don't want to sleep when you planned, toddlers who break things, teens who think they know everything, or young adults who are far away.

~~~~~

***WANTED:***

***Antiques & Collectibles Experts***

We are looking for parishioners who can appraise various collectibles (i.e. dolls, Longaberger baskets, cameras) that have been donated to the parish. If you think you can assist us or know of someone who can, please call Lonnie at 662-6049.

~~~~~

Meal Delivery Volunteers Needed

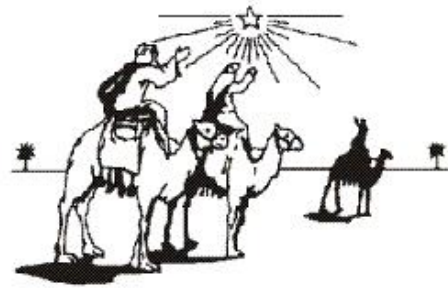
Senior Citizens United Community Services is searching for volunteers to deliver meals to needy senior citizens in the Camden County area. For more information, contact the Home Delivered Meals Coordinator T.J. Ward -(856) 456-1121, x158.

~~~~~

***CCHS Annual Christmas Concert***

The ARTS at Camden Catholic High School presents the "Annual Christmas Concert" on Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. Select pieces and Christmas music will be performed by the band and choir. Admission is FREE! Visit our web site at [www.cchsarts.com](http://www.cchsarts.com) for more information about the concert and samples of music from our programs.

***2009 Christmas Schedule***



**Penitential Service:**

Wednesday, Dec. 16th @ 7pm

**Advent Evening of Reflection:**

Friday, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm

**Confessions:**

Saturday, Dec. 19th: 3:45-4:15pm

Monday, Dec. 21st: 7-8pm

Tuesday, Dec. 22nd: 7-8pm

**Christmas Eve Vigil Masses:**

4pm Children's Mass,  
5:30pm & 10pm

**Christmas Day Masses:**

9am & 10:30am

***2009 Christmas Giving Tree***

Each year, St. Stephen families come together to help those who are in need. Last year we asked you to give a monetary gift to help families in the Pennsauken area. This year we are asking you to take a gift tag from the GIVING TREE to assist in helping families who have children in St. Anthony of Padua school in Camden celebrate Christmas. WE are specifically asking to adopt a child this year. If possible, an article of clothing, a book and a toy could be purchased and placed in a gift bag with the angel tag placed on the gift or you can bundle the gifts together put them in one gift bag. Make sure the tag is securely tied to the gift. The first name of the child, grade and clothing size are on each of the tags.

**Please have all gifts returned by December 20th.**



*The Word Engaged - Meditations on the Sunday Scriptures*  
*Third Sunday of Advent C - December 13, 2009*

Reading I: Zephaniah 3:14-18a

Responsorial Psalm: Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6

Reading II: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:10-18

## *Joy in the Diminishments*

“Rejoice in the Lord always.” Don’t worry; be happy. So we’ve always been advised on the third Sunday of Advent. Crank up the jollies. Rejoice. Cheer up. What if you don’t feel like it? What if you feel besieged, overworked, overwrought, tired, cramped, and alone?

Sometimes the most useless thing to say to a sad person is “Snap out of it.” Yet this is what the Liturgy of the Word seems to insist on. Zephaniah tells a timid, disheartened people: “Fear not, be not discouraged. . . . God will rejoice over you with gladness.” Simple as that.

To rub it in, the psalmist, despite our fears and weaknesses, cheerily demands that we cry out with joy, that we be confident and unafraid. You might as well say, “Have a happy day,” or pass out smile buttons.

Paul is just as bad. To a bickering, fearful, and restless community he writes: “Be unselfish. Dismiss anxiety from your minds. Just trust our God and present your needs.” Then the church, supposedly, will be flooded with peace, understanding, and harmony.

But what if it doesn’t work? What if Advent doesn’t take? What if things get worse or the pain does not let up?

Advent’s themes of happiness and hope can annoy someone who hurts. When you are burdened with the chaff of ego or the weight of anxieties, forced joy and canned glee disgust the best of persons.

Yet it is nothing but our diminishment, our losses, our sadness, our weight of sin that Advent confronts and calls us out of. Somehow it is the pathos of our own melancholy that must be laughed away. It is our sense of exile, our cramped confinement, the dross of our psychic baggage that must be burned off by the fire of love.

The crowds John encountered had, themselves, little reason for joy. Aware of their own need for deliverance, they felt a glimmer of anticipation that he might be the messiah. He counseled justice and rectitude, but the promise he spoke of was something far more than they might have suspected or wanted: “I am baptizing you with water, but there is one to come who is mightier than I. He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn in unquenchable fire.”

I used to think this passage referred to the contrast between the saved and the lost. My prayer was to be in the happy granary, not burnt in the fire.

But this is clearly a misreading of the Baptist’s words. The fire is part of the baptism in Jesus and his spirit. Fire is not the fate of the lost, but the refining of the blessed. We all have our chaff, our dross, our waste. We all have our winnowing. And it is the fire of Christ that will burn it away. The burdens we carry do not make us unfit for Advent’s message. They qualify us as prime candidates.

The only exit from Dante’s Purgatorio was a wall of fire. Once the pain was burned away by love, the other side was Paradise, sheer joy.

*John Kavanaugh, S. J. of Saint Louis University*