



# The Deacon

Quarterly Newsletter for the Parishioners of  
St. Stephen Catholic Church ~ Caseyville, IL.

## Baptismal renewal is at the heart of Lent

By Fr. Ray

Anticipating Ash Wednesday and the Lenten Season, I found the following on the website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and would like to share parts of it with you as we begin our Lenten Journey at St. Stephen.

“Our observances of Lent begin on Ash Wednesday, a day of fast and abstinence for Catholics. At Mass on Ash Wednesday, the imposition of ashes replicates an ancient penitential practice and symbolizes our dependence upon God’s mercy and forgiveness.

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*“The three traditional pillars of Lenten observance are prayer, fasting and almsgiving.”*

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During Lent, the baptized are called to renew their baptismal commitment as others prepare to be baptized through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, a period of learning and discernment for individuals who have declared their desire to become Catholic.

The three traditional pillars of Lenten observance are prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

The Church asks us to surrender ourselves to prayer and reading of Scripture, to fasting and to giving alms. The fasting that all do together of Fridays is but a sign of the daily Lenten discipline of individuals and households: fasting for certain periods of time, fasting from certain foods, but also fasting from other things and activities. Likewise, the giving of alms is some effort to share with this world equally – not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents.

The key to fruitful observation of these practices is to recognize their link to baptismal renewal. We are called not just to abstain from sin during Lent, but to true conversion of our hearts and minds as followers of Christ. We recall those waters in which we were baptized into Christ’s death, died to sin and evil, and began new life in Christ.”

Throughout the Lenten Season, the parish will offer communal opportunities to experience the true spirit of the season. For further information, visit the conference’s website at [uscbb.org](http://uscbb.org) and link to prayer and worship and, then liturgical resources. Fr. Anthony and I will journey with you in a special way looking forward to celebrating Easter’s renewal in the risen Christ.

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## “Lunch is served” for seniors

You have heard the saying: “there is no free lunch.” Well, St. Stephen parish is proving that statement wrong every Friday starting March 2.

The **FREE lunch** begins at 11am at Voigt Hall and all seniors are welcome. “If you know someone who is alone or a little lonely, bring them with you,” said co-coordinator Toni Kokotovich. “Join us for food, conversation and fellowship.”

Reservations are required. Call Joan at 397-0217 or Toni at 344-3550 to reserve your seat.



The St. Stephen Men’s Club got a special treat during their December gathering: church members serenaded the group with Christmas carols.

## Hispanic Ministry: Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

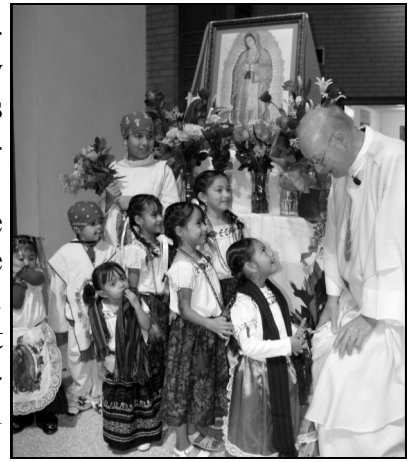
By Jeanne Adamske

The Hispanic Ministry began about a year ago in an effort to find ways to be more inclusive of our Hispanic parishioners that they might hear the Word in their native language. We took small steps towards our goal with a bilingual Ash Wednesday celebration in 2011. Our efforts were successful and we will celebrate a bilingual Ash Wednesday again in 2012. The committee also coordinated a Spanish Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12, 2011. Fr. Vince Haselhorst (pictured right) presided for the Mass, which served as a wonderful opportunity to gather together and experience the Hispanic culture and tradition in relationship to



our faith. Over 100 people attended the liturgy and gathered afterwards in Voigt Hall for amazing food and fellowship.

Language can be a barrier to overcome but the people of St. Stephen are taking great strides to foster relationships of all generations and all backgrounds so that we can grow in our faith and love of Christ and together.



Beginning in March, our parish will have a Spanish Mass the second Sunday of every month at 12:30pm. We are excited about this new addition to our Mass schedule and hope that we have a great response.

## Sweet Treats for a Good Cause

The St. Stephen Youth Team recently had a bake sale (pictured left) in conjunction with the Men's Club barbeque in January. Proceeds from the sale are used to provide financial assistance for youth-



related activities.

## Youth Team Update

The youth team has found several opportunities to get together, share our faith, and have fun. This fall, youth went to Lazer Force in Caseyville to enjoy a few games of lazer tag and pizza with members of the Holy Trinity Youth Group. It was a ton of fun and even the adults played. A few months later we traveled to Hidden Valley Ski Resort for skiing. The weather conditions were awesome and the youth had a great time.

## Easter Joy

Submitted by Jo Vallo

Little brown urchins going into church  
Wearing old jackets on an Easter morn.

Cluck-cluck ladies feeling very sad  
For the little urchins who look so bad.

None had heard the mother tell the little son,  
"some folks need new clothes to have any fun,  
But you know who you are— you had a good Lent.  
God sees your soul, not the money you spent."

Proud little urchins in winter coats!  
Joy in the Easter time! Happy in the church!

## To Look: To See

By Jo Vallo

Walking into St. Stephen Church a person sees dramatic stained glass windows on both sides of the aisle. How many Sundays can you see the colors dance into the church through the windows and not stop and look at a window in detail. I suggest that you find a spot near the first window you study it. Note the figures in the window; consider the ideas written in glass for you. Then, for a week, use the window as a meditation. Really look at the window. Each week select another window. At the end of ten weeks you should know the windows, the church and yourself in more depth.

## Our Community is Growing

**A special welcome to the following who recently became registered members of St. Stephen Catholic Parish:**

Steven Powe • Earl and Jackie Powe

Diana Logan • Mary Reames • Kathy Gremaud

Sue and Richard Bickel • Theresa Mitchell

**Congratulations to all who are moving forward in their faith this year!**

The following young adults will receive their **Confirmation** this year: Victoria Adamske, Sydney Krisher, Marissa Steiner, Alex Bell, Manuel Mora, Paige Philpott, Jada Williams, Anthony Allen Jr., Angel Galeana, Mariluz Galeana

The following children will receive their **First Eucharist** this year: Charis Galeana, Stephanie Torres, Jennifer Torres, Payton Rose, Cecilia Olsen, Isaac Boatman, Riley Randolph, Arcadio Aburto Jr., Adam Foley, Willy Grieb, Brianna Campos, Brett Alley, John Alley, Zachary Rose, Dennis Rose

The following have received the sacrament of **Baptism**: Natalie de la Cruz, Mary Rose Rasmussen, Joseph Finnegan Carr, Justin Anthony Foley, Alexis Maria Origliosso, Cesar Alixtac, Dianelys Joaquin, Gerardo Perez, Lizbeth Perez, Austin Nicholas Dobryski, Jon Luis Demers, Mackenzie Mae Waligorski

Christina Foley and Carrie Rose will be received into the Catholic church this year.



## Lent/Easter Mass schedule

*From Catholic.org*

Easter, where we celebrate the resurrection of Christ, is preceded by Lent, a season of self-examination, fasting and penance in preparation for our Easter Day observance. Lent is a 40-day period prior to Easter Day. Also, beginning the Sunday before Easter we have Holy Week, with Palm Sunday (also called Passion Sunday), Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Easter Day actually begins on Saturday evening with the Easter Vigil. The celebration of the Vigil is in keeping with the Jewish tradition of celebrating the day from sundown to sundown. Thus, the Saturday evening Vigil Mass is a Sunday Mass.

Easter is also a season that lasts 50 days and ends on Pentecost Sunday, which is an observance based on the second chapter of the Book of Acts where the Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles. This day is considered the birthday of the Church.

### Opportunities for Prayer During Lent

- † Special spirituality talk Wednesday, Feb. 29.
- † Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 8am Mass
- † Wednesdays during Lent: 6:30pm Mass
- † Fridays during Lent: Stations of the Cross at 6:30pm
- † Palm Sunday: 9:30am, April 1

### Holy Week Schedule

- † Wednesday, April 20 at 6:30pm
- † Holy Thursday: April 5 at 6:30pm
- † Good Friday: April 3 at 6:30pm
- † Easter Vigil: April 7 at 7:30pm
- † Easter Morning Mass: April 8 at 9:30am

### **Performer Inspires**

Parishioners and guests were inspired by a performance from John Michael Talbot at St. Stephen church on October 7 (at left). Talbot is recognized for his Catholic music and inspirational speaking. It was an amazing evening of musical reflection and meditation.

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## Will you walk with Jesus this Lent?

*By A. Swartz*

Are you looking for a way to get closer to Jesus this Lent? Come and walk with Jesus at the Stations of the Cross.

As a child, I remember attending the Stations of the Cross during Lent. This became somewhat of a sacred ritual for me as a child, and I knew I was a part of something spiritually powerful yet humbling. I remember kneeling and responding "...because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."

During my teenage and young adult years, I neglected attending the Stations, probably because I felt I had more important things to do on a Friday evening. Upon moving our family to Caseyville eight years ago and becoming a member of St. Stephen's community, I rediscovered the Stations of the Cross.

Lent is a time to reflect upon the Passion of our Lord, and the Stations of the Cross are a perfect opportunity to walk with Jesus as he carried the cross. This is also an opportunity for us to reflect

upon our own struggles as we "carry our crosses" everyday.

Our Lenten season begins soon, and I encourage you all to attend our Stations here at St. Stephen on Fridays at 6:30pm. You don't have to come every Friday, but please make a commitment to come at least once. Will you consider spending 30 minutes of your week walking with Jesus?



*Stations of the Cross: 6:30pm on Friday evenings  
during Lent at St. Stephen Catholic Church*

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