

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve/Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
This year, the calendar aligns so that the Fourth Sunday of Advent falls on December 24, 2017 (Christmas Eve). This has not occurred since 2006. The following are frequently asked questions regarding this calendar issue.

Are the faithful able to attend one liturgy on December 24th to fulfill their obligation for both the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas? Will it 'count' for both'?

Despite falling on a Sunday, the faithful are still obligated to participate in two Masses between December 23-25th: one for the Fourth Sunday of Advent (anytime from 4 p.m. on Saturday, December 23rd until 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 24th) **AND** one for the Christmas Solemnity (either on Sunday, December 24th after 4 p.m. or Monday, Christmas Day.) As the Church, we therefore complete our Advent journey with all four Sundays in preparation for the celebration of Christmas.

What are some options for art and environment (decorating) for Advent and Christmas for the weekend?

Given the short timeframe between the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Masses, some adjustments may need to be made for the Christmas art/environment of the church.

Here are some examples and suggestions:

Decorate the church for Christmas earlier in the week before the Fourth Sunday of Advent with larger/complex items (i.e. trees, nativity scenes, etc.); however, make notable distinctions for the Advent liturgies that it is not yet Christmas (keep Christmas lights off, the image of the Christ child out of the nativity scene, postpone placing flowers around the sanctuary until after the Advent celebrations, etc.).

If possible, keep lights dimmer for the Advent liturgies; then illuminate the church more for Christmas liturgies.

December 17th begins the "O Antiphons" of the Church, when the season of Advent focuses on preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth. If the church is being used for weekday celebrations and rites between December 17th and 23rd, consider using this as a reason to begin to transition the church environment during this time.

Be sure to continue to use violet altar cloths and vestments for any remaining Advent liturgies.

Is January 1, 2018, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God a holyday of obligation?

Whenever the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God falls on a Saturday or on a Monday, the precept to attend Mass is abrogated. If your parish regularly celebrates Mass on Sunday evening, the Mass for the Feast of the Holy Family should be celebrated on the evening of December 31. While the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God on January 1 liturgically outranks the Feast of the Holy Family, since January 1, 2018 is not a holyday the precept to attend Mass is not attached to it as it is for the Feast of the Holy Family.

St. Edward and St. Stephen Catholic Churches

300 NW 5th Street, Fairfield IL 62837

Email stedwardcatholicchurch01@frontier.com

Website: stedwardfairfield.com



812 N. Main Street, Flora IL 62839

Email: ststephenflora@yahoo.com

Website: ststephenflora.com

Rev. Father Charles Anyaoku, Pastoral Administrator

Email: fronyekaanyaoku@yahoo.com, cell phone: 618-641-8978, office phone: 618-662-6261

St. Edward Mass Schedule:

Saturday: 4:00 p.m. and Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Confession, Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Saturday, 3:30 p.m.

Parish Office:

Peggy Garrison, Secretary
 Office hours Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday,
 8 a.m. to 12 noon Rectory/Office 847-7931
 Fax – 847-7393 Parish Hall 847-7512

Bulletin Info:

Peggy Garrison, Parish Office.
 Please submit by noon on Thursday

New Parishioners Register at the Parish Office

PSR Coordinator: Sarah Pickens

RCIA Coordinator: Ginny Barrett

Music Director: Denise Zurliene

Pastoral Council – 3rd Thursday

Altar Sodality – 3rd Monday

Men's Club - As announced

CYO Meeting - As announced

Food Pantry Distribution – 2nd Saturday 8am

St. Stephen Mass Schedule:

Saturday: 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 8:30 a.m.

Confession, Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Sunday 8 to 8:20 a.m. or call for appointment

Parish Office:

Trudi Herdes, Secretary,
 Office hours Monday & Wednesday mornings.
 Office, Fax and Social Room - 662-8121
 Rectory – 662-6261

Bulletin info:

Beth Fancher, 665-3163 submit by
 Thursday email: bafancher@wabash.net

New Parishioner Register contact Dorothy

Uebinger 662-3711 email dot@wabash.net

Music Director: Diane Briscoe

PSR Coordinator: Paul Duquaine

RCIA Coordinator: Cheryl McCarty

Knights of Columbus – 1st Wednesday, 7 pm

Finance Committee – 2nd Wednesday, 7 p.m.

Altar Society - As announced

Pastoral Council - 4th Wednesday, 7 p.m.

Food Pantry Collection - First Weekend

Baptism, Marriage, Vocations, Sacrament of Anointing & Care of the Sick, contact
 Father Charles Anyaoku or call St. Edward or St. Stephen Parish Offices.

**One thing I ask of the Lord, and this I long, to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. (Ps. 27, 4)
 That should be our daily prayer. That should be our daily desire. That should be our daily wish.**

ST. EDWARD MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, December 9, 4:00pm—John Robison III+
Sunday, December 10, 10:30am—The Deceased of the Clark Family+
Thursday, December 14, 6:30pm—Blessings Received
Friday, December 15, 8:00am—St. Edward Parishioners
Saturday, December 16, 4:00pm—Jim Turner+
Sunday, December 17, 10:30am—Larry McClure+

Rosary—Every Saturday 3:30pm and 2nd Sunday 10:00am

Weekly Contributions 12-03-2017

Envelopes(31) \$1,808.00
Loose 170.00
Total \$1,978.00
We need \$1,887.00

Building Fund \$127.00
Christmas Flowers 170.00
Cath. Camp. HD 20.00

Attendance: Sat. 16 Sun. 77

Saturday, December 16

Lector: Don Zurliene
EM: Sally Conley, Diana Zurliene
Ushers: Jim & Margaret Thompson
Gifts: Ray & Sally Conley
Servers: volunteers

Sunday, December 17

Lector: Debra Simmers
EM: Peg Garrison, Jeff Murphy
Ushers: Bob & Hank Simmers
Gifts: The Bunting Family
Servers: Collin Pickens, Ailyn Zurliene



Garland Keck, Kim Buchanan,
Lanora Neavill, Ute Britton, Leon
Chamness, Jack Ciesielczyk, Jalain
Thompson, Phyllis Laird, Kurt Wiseman, Nanette
Williams, Julie Griffith, Gina Williams, Emilee
Stanley, Noreen Reeves, Paula Zdan, Maddox
Oppenheimer, Sara Kerchner, Charles Drechsel,
Dorothy Baylor, Eva Decker, Matthew Rorban,
Kathy Bramlet, Tom Colvin, Andrew Mayo, Robyn
Meagher, Sheila Zurliene, Sandra Henson, Andrew
Luna, Elaine Jeffers, Jodi Hunt, Claire Grosso,
Sarah Frye, Homer and Shirley Clark, Sam Ochs
and all priests who are sick.

PENANCE SERVICES

St. Stephen: Wed. December 13th –6:00pm
St. Edward: Thurs. December 21st –6:00pm

Our Daily Scripture Readings:

Mon: Is 35:1-10 Lk 5:17-26
Tues: Zec 2:14-17 Lk 1:26-38
Wed: Is 40:25-31 Mt 11:28-30
Thur: Is 41:13-20 Mt 11:11-15
Fri: Is 48:17-19 Mt 11:16-19
Sat: Sir 48:1-4,9-11 Mt 17:9a,10-13
Sun: Is 61:1-2a,10-11 1 Thes 5:16-24 Jn 1:6-8

ST. STEPHEN MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, December 9, 6:00 p.m. mass – For the living & deceased of the parish
Sunday, December 10, 8:30 a.m. mass – Jim Stanford+
Tuesday, December 12, 6:30 p.m. mass – Catholic Extension Donors
Wednesday, December 13, 6:00 p.m. Reconciliation Service
Thursday, December 14, 8:00 a.m. – Frances Whelen
Friday, December 15, Eucharistic Adoration, 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Saturday, December 16, 6:00 p.m. mass – Howard and Madonna Guellner+
Sunday, December 17, 8:30 a.m. mass – For the living and deceased of the parish
Rosary will be said a half an hour before each mass +designates deceased

Weekly Contributions 12-03-17

Envelopes..... \$ 1,695.00
Loose..... 149.00
Total \$ 1,844.00
We Need - \$1,731.00

Cemetery - \$5.00
Food Pantry - \$268.25

Attendance: Sat. - 52 Sun. - 92

Weekend Ministers

Saturday, December 16

Lector: Mary Roy
Commentator: Volunteer
EM: Jim Fehrenbacher, Paul Birk,
Gerald Klein
Altar Servers: Pierce Family
Ushers: Jim Klein, Ted
Zimmerman

Sunday, December 17

Lector: Ted Whitehead
Commentor: Beth Sulsberger
EM: Dennis Holkenbrink, Pat
Ridgeway, Emily Milner
Altar Servers: Max & Nolan
Duquane, Evelyn Stinner
Ushers: Justin Fleener, Jacob
Whitehead



St. Stephen Activities for the Week

Sunday, December 10, Sacrament of Reconciliation
8 – 8:20 a.m., PSR Class Dinner – 5:30 p.m.
Christmas Program – 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 12, Bible Study after mass
Wednesday, December 13, 6 p.m.
Reconciliation Service
Friday, December 15, Eucharistic Adoration
8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. Servite Rosary 12:00 noon,
Chaplet of Divine Mercy 3:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 17, - Sacrament of Reconciliation
8 – 8:20 a.m. PSR Program

PRAYER INTENTIONS: Linda Griffy, Bill Marks, Nichole Wheaton,
Lisa Persinger, Verna Oliver, LaVonne Kemmerer, Patience McKnight,
Clara Wilson, Claire Fopay, Mildred Garrison, Ray Vaughn, Anita Allen,
Joe Falica, Lois Houlihan, Ray & Irene Winka, Pat Venable, Chris Boyd,
Dr. Mark Wallace, Gerty Grundy, Ginny Timm, Tracy Winka, Steve
Dudzik, Ruth Wilson, Mike Burge, Angie Borrelli, Roger Wells, Tom
Kasper, Becky Payne, Rita & Judy Porter, Bob Bluhm, Rhonda Ryker,
Kelly Coan, Rick Harvey, Dr. Don Bunnell, Duck Greenwood, Paul
Weidner, Marilyn Wheaton, Jim Brown, Jakob Lane, Ted Zimmerman,
Diana Fleener, Rodney Greenwood, Robbie Porter, Ashlyn Smith

PSR Schedule Fall, 2017

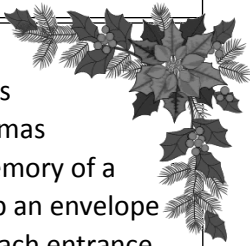
Dec. 10 – Class (Practice for Program) Dec. 17 - No Class
Dec. 24 - No Class Christmas Dec. 31 - No Class New Year

ST. STEPHEN NEWS

Christmas Eve, December 24, Mass will be at 10 p.m. with Carols tarting at 9:30 p.m. and Christmas Day Mass will be at 9 a.m., December 25. See December Calendar



If you would like to donate towards purchasing Christmas poinsettias, in memory of a loved one, pick up an envelope on the tables at each entrance. .



The Tree of Joy is now up and ready with angels in place! You may make your selections at any time. There are some tips on the back of each angel to assist you. Any questions contact Cheryl McCarty. Thank you in advance for your generosity in sharing. Bring gifts by December 10.

Come and celebrate the true Reason for the Season with Santa at Guadalupe Project! We are excited to invite everyone to our Christmas event! Santa will be visiting, and we will have a beautiful photo set where your child can pose with Santa at a manger scene. Sunday, Dec. 10 from 12 noon to 4:00 pm..

There will be door prizes and refreshments. Tickets for photos are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door.

We will also be having a drive for diapers, wipes, and formula. Anyone can come from 12-4 and visit Guadalupe Project, bring donations, enjoy refreshments, and tour the building.

If you would like to donate tickets, we would like to be able to give away 75 tickets to families who have visited Guadalupe Project. To donate a ticket, contact Laura at laura@guadalupeproject.net or mail \$10 per ticket to PO Box 181, Flora.

CRY ROOM
St. Stephen's Cry Room is in the Library, which is equipped with a TV set up with a live feed of the Mass.

The next Altar Society rotating chairman are: Jill Fehrenbacher, Mary Beth Lancaster /Susan Schroeder, and Erin and Emma Pierce.

Prayer Chain: When a parishioner has an intention & requests prayers, Erin Pierce will initiate the prayer chain. She will contact Fr. Charles, who will determine the prayers. An email will be sent to all members, who will pray for the intentions. Each member should endeavor to assure the obligation is met. Erin erinmp1968@aol.com call 662-2266.

St. Stephen Christmas program will be this Sunday, 7:00 p.m. with a Church Dinner before. The dinner will be at 5:30 pm, For the Potluck, bring side dish and desserts, meat will be provided.

ADVENT EVENSONG Holy Cross Church, Wendelin, Sunday, December 10, 4 p.m. A candlelight service with Scripture, Organ, English Carols & Austrian Christmas music sung in German by the Wendelin Kloeppen Singers. All are welcome. Refreshments afterwards. Dedicated memory of Fr. David Braun

The choir is practicing on Mondays at 7 pm until Christmas. Practices will continue until Christmas unless announced. All are welcome.

If you would like to help earn money for St. Ann's general fund visit Goodsearch.com and register making St. Ann's your charity. Please type in "St Ann's Altar Society" (no punctuation). Make it your homepage or just use it to search or make online purchases.

Please consider purchasing SCRIP cards after weekend Masses. There are several retailers & restaurants participating in the program. St. Ann's buys the cards at a discounted rate and sells them at full face value. When you buy a card you receive a card worth the purchase price, Contact Erin or shopwithscrip.com. Retailer list is on website.

ST. EDWARD NEWS

PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

To "Prepare The Way of The Lord" for your journey with the Jesse Tree, after Mass the weekend of Dec. 9-10, all parishioners are asked to do, or sincerely say something nice for/to a family member, a co-worker, a neighbor, or a friend, etc. Next weekend, (Dec. 16-17, Third Sunday of Advent) tie a ribbon on our Jesse Tree.

Jesse was the father of David, one of the earliest Kings of Israel. Since the Messiah was to come from the line of King in Israel, this "Jesse Tree" commemorates the ancestry of Jesus and helps us to "Prepare the way of the Lord" through our thoughts and actions.

Second Sunday of Advent—Until Christ returns.

Who shall we be and what shall we do while awaiting this Second Coming? Surely not standing around being idle. No-at work! The Bible readings early in Advent urge us to be at these works: giving comfort, straightening out pathways (both figurative and real), repenting, living without spot or blemish.

- *St. Paul asks, What sort of person ought I be?
- *How does my life point to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?
- *What one act of mercy will I do this week?

CHRISTMAS CHOIR

We will once again have Christmas Choir this year for Christmas Eve Mass. The dates and times for practices are yet to be determined. Will have more information in bulletin next weekend. If anyone has some ideas please contact Lisa Konopasek or Jeff Zurliene.

A BIG THANK-YOU

Teresa Williams and Libby Pond would like to Thank St. Edward Parishioners for all their support with the fundraisers and prayers as they prepare themselves for their mission trip to Haiti.

We will be decorating the church for Christmas on Sunday, Dec. 24th following 10:30am mass. Anyone that is available to help it would be greatly appreciated. The more hands make for quick work. Thank-you in advance.

THANK-YOU TO THE LADIES ALTAR SODALITY FOR A MAGNIFICENT CHRISTMAS PARTY. EVERYONE HAD A GREAT TIME!!!!

FROM FATHER CHARLES’ DESK:

Prepare a way for the Lord

Today’s Gospel reading, Mark 1:1-8 tells us that people of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem went to meet John the Baptist for baptism in the Jordan River, and were confessing their sins for repentance. They received the spirit of repentance because they acknowledged their sins. This is time we prepare ourselves by acknowledging our weaknesses and faults, and making amendment. Repentance involves a determined turning away from sin and a full hearted turning to God.

John the Baptist is the very voice of advent, the voice that points to the coming of the Lord Jesus to transform our life.

The message of John the Baptist to all of us is to prepare. It is a preparation of our life and soul for Christ. John speaks about preparing the way for the Lord, in terms of getting rid of the bumps and holes in our life to make a straight path for the Lord. Are we willing to get rid of the potholes and bumps in our life? what are we willing to give up in order to prepare for solid spiritual construction in our lives?

The deeper Christmas, which is a rebirth of fidelity to the Lord Jesus, a deeper appreciation of our Christian dignity and mission, a renewed welcoming of Christ and His Gospel into our life requires preparation.

In the middle of this crowded season, let’s make room for John the Baptist and his message of repentance because he keeps us real. He reminds us that we should be getting ready not just for another holiday season but to renew our lives in the power of Christ by getting rid of the obstacles that block our full experience of the Lord’s grace and power in our lives. He reminds us that we can change. His message of repentance prepares us not for temporary seasonal cheer but for deeper joy in the Lord that comes from experiencing release from sin and new life in Christ, and carries the promise of a new life, a new future in Christ that is open to each one of us.

From Father Charles Desk (cont.)

REFLECTION

The season of Advent gives us an opportunity to make a new beginning.

Advent is a season of hope.

It would be hard to exaggerate the value of hope.

It is said that while there is hope there is life.

This has an even deeper meaning in reverse:

while there is hope there is life.

As long as there is hope, no situation is impossible.

It is the task of Christians to keep hope alive in the world.

Advent summons us to wait in joyful hope

for the coming of our savior, Jesus Christ.

In the final analysis, he is our hope.

December Calendar for St. Stephen and St. Edward Parishes

Sunday, December 10, Dinner 5:30 p.m., Christmas Program 7:00 p.m. –
St. Stephens

Wednesday, December 13, Reconciliation Service - St. Stephen – 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 13, Reconciliation Service - St. Edward – 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 23 – Regular mass times at both churches
St. Edward – 4:00 p.m. St. Stephen – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 24 - Regular mass times at both churches
St. Stephen – 8:30 a.m. St. Edward – 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve masses – St. Edward – 6:00 p.m. St. Stephen – 10:00 p.m.

Monday, December 25 – Christmas Day - St. Stephen - 9:00 a.m.
St. Edward – 11:00 a.m.

From Father Charles Desk (cont.)

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