

# SAINT STEPHEN

## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



### The Baptism of the Lord - January 9, 2022

#### MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday 5:15 p.m.  
Sunday 7:30, 9:30, 11:30am, 5:15pm  
Monday-Thursday 9am

#### RECONCILIATION

Saturday 3:30 to 4:30pm and by appointment

#### ADORATION

Most Thursdays after 9am mass  
Fridays at 6pm in early 2022:  
Jan. 7, Feb. 4, March 4

Rev. Henry Hoffman, Pastor  
Rev. Lourduraj Pitchai, O. Praem  
John DiTaranto, Deacon  
Donald Ross, Deacon

Lisa Romano, Secretary (203) 268-6217  
Nina Keane, Secretary (203) 268-6217  
Barbara Upton, Music (203) 258-9103

Faith Formation and Youth Ministry  
Janet Wrabel, (203) 268-6860  
ststephenfaithformation@gmail.com

David Ference, Finance Council Chair

St Stephen Parish Office  
6948 Main Street , Trumbull, CT 06611  
(203) 268-6217

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

9:00am to 4:00pm Monday through Friday  
ststephenrectory@yahoo.com



# Mass Intentions

## Saturday, January 8

5:15 PM Gina O'Neill Family

## Sunday, January 9 (Baptism of the Lord)

7:30 AM Penny Meyers Patty & David Ference

9:30 AM Bob Keane Upton Family

11:30 AM Armand & Josephine Lenotti Daughter

5:15 PM The People of St Stephen

## Monday, January 10

9:00 AM Stanislaw Wadolowski Girgaski Family

## Tuesday, January 11

9:00 AM Richard Panagrassi  
Joseph & Gladys Madar

## Wednesday, January 12

9:00 AM Anita Cimeno  
Andrea & Tom Franzago

## Thursday, January 13

9:00 AM Winthrop Bibbins  
Joseph & Gladys Madar

## Friday, January 14

9:00 AM No Mass

## Saturday, January 15

5:15 PM Juan Lopez Ann Hamlin & Family

## Next Sunday, January 16 (2nd Sunday)

7:30 AM Eleanor Gentile Senes Family

9:30 AM Robert Keane Pat & Gerri Cooney

11:30 AM Sandra Cappello Giampaolo Family

5:15 PM The People of St Stephen



### Readings for the week of January 09, 2022

**Sunday:** Is 42:1-4, 6-7/Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 [11b]/Acts 10:34-38/Lk 3:15-16, 21-22 or, Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 104:1b-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27-28, 29-30 [1]/Ti 2:11-14; 3:4-7/ Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

**Monday:** 1 Sm 1:1-8/Ps 116:12-13, 14-17, 18-19/Mk 1:14-20

**Tuesday:** 1 Sm 1:9-20/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/Mk 1:21-28

**Wednesday:** 1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20/Ps 40:2 and 5, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10/Mk 1:29-39

**Thursday:** 1 Sm 4:1-11/Ps 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25/Mk 1:40-45

**Friday:** 1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a/Ps 89:16-17, 18-19/Mk 2:1-12

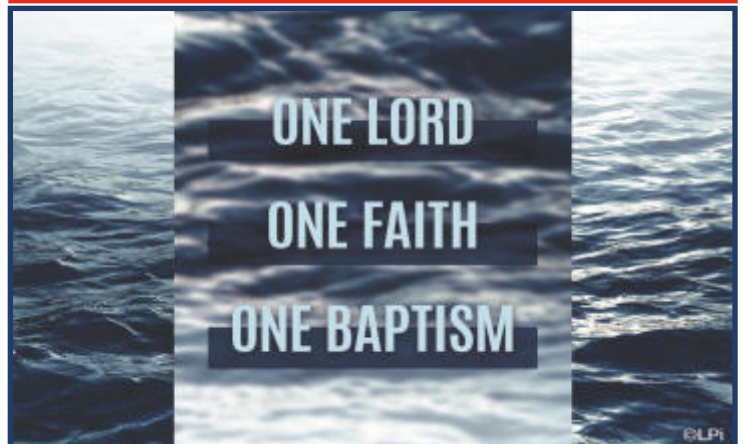
**Saturday:** 1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a/Ps 21:2-3, 4-5, 6-7/Mk 2:13-17

**Next Sunday:** Is 62:1-5/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10 [3]/1 Cor 12:4-11/Jn 2:1-11



Saint Stephen

## Fr Henry and Parishioners Enjoying the Christmas Spirit



## Time Flies!

Fellow St Stephen Parishioners:

Over the past short two-week period since Christmas Day, we watched Jesus go from a newborn babe on Christmas Day to a thirty-year-old adult being baptized today.

Before we leave behind a consideration of the Baby Jesus, as we progress over the next three years of Jesus' life, toward his Passion, Death and Resurrection, which we celebrate in mid-April, let us consider our Holy Father's words about the baby Jesus.

Not too many days ago, Pope Francis shared with us how the celebration of Christmas serves as a reminder that God did not reveal his greatness in a grand spectacle, but rather in the "littleness" of a poor, vulnerable child born in a stable in Bethlehem.

Harsh words, yes. But also a reminder that Jesus can be found anywhere and everywhere, even among the poor and vulnerable.

As he shared these words, our Holy Father held a figurine of the baby Jesus. "Let us be amazed by this wonderful truth," the Pope shared, "how the one who embraces the universe needed to be held in his mother's arms. The one who created the sun needed to be warmed in swaddling clothes. Tenderness incarnate needed to be cuddled. Infinite love had a tiny heart that did beat softly."

At the conclusion of these words, several children in the audience made their way to the figurine of baby Jesus, placing white flowers around the figurine as it was laid in a manger.

Pope Francis concluded his message with the words of how an angel's announcement of Christ's birth to shepherds was a sign for them to look for "a child, a baby lying in the dire poverty of a manger."

Harsh words, yes. But also a reminder that Jesus can be found everywhere and anywhere, even in the harsh poverty of being born in a manger.

Let us be open to finding Jesus everywhere, even in the harshest of places and conditions.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Fr Henry



## Asking the Whats beyond the Whys

At the end of Fr Henry's article in our bulletin of a couple weeks ago, "We Ask Why", Father Henry reflected on Jesus' words "blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed". He said "Perhaps implied in Jesus' words is this: Blessed are those who *believe* in the midst of the 'why's.'"

I would like to take Fr Henry's article to the next level, with the follow thoughts.

What about the "what's." What do I do when my why's are greeted only with deafening silence? What do I do when, like those dejected disciples on the Emmaus Road out of Jerusalem on that first Easter, I utter what have to be the three saddest words in the English language: "I had hoped." All of us at one time or another have uttered these three words. Every one of us has asked the question "What do I do now?" That belief Father Henry mentions is the beginning of answering the question "what now?"

I reflect on the experience of the two Disciples in the Emmaus account of the Gospel of St Luke. After Jesus' Death and Before they recognized him in the Resurrection, these two disciples seemed so lost.

What do we do when we are searching, as were those same Disciples of two-thousand years ago. Yes, what do I do? Do I continue on to Emmaus, which literally means "nowhere"...or....in meeting in the Eucharist each and every day and week the very same Christ who died and rose 2000 years ago, do I run back to the Jerusalems of today proclaiming "I have seen...I have met...the Lord!"

Asking "what" gets us beyond our "whys." Truly, we may never answer our why's, yet ask why we must; but if we walk closely with the One who after three days in a tomb transformed the universe in answer to the "what do we do now" questions of all times, we too can become the Mary's, the St. Josephs, the St. Peters, the St. Pauls, the St. Stephens of our own time, somehow, some way entering the sufferings which surround us rather than continuing to fruitlessly question them without answers.

The mid 20<sup>th</sup> century French poet Paul Claudel once said "Jesus did not come to explain away suffering or remove it. He came to fill it with His presence." Put another way, we might say "Jesus did not come to answer our whys....but he has come to help answer our whats, and fill them with His presence."

So, our every day challenge is this: How and when can I move beyond my whys so I can begin to fruitfully answer some what's? Thoughts and words to ponder.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Deacon Don Ross



## Sacraments

### Baptism

Sundays at 12:45 p.m., by appointment  
Pre-Baptism Class is necessary for first child.  
Please call the rectory for an appointment.

### Marriage

Arrange with the priest at least 1 year  
in advance.

### Penance

Saturday 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

### Prayer Line

For special intentions call  
Agnes Lazor (203) 220-8043

## Reflecting Back On Christmas Day

Our daughter recently married. During family gatherings before and after the wedding, bride and groom baby stories brought tears of laughter and just plain tears. A wise person once said to me that one of parenting's greatest challenges is learning to gracefully let our children go. When they're young, we sometimes wonder when they'll ever leave our arms to explore the world. But as they grow older and leave home, we sometimes yearn for those times we held them in our arms. Full arms sometimes create a yearning for empty ones. Sometimes, empty arms yearn to be full.

Having recently experienced one of life's "letting goes", and on letting go of Christmas 2021/2022, I noticed a detail in the Christmas story that never before caught my attention. We don't know if anyone ever asked Mary or Joseph if they could hold their newborn baby. We don't know if the shepherds simply looked at the baby or ever held him. We don't know whether the Magi ever cradled the baby in their arms after presenting their gifts. There are no accounts of grandparents waiting anxiously in Nazareth for an opportunity to hold the newborn child. We are told that besides Mary and Joseph, Simeon was the only one who held the infant Jesus, but held him not in Bethlehem, but in Jerusalem awhile after the baby's birth. Is it possible that Simeon ached to hold a child after once having to let one go? We really don't know. But perhaps the omission of any mention of Christ being held by anyone besides his parents in Bethlehem and Simeon in Jerusalem is an invitation for us to reach out to hold him, to fill our empty arms and empty hearts.

Babies yearn to be held, and in each one of us there's a yearning to hold one. Perhaps God became one of us as a baby because God knows that only an infant has the ability to crawl in through even the slightest of cracks in the most hardened of hearts, and soften them. Perhaps God became one of us as a baby to teach us that a baby is God's promise that the world will go on. Perhaps God became one of us as a baby so we might realize power we never knew we had to love and nurture the most helpless.

We can go on and on speculating about why God chose to become one of us as God did, but there are some certainties. God did, in fact, become one of us...and the Gospels speak of no one other than Mary, Joseph, and Simeon who cradled God as a babe in their arms. Christmas is a moment to fill a gap in Gospel stories...and in your heart...it's a moment to hide from restless thoughts and everyday worries, enter your inner room, and ask Mary and Joseph if you may hold their baby. Then, as you gaze on the child in your arms, remember the songwriter Mark Lowry's words to Mary, and to all of us, that the child she delivered has delivered her and delivered you. Remember that the tiny eyes you gaze into have looked upon angels where they trod, and remember as you kiss the child Jesus'-or any child's face- you kiss the face of God.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Deacon Don Ross



**Hospital Visits.** If you or a family member are in the hospital, and you would like a visit from a priest. Please call the Parish office at 203-268-6217. You must also let the hospitals know that you are a member of St. Stephen Parish, since the priest does not have access to patient information.



We welcome our newest members of St. Stephen faith community who were newly baptized:

Grace Lorraine Bailey



## PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Let us remember in our prayers the following parishioners and friends who are sick:

Therese Karr, Bernie Engelman, Peggy Lawler, Deborah Fredrickson, Sophie Buzzeo, Dolores Montelli, Mark Mahoney, John Kelnhofer, Rose DiMartino, Carol Moyer, Joseph Sheridan, Aiden Hutto, Steve Krehley, Deacon Joe Gagne, Kevin Maguire, Lori Cimeno, Patricia Forcier, Gene Orsenigo, Mitchell Yeoh, Ann Ianniello, Patricia Farrell, Joseph Tereira, Adriana Schanbusch, Anita Tynan, Mark King, Hugh Croll, Emmie B., Richard Turco, Ann Hamlin, Marian Nanchy, Marie Tedesco, Russell Arsenault, Jr., Abigail Jackson



## PARISH NEWS



Thursday mornings  
after 9am mass

First Friday Evenings  
in Early 2002  
at 6pm  
January 7  
February 4  
March 4

### Pray for our Recently Deceased Parishioner...

Please pray for those who have gone home to the Lord...

Nicholas Vancho  
Cathleen Ann Smith

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to their loved ones.



### Spiritual Direction Available

Spiritual direction is a space and place to unpack and notice, through conversations with a prayerful companion, personal encounters with the Jesus for whom each and every one of us matters. The very act of holy listening and sharing that occurs within spiritual direction sessions is an experience of Jesus meeting us and entering our life in the world, where we are, as we are.

People meet with a spiritual director for many reasons. Perhaps they want to grow in their relationship with God and are seeking guidance as to how to start their prayer lives or how to take their prayer lives deeper. Or maybe they are trying to discern an invitation from God to minister in some way. Or maybe they are in the middle of having to make a major life decision or transition. Perhaps they are experiencing some crisis of faith. No matter what draws someone to seek spiritual direction, the conversations between prayerful companions always lead back to the One who draws a person to seek spiritual companionship in the first place—the Living Spirit of God.

If you desire to “find God in all things”, Deacon Don Ross is available to be a prayerful companion on your journey to the fullness of life in Christ. Conversations can occur via Zoom, Google Meet, or in person. Deacon Ross is Certified as a Spiritual Director through Fairfield University’s Murphy Center for Ignatian Spirituality. He can be contacted at 203-948-1036 or [dnross@diobpt.org](mailto:dnross@diobpt.org).



Epiphany of the Lord - (2022) - \$5989.79

Monthly - (2022) - \$569.00

Solemnity of Mary- (2022) - \$573.00



### St. Stephen's Men's Solidarity Group **No Ordinary Path**

On September 16, 2017, the St. Stephen's Men's Solidarity Group was founded.

The Men's Group is an informal gathering that acknowledges God's everyday presence among us. We work together in fellowship, develop community ministries, engage in meaningful discussions, pray in community, and generally have a good time.

Our journey begins with Matthew 25:40.

*"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these the least of my brothers of mine, you did for me."*

Since founding, the Men's Group has launched the following Community Ministries:

Bi-weekly Men's Group meetings, Monday evenings (7:00 pm) in the Parish Hall.

Weekly Volunteer Service at the Trumbull and Monroe Food Pantries.

Semi-annual Spring and Fall American Red Cross blood drives in the Parish Hall.

Advent and Lent Spiritual Days of Prayer, Renewal and Reflection.

Annual February Men's Retreat at Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center.

Cleared a pathway and erected the Stations of the Cross in the woods behind the Church, accessible to all, anytime, for contemplative prayer and solitude.

### ***Why don't you come join us?***

*"So could you not keep watch with me for one hour?" Matthew 26:40*

The following ministries, discontinued due to Covid-19, hope to resume in the future.

Monthly Sunday Eucharistic Prayer Service at Middlebrook Nursing Home.

Monthly Friday Shabbat Ecumenical Prayer at B'nai Torah.

Weekly Sunday evening Eucharistic Prayer Service at the Bridgeport Detention Center.

*"The only way for us to give witness is...to be what we are in the midst of everyday banal realities." Fr. Christian de Cherge, Trappist Monk / Martyr - (d. 1996).*



**Mrs. Janet Wrabel**  
 (203) 268-6860 (Office) or (203) 913-4393 (Cell)  
[ststephenfaithformation@gmail.com](mailto:ststephenfaithformation@gmail.com)

**Faith Formation**

Are you interested in registering your child(ren) for the 2021-2022 school year and are thinking it's too late? It's not! Please contact Janet Wrabel for more information.



**Family Mass - Sunday, January 9 - 9:30 a.m.**

After Mass come to the parish hall for refreshments and also to participate in our **CARD MINISTRY**. We will make **GET WELL CARDS** to share with our parishioners throughout the year.

**YOUTH MINISTRY**

Seeking high school students who are interested in being a member of the **Youth Ministry Advisory Board**. You will have a voice in the planning and also help coordinate service, spiritual and social activities involving the middle school and high school youth of St. Stephen Parish. If you are interested in this leadership role please come to the **Youth Ministry Advisory Board Meeting on Sunday, January 9th in the parish hall following the 5:15 p.m. Mass**. Please RSVP to Mrs. Wrabel if you will be attending so enough pizza will be ordered.



**WOMEN OF ST. STEPHEN**

The next "Coffee And" sponsored by the Women of St. Stephen will be on January 9th after all morning masses.

**Women of St. Stephen Holiday Dinner**

The Women of St. Stephen Holiday Party has been canceled due to the fact that Roberto's Restaurant has closed.

**Contribution Statements**

Contribution statements will be mailed to all parishioners who have contributed \$250.00 or more to the parish in 2021. Statements will be mailed out within the next couple of weeks. If you do not receive a statement, please call the parish office and a copy will be provided for you.



We invite all interested families to attend our Open House on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at 8:30 am. To register please go to <https://www.stcatherinesienatrumbull.org/apps/pages/visit-scss> or our website, [stcatherinesienatrumbull.org](http://stcatherinesienatrumbull.org). This Open House will provide an opportunity to meet and interact with teachers, administrators, and students and tour our beautiful campus located at 190 Shelton Road, Trumbull. Come to see for yourself what makes SCSS such a special place for your child. We hope to see you there!



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Everyone has a vocation! To the married life, to religious life, to living out the Christian life as a single person in a counter-cultural society. Please ask Fr Henry, if you have any questions of any kind about any kind of vocation.



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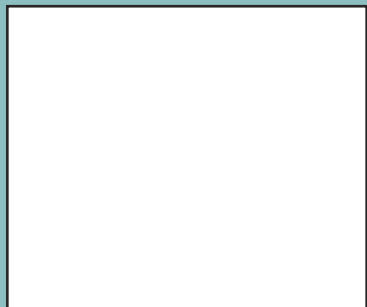

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Dona Wassell, Parishioner

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