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the

Liturgical *flame*

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR
LITURGICAL MINISTERS

Lent—A time to Refocus our Lives

What do you think of, when you know that Lent will soon be starting? I think the first thing that comes to most people, is giving meat up on Fridays. Yes, the fish fries are great to go to for great food and meeting up with friends. But we all know there is a lot more than giving up meat on Fridays. I would like to take the time now, to look at what Lent is all about.

Lent is a time to look back on our lives. Look at where we are in our faith journey. Is the path we are taking, one that will make a difference in our life and the lives that we care about? We are told in Luke 4:1-2: "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the spirit for forty days in the wilderness..." Jesus spent forty days praying and fasting to prepare for his mission here on earth. As always Jesus shows us the way! We all need to take time to see if we are following our Lord and Savior! To see if we are being led by the Holy Spirit!

Lent is a time to see how we can grow in our faith. Make it a time to broaden or deepen our spiritual lives. So many times Lent isn't used for this, but it should be one of the main things we do. Some of the ways we can do this is:

- *Attend Mass during the week
- *Read and pray with the Mass readings for each day.
- *Pray the rosary
- *Spend time in Eucharistic Adoration
- *Pray the Liturgy of the Hours.
- *Learn about the Catholic Church-what it believes and why
- *Go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation more often
- *Seek spiritual direction
- *Read spiritual books

Maybe what ever we decide to do will be so rewarding that we will want to continue it past Lent, maybe for the rest of our lives!

When we think of Lent we usually think of things we can give up. What to give up? Here are some areas that we might focus on in our Lenten sacrifice?

- *A type of food
- *Television or internet time
- *Unnecessary spending or shopping
- *Alcohol or caffeine

Sacrifice should be a way to grow closer to God. Ask the Lord to help you when you are tempted to give up on what ever your sacrifice is.

We have discussed pray and sacrifice as part of Lent. Another equally as important part of our Lenten journey is almsgiving. We are all called as Christians to help others. Here are some ways we can do this:

- *Donate to the food pantry
- *Donate your time to help a neighbor, co-worker, friend, family member
- *Give your old clothes to the Goodwill or some other organization
- *Take time to write a note of thanks or encouragement to someone
- *Give someone a compliment
- *Visit the sick, the homebound

Brothers and Sisters in Christ we need Lent to re-focus our lives! In this world today we are so focused on worldly things like money, careers, and getting ahead that we lose sight of why we are here in the first place. We are here to love the Lord our God! May this Lent be one of finding out that you cannot out do God! The more you love and serve Him the more He will shower you with His Love, mercy and grace.

Have a Blessed Lenten Season!
Deacon Wes Kreun

Remember Man you are Dust . . .

These are the words recited to us on Ash Wednesday as the ashes are placed on our forehead. These ashes remind us that without God we are simply dust. Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the Lenten Season. A season that is solemn and allows us to reflect on and prepare for the mysteries of the Easter Season.

The Lenten season lasts for forty days and concludes on Easter. These forty days do not include the Sundays during the Lenten season. These forty days remind us of the forty days that Jesus spent in the desert before beginning his public ministry.

During the season of lent we are called to renew ourselves as Christians through the practices of fasting, prayer and almsgiving.

We have many opportunities for you and your family to spiritually renew yourselves during these forty days. Maybe you can become involved with a FISH group, or, attend weekly Stations of the Cross on Friday's. Maybe you could try to attend daily mass or devote time in the adoration chapel spending time with Our Lord. Maybe you could get involved in one of the many parish activities or volunteer for a new liturgical role.

The goal of lent is to teach us new ways to enter into the Easter Season. We really shouldn't just do these special things during those forty days but train ourselves to continue these things forever.



Mark Your Calendar

First Communion Sunday—March 27th, 2011

Regular 9:00 a.m.; 10:30 a.m. and Noon masses are held in the gymnasium

First Communion Masses in the church
9:00 a.m.; Noon; 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday—April 24th, 2011

Divine Mercy Sunday—May 1st, 2011

Sunday Evening Concert

Confirmation—May 16th, 17th, 18th

Ecumenical Spiritual Mardi Gras

An Ecumenical Spiritual Mardi Gras will be held at St. Stephen the Martyr on Tuesday, March 8, 2011 beginning at 7:00 p.m. It will consist of a prayer service in our Worship Space followed by fellowship in the dining room. We will be joined by members of the congregations from the following churches. Celebration Covenant, Faithful Shepherd Presbyterian, Community Covenant, St. Columbkille Catholic Church, Living Faith United Methodist, Faith Presbyterian and St. Thomas Lutheran. We welcome you to join us.

Ash Wednesday Masses

Wednesday March 9th

6:30 a.m.

8:15 a.m. (School Mass)

12 Noon

4:00 p.m.

5:30 p.m.

7:00 p.m.

Liturgical Ministers Needed

Please sign up on Gathering Table

Seasonal Decorating

We will be decorating the Worship Space for the Season of Lent on Sunday Evening March 6th at 7:15 following the conclusion of the 6:00 p.m. Sunday Evening Liturgy.

There also will be an opportunity to assist with our Holy Thursday and Easter Decorating. Please watch for information in upcoming bulletins and the Easter Edition of the Liturgical Flame.

Service Hours are available for Middle School and High School Students needing these opportunities. Please contact Karen Hardy at 861-4537 or k.hardy@stephen.org with any questions.



Harry was a Minister

The following story was obtained at a Liturgical Ministry breakout session at the South West Liturgical Conference in Salt Lake City at the beginning February. It is reprinted with the permission of John Gallagher.

Harry never even vaguely considered himself a minister in his church. "Come on", he would say. The people who give out the Eucharist, the ones who lector, maybe they are ministers, but me...I'm just an usher.

A young priest in Harry's parish had given a talk on the "ministry" of greeter and usher, but Harry wasn't buying that "malarkey." He said he was just trying to "give the pastor a hand" by taking up the collection, steering people to Holy Communion and saying hello to parishioners when they came into church.

Harry believed that, until one cold March night he came home from work and his wife told him the pastor had called. Harry returned the call and the pastor told him that a letter had been received at the rectory. The letter was simply addressed to "Harry the usher."

The priest said that since he was the only usher called Harry, would he please come and pick up his letter.

Harry intrigued by the request, complied and on the way home ripped open the envelope and in the dim light of the car read the following:

*"Dear Harry,
I don't know your last name but I guess that's fair.
You don't know mine either. I'm Gert; Gert from the
10:30 a.m. Mass. I am writing you for a couple of reasons,
and I hope you will understand.*

One of the reasons is to ask a favor. I am not particularly close to any of the priests in the parish but somehow I feel close to you. I don't even know how you go to know my first name, but every Sunday morning when I walked into Mass you smiled and greeted me and called me by my name. We would exchange a few words that were perhaps meaningless to most like how bad the weather was; how much you liked my Easter hat and how late I was on a particular Sunday.

I don't have any close family left, Harry. My husband has been dead for 16 years and the kids are scattered. Not too many people smile and greet an old lady like me, but you did.

Harry, in the little time left to me, I just wanted to say thank you. Thank you for your thoughtfulness; for remembering my name is Gert; for the smiles and the little laughter; the consideration and the conversation.

Now for the favor—I am dying Harry. My time is running out. It is not important that you

come to my wake, but what is important to me is that when they bring me to church for Mass for the last time, you will be standing at the front entrance. It wouldn't seem right if you weren't standing there to say "Hello Gert. Good to see you."

If you are there Harry, I will feel assured that your warm hospitality in my home parish will be duplicated by Peter, Jesus and Mary in my new parish, my new home. I hope they will say just as you always did, "Hello Gert. It is good to see you."

*With love and gratitude,
Gert*

The lady who wrote that letter recently was buried from her parish church. Harry did stand at the entrance. He smiled and said the words Gert wanted to hear as he gently touched the coffin.

He found out that it wasn't malarkey; Harry had become a minister.

This little story is just a reminder to our ushers that you are a very important part of many individuals lives here at St. Stephens. You are that smiling face that greets us as we enter the church. You are that kind individual who assists us in finding a seat when we may be running a little late. You are that individual who graciously gives of your time and talent. You are appreciated year round here at St. Stephens and especially during those busy masses of Christmas and Easter when we are bursting at the seams with those who want to celebrate the Mass of Jesus Christ our Lord.

If you are currently not an usher, and this story touched you and you would like to make a difference in the life of another parishioner here at St. Stephens. Please consider contacting Karen Hardy at k.hardy@stephen.org or calling 861-4537 to obtain more information on the usher ministry.

We welcome individuals of all ages (High School Students and Adults) to get involved with this ministry.

**AS FOR ME AND MY
HOUSEHOLD— WE WILL
SERVE THE LORD**

JOSHUA 24:15

INTERFAITH MARDI GRAS SERVICE — March 8 at 7:00 p.m. in the Church

ASH WEDNESDAY — March 9

Masses — 6:30 a.m., 8:15 a.m., 12:00 noon, 4:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m., and 7:00 p.m.

SOUP SUPPER! — March 9 from 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., proceeds to the poor.

Hosted by Youth Ministry

STATIONS OF THE CROSS — Every Friday at 6:00 p.m. in the Church

STATIONS OF THE CROSS LED BY THE SCHOOL STUDENTS

March 11, March 25, April 8 and April 15 at 2:30 p.m. in the Church

All are welcome to attend.

FISH FRIES — Every Friday beginning at 5:00 p.m. in the Dining Room

Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus

Have fun, socialize, and support the Knights who support the Parish!

FISH GROUPS — Bring your regular group together, join an existing group, or start a new one. Six weeks. Call Sister Clarice at 402-861-4508. We will be using best selling author, Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, *Longing for the Holy: Spirituality for Everyday Life.*

COMMUNAL RECONCILIATION SERVICE — Wednesday, March 30 at 7:00 pm.

Several priests presiding.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY — All young adults are invited to a special Lenten gathering of all young adults on Thursday, March 10 at 7:00 pm in the Parish Center. The topic is "Giving." Each of us is called to give in so many different directions throughout life. We are called to give to our families, our jobs, our church, our community and of course to ourselves. The guest speaker will be Jackie White, President of the Board for the Midlands chapter of Big Brothers, Big Sisters. Food and drinks would be provided. Our safe-environment trained baby-sitters are available for free.

SPECIAL LENTEN HOLY HOUR — Join us in the worship space for an intimate celebration of Holy Hour, praise, worship and Benediction Monday, April 4, 2011 at 7:00 pm. This kind of prayer takes place in a relaxed atmosphere of love, peace and joy. Come and be a witness to God's love and healing! For more information, contact Rich Benda at 402-415-1011.

ADULT FORMATION — Check the bulletin each week or our parish website for the most current studies available to you. Listed below

- **Rome Beneath the Surface** — Mr. Omar Gutierrez, Special Assistant to the Archbishop is scheduled to speak on March 22 from 9:30 am –11:00 am or 7:00 pm –8:30 pm Mr. Gutierrez will present a fascinating lecture on the excavations ongoing beneath Rome. Come learn about this archeological treasure, about the tomb of St. Peter, the catacombs, more recent discoveries, and what they have to tell us about our every-day faith. Registration available online at www.stephen.org, click on adult formation or email Deacon Marty at m.warwick@stephen.org
- **Holy Mass and Healing Service** — Saturday, April 2 with Alan Ames. Evening agenda starts with mass at 5:00 pm followed by the presentation from Alan. Reconciliation will be available. Watch the bulletin for more details.

April 17 Palm Sunday: regular Mass times

April 21 Holy Thursday: 7:00 p.m. Mass

April 22 Good Friday: 3:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m.
5:00 p.m. (Youth Passion Play)

April 23 Easter Vigil: 8:45 p.m.

April 24 Easter Sunday: regular Mass times

Confessions

Tuesday, April 19
11:00 a.m.-12 noon & 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 20
4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 21
11:00 a.m. – 12 noon & 8:15 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.



Alan Ames

Holy Mass & Healing Service (Alan Ames Ministry)

Alan Ames has been speaking and praying for healing around the world since 1994. He was blessed to speak, with church approval, at World Youth Day 2002 in Toronto, where he conducted three talks. Alan shares his unique conversion experiences that caused a dramatic change in his life from a violent alcoholic to a man of the Sacraments and prayer. His mission has many aspects, but primarily centers on the Eucharist, Reconciliation, and the Rosary. The Lord has gifted Alan to be an agent of healing. Many physical and spiritual healings have taken place plus hundreds of conversions through the prayers. His talks are based on and stress the importance of the Body of Christ and our precious Catholic Church.

Come and listen to Alan's amazing story and testimony of God's love.

<i>April 1st</i>	<i><u>St. Cecilia Catholic Church</u></i>	<i>Mass at 6:30 p.m.</i>
<i>Fri.</i>	<i>701 North 40th St. Omaha, NE</i>	<i>Presiding - Rev. James Buckley</i>
<i>April 2nd</i>	<i><u>St. Stephen the Martyr Catholic Church</u></i>	<i>Mass at 5:00 p.m.</i>
<i>Sat.</i>	<i>16701 S St. Omaha, NE</i>	<i>Presiding - Rev. James Tiegs</i>
<i>April 3rd</i>	<i><u>St. Joseph Catholic Church</u></i>	<i>Mass at 10:00 a.m.</i>
<i>Sun.</i>	<i>155 A St. Platte Center, NE</i>	<i>Presiding - Rev. Rodney Kneifl</i>

The Agenda includes: Mass and Alan's Presentation and a Healing Service.

Alan has the approval of Archbishop Barry Hickey, the Archbishop of Western Australia. The Archbishop personally appointed Alan's spiritual director and Alan is strictly obedient to him.

Testimony: John: "My local hospital discovered a tumor on my liver and needed surgery to remove the tumor. We went to Alan's healing service and I felt a tingling in my abdomen and back of my neck. I didn't think anymore about it and went to the hospital for surgery. The day before surgery they were trying to locate my tumor and couldn't find it with ultrasound or x-ray. The doctor then confirmed the tumor was not there and three other doctors also looked for it and could not find it. I've had about eight x-rays since then and still there is no tumor. Thank God!"

Alan Ames books, videos and Eucharistic Rosaries are now available to order on-line. Please share the website below with friends and family to place on-line orders: <http://www.alanames.org/en/order.htm>

Please do not call Churches!! Call Bob or Madaline at (402)333-4831

Understanding the Revised Mass Texts

Beginning with Advent 2011 the Mass Texts are being revised to allow us as Catholics to have a firmer grasp of the meaning of the original texts. Our worship at Mass not only is an expression of our faith, but our worship shapes and forms each of our individualized faith journeys. As we gather each week to listen to the things that God gave us, the scriptures, prayers and rituals become part of us and teach us about our faith. Therefore it is important that the prayers that we pray at Mass express and teach our faith clearly and accurately as given to us from God.

The church undertook the project of re-writing the Roman Missal in order to express and teach our faith even more clearly and accurately. Those prayers written in Latin needed to be translated into English.

The translation of those prayers was not an easy thing to do, because the translated prayers must stay faithful to the original meaning but also must flow in the language that the people stating the prayers will understand.

One of the goals by those that translated the Missal was to utilize a language that was a little more formal than the way we might speak in other settings. The more formal language is meant to remind us that we are doing something more formal and reverent when we gather together to worship God in the Eucharist. This will help set a tone as we gather to remind us that something important happens as we gather to celebrate Mass.

This fall we will have lots of opportunity to learn more about the new Missal and prayers. We will have special bulletin inserts and homilies for eight weeks in a row that will discuss these changes.

The introduction of these new prayers gives us all an opportunity to learn more about our faith as we study and prepare for the upcoming changes. However, the new Missal is about so much more than the changing of the words that we recite and pray. It is instead an opportunity for us to engage in the renewal of our worship as we gather together in the presence of the Lord. This will allow us to know the love of God that he poured out to us through our Savior—Lord Jesus Christ.

The last several Liturgical Flame Newsletters have discussed the Revised Mass Texts. We have already covered the Penitential Rite, Gloria and the Nicene Creed. These articles can be located at the Stephen.org website under liturgy. Previous editions of the Liturgical Flame are there for your review.

Today's article will be focusing on the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Once the priest has received the gifts the prayers stated at the altar by the priest will be slightly different. While holding the bread the priest is going to say, "Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you:

fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life." This allows us to remember that we are in the act of offering the bread to God the Father.

The translation of the words while the chalice is lifted makes that similar distinction, "Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands it will become our spiritual drink. "

After the priest washes his hands he invites you to pray slightly differently. "Pray, brethren that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father. This implies that more than one sacrifice is being offered by the congregation. The Mass is a single sacrifice offered by all present, but each baptized member of the assembly is offering a sacrifice.

Our response changes slightly with the addition of the word "Holy", "May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

The Eucharistic Prayer is the center and summit of the entire Mass. The new translation into English has longer and more involved sentences. The vocabulary is broader than the previous translation.

All of the Eucharistic Prayers have a similar structure. There is an opening dialogue where we as a congregation exchange lines with the priest — The Lord be with you....

Then the priest recites the preface of the Mass which gives thanks and praise to God. At the conclusion of the Prayer of thanksgiving, we as a congregation offer up the Holy Holy Holy and join our voices with the echoing choir of angels.

The Epiclesis then occurs where the priest asks the Holy Spirit to come down upon the bread and wine and change them into the Body and Blood of Christ. The story of the Last Supper is recounted and then we proclaim the Anamnesis remembering the death and Resurrection of Christ.

The priest offers to God the consecrated bread and wine and then the priest asks for the Holy Spirit to come down upon all of us binding us as one in communion with the Body of Christ. This where we also pray for the living and the dead.

The Eucharistic Prayer concludes with the Final Doxology where we pray to the trinity and respond in faith with the most important words at mass "Amen".

The next Liturgical Flame will focus on the specific wording changes of the Eucharistic Prayer.

Ask the Liturgical Team?

**ASK THE
LITURGICAL
TEAM?**

Q: What is evangelization?

A. Evangelization is the process of witnessing to and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and helping others “meet” our Lord. This mission is shared by all believers. The proclamation and catechesis of others are essential to the new evangelization to which the Church commits herself today: to bring the Gospel of salvation to those far and near. At the conclusion of every mass we are challenged to ‘go forth’ and continue the mass by spreading the good news to those in our everyday lives, to be disciples of Christ to those around us.

to grow in holiness. This is when the Elect enter the stage of Purification and Enlightenment that occurs during the Lenten Season. The Scrutinies are celebrated on the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent. The scrutinies are meant to bring God’s illuminating Word to the Elect so that whatever is weak or sinful in their hearts can be healed and so that whatever is good in them can be strengthened. The parish community joins them by examining their own lives and interceding with God for the Elect. Here at St. Stephens we celebrate the scrutinies at the 9:00 a.m. mass which our Elect attend prior to attending their Sacramental preparation classes.

**PLEASE SEND
YOUR
QUESTIONS TO
K.HARDY@
STEPHEN.ORG**

Q: What are the scrutinies?

A. Those individuals (the Elect) that are preparing to enter the Church at the Easter Vigil are led through prayerful reflections that are designed to help them turn from sin and



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Liturgy Office

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**CHECK OUT PAST
ISSUES OF THE
LITURGICAL FLAME
AT STEPHEN.ORG
UNDER THE
LITURGY SECTION**