



# The Family Connection



St. Stephen the Martyr Religious Education  
Mary Maguire, Director [www.stephen.org/reled](http://www.stephen.org/reled)

## December 9, 2011

- Dec. 17: Christmas Program Rehearsals, Gym; 9 and 10:30 am
- Dec. 18: Sunday School Christmas Programs; 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.
- Dec. 20/21: Baby Shower for Mary
- Dec. 25-Jan. 7: Christmas Break
- Jan. 4: Catechist Meeting, DR; 6:30 pm
- Jan. 8: Sunday School Resumes
- Jan. 10/11: R. E. Classes Resumes

## Baby Shower for Mary

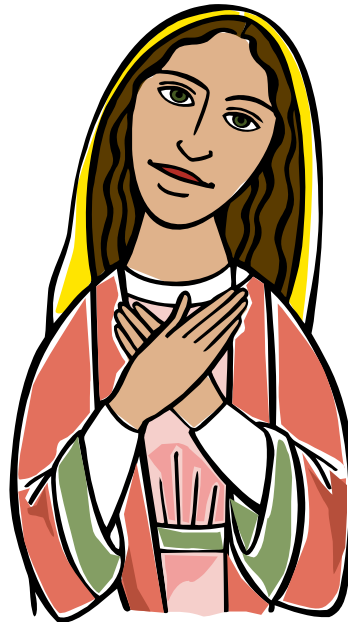
During the fourth week of Advent, students will have a Baby Shower for Mary to support our parish Angel Tree efforts. At this baby shower, students will bring items that will be donated to EPS (Essential Pregnancy Services), which provides needed items for moms and babies in low income families.

Contributions of any kind or size are welcomed and greatly appreciated. *Students can bring these items to the baby shower on the December 20/21 classes.*

**Kindergarten -4th Grade:**  
Suggestions: 4-8oz bottles, formula (any brand), diaper rash ointment, socks and booties, newborn, small or medium diapers.

**5th-8th Grade:**  
Suggestions: baby lotion, formula (any brand), baby wipes, baby wash or shampoo, size LG/XL baby diapers

Or any item a baby would need.



## NATIVITY SCENE POTS

Celebrate the joy of Christmas — and remember Jesus' birth — by making this craft to decorate your home or to give as a gift.

### What you need:

- 3 terra cotta pots (any size)
- Acrylic paints (including one for skin color)
- Paintbrush
- Craft glue (or a glue gun, with an adult to help)
- Brown yarn
- Material swatches
- Straw-colored raffia

### What you do:

1. Decide which pot will be Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus. Turn each pot upside-down and paint a face on each one.
2. Decorate the pots by painting hair and clothes or by using yarn and material as hair and head coverings.
3. For baby Jesus, glue raffia along the bottom to look like straw in a manger.



### Office Hours:

Monday: 9 AM – 3 PM  
Tuesday: 9 AM - 6:30 PM  
Wednesday: 10 AM- 8 PM  
Thursday & Friday: Closed  
Sunday: 9 AM-Noon  
Or by appointment

You can also call us at 896-5683.  
Messages will be checked daily.  
Fax number: 861-4590

- **Director:** Mary Maguire at 896-5683 [m.maguire@stephen.org](mailto:m.maguire@stephen.org),
- **Admin. Asst.:** Eileen Smith at 861-4513 [e.smith@stephen.org](mailto:e.smith@stephen.org)
- **Confirmation:** Deborah Sheehy at 861-4510 [d.sheehy@stephen.org](mailto:d.sheehy@stephen.org)
- **Sunday School/VBS:** Rhonda Richeson at 861-4511 [r.richeson@stephen.org](mailto:r.richeson@stephen.org)
- **Youth Ministry:** Laura Bogue at 861-4509 [l.bogue@stephen.org](mailto:l.bogue@stephen.org)

Want to add something to the newsletter?  
Contact Eileen at: 861-4513,  
[e.smith@stephen.org](mailto:e.smith@stephen.org)

## Sunday School Lessons

### December 11, 2011

**Intro:** An Angel Visits Mary, Chapter 11

**PreK:** Jesus Is Born, Lesson 23

**Kind:** Jesus Is Coming

**Prayer:** Dear Father In Heaven

**Tue/Wed Kindergarten: (Dec. 13/14)**

God Sends His Son

**Prayer:** Jesus Help Us



# Sunday School Program

### Reminder

**Saturday, December 17 is the Christmas Program Rehearsal**

**Christmas Program  
December 18, 2 and 4 p.m.**

## Advent Activities

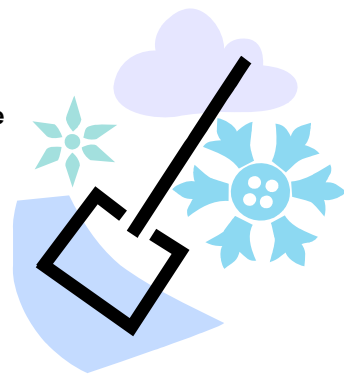
Advent Prayers — R.E. students will be preparing with special prayer and service activities during the month of December. The Advent activities will culminate with the students participating in a 'Baby Shower for Mary' on the last night of classes, Dec. 20/21.

Special thanks to Kaitlin Kueny for developing the prayer activities and services as her high school senior project; and to Heather Berreth for helping to organize the 'Baby Shower for Mary'.



## Weather Cancellations

The Religious Education program observes the school closing policies of the Millard School District. If Millard Public Schools cancel classes or evening activities due to inclement weather, we will not hold Religious Education classes that evening. **Occasionally, because of deteriorating weather conditions during the day, we will need to cancel R.E. classes late in the afternoon or early evening, even when Millard has held classes.** Cancellations and plans for re-scheduling activities will be published on the 'Weather Information' page of the parish web-site, located at [www.stephen.org](http://www.stephen.org) and broadcast on KFAB radio and local TV stations. Parents should use their discretion as to whether it is safe for their children to attend class. The safety of our children is our always our primary concern.



## Care Ministry

The joy of Christmas can turn into a time of painful loneliness and emptiness for those who have suffered a loss or who are going through a difficult time. But help is available. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to provide confidential, one-to-one, Christian care. They will listen to you, care for you, encourage you, pray with you and for you, and support you through the holidays and for as long as your need persists.

If you, or someone you know, is hurting, find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking to one of our Stephen Leaders: Sister Clarice Faltus (402-861-4508 or [c.faltus@stephen.org](mailto:c.faltus@stephen.org)); Marci McElroy (402-894-9298); Marvin Winkeler (402-964-2331).

## Adult Education Class Offered

Beginning January 10 in the GPC we will be offering the Quick Journey, an eight-part series taught by Jeff Cavins which provides an excellent introduction and overview of the Bible from a Catholic perspective. The Quick Journey study briefly covers salvation history in a series of eight, half-hour talks that are complemented by group discussion questions, useful maps and charts, and brief assignments for home study. This study makes the complexity of the Bible simple through an easy-to-follow narrative approach and an ingenious color-coded Bible timeline. This is a great way to "get your feet wet" and learn how to begin authentic Catholic Bible study. Registration is required to ensure adequate resources. Please register at [m.warwick@stephen.org](mailto:m.warwick@stephen.org) or on the SSM website or contact Ms. Wendy Synowicki at [wendysynowicki@aol.com](mailto:wendysynowicki@aol.com).

***Class time will be 7 p.m.***

***Class location will be at St. Stephen's School Library***

***Class begins on Tuesday, January 10, 2012.***

## Church Christmas Decorating

**CHRISTMAS DECORATING** — December 20, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Worship Space: It takes a large number of people to decorate our three Parish Worship Areas for the Beautiful Christmas Season. We need more adults to help with this opportunity. Service hours are available for teenagers needing them.

**ORDINARY TIME DECORATING** — January 8, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Worship Space: Come assist with taking down the Christmas Decorations and placing them in storage. Service hours are available for teenagers needing them.

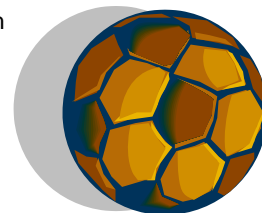
For more information, contact Karen Hardy [k.hardy@stephen.org](mailto:k.hardy@stephen.org) 861-4537.



Thank you, Jesus for all you do for me. This week, I gave thanks to you by sharing:  
 Time: I supported a classmate when he was being teased. Beth  
 Talent: I packed food for Kids Against Hunger. Kaelyn  
 Treasure: My family went shopping for a family we adopted for Christmas. Chloe

## Spring Soccer Registration

Spring CYSL and Micro soccer registration will be held Saturday Jan 7th from 10 am-12 pm in the dining room. Any registered parishioner born after Apr 1 2008 is eligible to participate. Season runs from late March to mid-May. Forms are on-line at [www.ssmsportsclub.com](http://www.ssmsportsclub.com) and can be mailed in early to the address at the bottom of the form. Call Greg McHale at 895-0153 with questions.



## Kids Against Hunger

Thank you to all who helped with the Kids Against Hunger campaign. It was a great success! Watch the following video clip to see those who helped from St. Stephen's do the packing!

### Packing Day!!

<http://animoto.com/play/pqFztA8v4uuvG7cqnlqEpg>

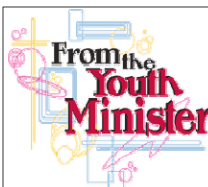


## Disciples of Christ

The following student's earned the Disciple of Christ Award from their Catechists:

Paige Hartmann	Grade 3
Dylan Bonner	Grade 3
Kaelyn Caniglia	Grade 3
Jenna Weber	Kind.
Mia Hustedt	Kind.
Carter Heaton	Kind.
Mae Killeen	Grade 3
Macy Cummins	Grade 4

## Youth Ministry News



Be sure to check our website at [www.stephen.org/youth](http://www.stephen.org/youth) for more information on what our youth are up to. Contact Laura at 861-4509 or at [l.boque@stephen.org](mailto:l.boque@stephen.org).

**EDGE-** It's time to turn the other cheek, Middle School! As we draw closer to Christmas, it's time to talk about what it means to follow God, to not bully, and above all: to FORGIVE! We'll meet on Tuesday, December 13 from 6:30 pm-8:00 pm in the dining room.

**LIFE TEEN-** Do you hear what I hear, High School Teens? Join us on Sunday, December 11 in the Parish Center from 7:00 pm-8:45 pm as we discuss the existence of God! We will also continue our open forum to answer all of your questions.

## Project Hope



Let us help you fill your stockings! Everyone will enjoy finding a gift card for their favorite restaurant or movie theatre in their stocking on Christmas morning.

Project HOPE offers both AMC Theatre, Marcus Theatre and Family Video gift cards for the movie-lover on your list. We also carry gift cards for all your favorite restaurants and fast food outlets: McDonald's, Taco Bell, Panera, Scooters, Starbuck's, Granite City, PF Chang's and many, many more.

Gift cards make great gifts—they are always the right size and the right color! Check the parish website at [www.stephen.org](http://www.stephen.org) for a complete list of vendors. Gift cards are available in the parish office between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, and following all the weekend masses. Thank you for your support. Have a very Merry Christmas!

## 7th Grade Retreats

There will be a 7th grade Retreat on January 20 or 21, 2012. This is part of the candidate's Confirmation preparation. There will be three retreats available for the students to attend here at St. Stephen's. We have divided the students by class. Please note which retreat your child has been assigned. If there is a conflict for your child or you would like to volunteer during the retreats, please call Deborah by January 6, 2012, at 861-4510 or email at [d.sheehy@stephen.org](mailto:d.sheehy@stephen.org). There will be no retreat changes after January 6.

### January 20, 2012 at 6PM-8:30 PM

7A Mrs. Mabeus  
7AW4 Jerrilyn Anthonie/Natalie Bechtold  
7BW4 Kathleen Meyer/Julie Riedel  
7CW4 Arnold Ferry/Halle Hoge

### January 21, 2012 at 1PM-3:30 PM

7C Ms. Carter  
7AT4 Christie Wilken  
7AT5 Michelle Schefcik/  
Kasey Volcelka  
7AW7 Theresa Hobza/  
Cheryl Vanicek

### January 21, 2012 at 8:30AM-11:00AM

7B Mrs. Jones  
7AW5 Taylor Horton/Danielle Kosalka  
7BW5 Kathleen Meyer/Melissa Bosselman  
7CW5 Tina Anderson/Denise Frost  
7BT4 Deborah Lewis/Alicia Sevcik

## Gospel Reflection for Families

### Gospel Reading: John 1:6-8,19-28

John gives testimony that he is preaching and baptizing in order to prepare for the coming of another.

### Family Connection:

In family life, we learn to trust other people for protection and care. This experience of trust within the family enables children to believe us when we testify about our faith in Jesus. John the Baptist was believed by those who heard him because he helped them to recognize Jesus in their midst. In our family life, we hope and pray that we lead one another to recognize Jesus' presence in our world.

As you gather as a family, recall that during the Advent season we are invited to pay particular attention to the signs of Jesus' presence in our world. Consider some of the signs of Jesus' presence that you have experienced. During Advent, we remember how John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. Read together today's Gospel, John 1:6-8,19-28. Discuss the signs of Jesus' presence in our world that you named and explain what these signs tell us about God and God's love for us. Pray together that your family will be led to recognize that Jesus is present among us. Read and pray together the psalm for today's Mass, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55).

