

# Newsletter

FOR  
NOVEMBER  
&  
DECEMBER  
2018



ST. STEPHEN'S PARISH  
POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH  
20 ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH LANE, READING, PA. 19607  
RECTORY: (610) 775-4559 CHURCH HALL: (610) 775-4758  
PASTOR: VERY REV. EDWARD D. RATAJACK

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**EVENTS TAKING PLACE DURING THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2018:**

**ATTENTION PARISH CHOIR:** Rehearsals to be held during the Months of Nov. & Dec., in preparation for our Holiday Celebrations and the Advent Season before them, will be held on an "as called" basis. Members will be informed in the usual way, as well as being announced on Sundays when they are to take place. **Anyone wishing to begin singing with our Choir, or perhaps only to sing for our Advent & Holiday Services, are welcome and encouraged to attend these rehearsals.**

**THURSDAY, NOV. 1ST IS THE SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS (ALL SAINTS DAY),** celebrated in honor of this Christian & Catholic Holy Day of Obligation commemorating the Blessed Saints of God. **Holy Mass will be celebrated at 7pm,** followed by the reading of the Names of the Departed ("Wypominki") that were offered. **All are encouraged to come & participate.** THANK YOU! --Father Senior Ed

**FRIDAY, NOV. 2ND IS ALL SOULS DAY.** Requiem Mass for the dead will be held **at 9am** followed by the final reading & praying for the offered Names of the Departed. Please plan to join us in honoring & remembering family & friends who have been called by God to come home and be with Him forever, waiting for the day when we will once again be united with them in heaven.

**REMINDER - BEFORE GOING TO BED ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD - REMEMBER TO SET YOUR CLOCKS BACK ONE HOUR** as Daylight Savings Time ends @ 2am early Sunday Morning, Nov. 4th!

**SUNDAY, NOV. 11TH - A HOME-MADE SOUP & BEEF BAR-B-Q SALE** will be held **after each Mass** on this day in the Church Hall by our Ladies Adoration Society. **All items will be sold cold** for you to take home and heat up for a quick, **yet good,** Sunday meal. All you need are some hamburger rolls and maybe some potato chips on the side to complete your meal. A variety of **soups** will be available for you to purchase **at \$7 per quart,** and the cost of the **Bar-B-Q is \$7 per pound.** We hope we can count on your support again this year. THANK YOU! --Ladies Adoration Society

**OUR 3 COMMUNITY & HOLIDAY OUT-REACH PROJECTS - WILL YOU HELP AGAIN THIS YEAR IN ANY OR ALL WAYS?**

**To The Community (Reading School District - on going collections):** School is back in session and once more we are collecting specific items to help the Social Workers of the Reading School District provide a place for the **homeless & needy students** to shower, get nourishment, have a spot to eat, do homework, etc.! As other groups are providing other items, our Parish Mission Commission has agreed to **collect items in the following 4 areas:**

- a. **Non-perishable drink items** (drink boxes, YooHoo, canned juices, Gatorade type products, water, etc.).
- b. **Non-perishable food snack items** such as granola bars, cereal bars, or any type of "healthy" and nourishing snacks.
- c. **Face Wash and loofa's** of any sort.
- d. **Feminine pads** for the girls.

**\*NOTE:** Some of you have also brought in other items in the past such as soaps, shampoos, lotions, dental & hair-care products, etc. These also will still be **gladly accepted.**

**COLLECTION BOXES** for these items can be found on or near the Church Hall Stage or can be placed on the tables near the windows in the Church Hall.

**For The Holidays:** Once again we are extending our charitable hand for the Holidays into our Community in the following **two ways:**

1. **ALL FREE-WILL OFFERINGS INTO OUR "LITTLE WHITE CHURCH"** in the vestibule **each week from now through Sunday, Dec. 9th** will go as in years past to **helping needy Senior Citizens** with their heating & utility bills this winter as requested through the Office of Aging; or, if the need arises, **helping families within our own Parish** with a portion of what is collected.

IF YOU ARE PERSONALLY IN NEED, OR KNOW OF ANY SUCH FAMILY OR INDIVIDUAL WHO IS, please inform Fr. Sr. Ed as soon as possible. All contacts will be strictly confidential, so please do not hesitate to do so. Anything you are able to give on a weekly basis, even your pocket change, would help in this charitable endeavor.

2. PROVIDING 50 NEEDED OR REQUESTED CHRISTMAS GIFTS to needy Senior Citizens from our "Angel Tree" in the Church Hall. If any tags remain as of this printing, ALL YOU NEED DO IS:
  - a. Choose a card (or more than one if you can to help us reach our goal) from the "tree".
  - b. Sign your name on the sheet provided next to the name or number on your tags.
  - c. Purchase your gift, wrap it, attach the tag to it, then bring it to the Church and place it in the room marked for returns on the 2nd floor of the SOCL building NO LATER THAN SUNDAY, DEC. 2ND! NO MATTER WHAT DATE THE TAG SAYS, WE NEED YOUR GIFT AT THE CHURCH BY DEC. 2ND, and if at all possible, earlier. When you bring in your gifts, mark the sheet that you signed when you chose your tags in the space provided, indicating that you've done so, so that we can keep track of them and get them to the Office of Aging on time as per their requested date to have them in, so that they can make their pre-Christmas deliveries to the people on time.

Any Help You Could Give in any or all of these areas will be appreciated more than you know by the less fortunate of our area, and maybe even within our Parish. THANK YOU! --Fr. Senior Ed

ATTENTION Y.M.S. OF R. SOCIETY: There will be no Society Meeting during the month of November. The next meeting will be held in December, one week earlier than normal, on Tuesday, Dec. 4th. Members. please mark your calendars and plan to attend. THANK YOU!

THURSDAY, NOV. 22ND IS THANKSGIVING DAY. Holy Mass of Thanksgiving will be celebrated at 9am! Come & show your "thanks" to Almighty God for the bounty He has graciously provided for you.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS CONFESSION & COMMUNION FOR SHUT-INS: Anyone knowing of any of our people who will be unable to attend Services in Church and would like to receive the Sacraments at home for the up-coming Holidays are asked to please contact me BY SUNDAY, NOV. 25TH at (610-775-4559) or see me after Mass prior to that date so that a schedule can be set before things get to be too busy around the Church, and my time will be limited. Visitations will be make between Nov. 26th & Dec. 1st. Those in hospitals or institutions that I am aware of will be visited as normal, as will those I see at private homes, so no special request need be made in these cases. Your cooperation in helping me fulfill this Sacramental task before the Season becomes much busier will be most appreciated. THANK YOU! --Father Senior Ed

REMINDER - WHEN PAYING YOUR PARISH DUES, if you are able to help with the Diocesan Dues portion which had been raised from \$12 to \$25 per person (thats \$26 more per family & \$13 more per single unit member) at our last Diocesan Synod, and which our Parish has been paying for you without raising our Dues for the year, please do so. If you could afford this little extra, it would help our Parish greatly. THANK YOU! --the Parish Committee of St. Stephen's

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EVENTS TAKING PLACE DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2018:

NOTICE: A FULL & DETAILED SCHEDULE OF OUR UP-COMING HOLIDAY SERVICES & EVENTS, along with a special CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPE, will be sent to your homes around the last week of Nov. or the first week of Dec.! Please watch for it and respond to it as you are able with your Faith, Attendance, Generosity, Devotion & Christian Love. If you do not receive your copy by Sunday, Dec. 2nd, please take a replacement from the stack by our Little White Church in the vestibule. THANK YOU! --Father Senior Ed

SUNDAY, DEC. 2ND -- ADVENT TEA -- INVITATIONS WILL BE SENT: During the month of November you will be receiving an invitation to attend our Ladies Adoration Society sponsored Advent Tea in the mail. Full information on what will be taking place will be within the invitation. In order to attend (as we hope many of you will), you must respond by the listed deadline date as seating will be limited, and also to insure that we will have enough of everything for all who will be coming. Hope to see you there! THANK YOU!! --Ladies ANS Society PS. It will begin at 11:30am.

TUESDAY, DEC. 4TH -- THE Y.M.S. OF R. MEETING FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER will be held in the Church

Hall at 7pm, one week earlier than usual. Members are asked to please be aware and plan to come and take part. THANK YOU!

SATURDAY, DEC. 8TH IS DESIGNATED AS THE DAY OF OUR PARISH ADVENT PENITENTIAL DEVOTIONS AND SEASONAL CONFESSIONS. From 9:30 to 11am, PRIVATE CONFESSIONS for children & youth will be held in Church. All Young People having received First Holy Communion and under the age of 17 are obligated to make their Advent Confessions on this day, and we ask our parents to please see to it that this Spiritual Obligation of the Church is fulfilled.

THEN AT 7PM, ADVENT PENITENTIAL DEVOTIONS will be held for all Members of our Parish, young & old alike, followed by PENITENTIAL GENERAL CONFESSIONS FOR ADULTS.

As these will be the ONLY Penitential Confessions given during Advent for both Youth & Adults, and required of us but twice a year, EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO ATTEND and SPIRITUALLY PREPARE for the Blessed Holiday Season. THANK YOU! --Father Senior Ed

EVENTS TAKING PLACE ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9TH:

1. EGG SANDWICH SALE: Our YMS of R Society will hold an Egg Sandwich Sale after each Mass on this day as an "Advent Communion Breakfast" following Saturday's Penitential Devotions and Confessions. Cost of the sandwich, fixed as you like it, will be \$5 each, take out or eat in, including juice & coffee for those eating in. We hope you will plan to stop by on this day and give your support to the Men's Society of our Parish. THANK YOU!
2. S.O.C.L. CHRISTMAS PROGRAM - AN INVITATION TO EVERYONE: On this day the Students of our SOCL Classes will present their Annual Christmas Program on the stage in the Church Hall. As in the past few years, it will be sort of a "Brunch Show", as the Egg Sandwich Sale will also be taking place, and you are welcome to eat your sandwiches during the program if you wish. The program will begin around 10:50 to 11am, so there will be plenty of time to obtain both your sandwiches and your seats. After the program, the Students taking part in it will be treated to breakfast, courtesy of our Aux. SOCL and YMS of R Societies. ALL PARISHIONERS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND so please plan to come on this day to both support the efforts of our YMS of R Society, as well as the performance of our Young People as the Most Sacred Season of Christmas draws near. THANK YOU!! --SOCL Students & Teachers, and our Aux. SOCL and YMS of R Societies
3. TODAY IS ALSO THE DEADLINE FOR PLACING INFORMATION INTO OUR PARISH NEWSLETTERS to be sent to the homes of our Parishioners for the months of Jan. & Feb.! All information is to be in writing and given to Fr. Sr. Ed by 11am in order to be included. Because of the busyness of this Season in general, this "earlier than usual" deadline is necessary, so your cooperation in this matter will be most appreciated in helping to get it out on time. Please DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE! Submit your information as soon as possible. THANK YOU!

TO THOSE WHO WILL BE ATTENDING MIDNIGHT MASS ON THE EVENING OF MONDAY, DEC. 24TH...we would like to have everyone seated in Church by 11:45pm! Procession into Church and the placing of the Christ Child into the Manger will begin at 11:50pm. Midnight Mass ("Pasterka") will begin at the Midnight Hour. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated. THANK YOU!

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U P - C O M I N G     A N D     F O R     Y O U R     I N F O R M A T I O N :

2019 PARISH OFFERING ENVELOPE PACKETS will be available for all Parishioners to pick up during the Month of December in the Library. When they are prepared, it will be announced in Church. We would really appreciate your cooperation in seeing to it that yours are obtained. THANK YOU!

CHRISTMAS WAFERS (Op/latek) will be available from the vestibule of our Church by the last week of November. If you need them for your family Holiday Celebrations, be sure and get them as soon as possible as only a limited amount will be available, and once they are gone, no more will be ordered for this year. THANK YOU! --Ladies Adoration Society

THE PROFIT FROM OUR ANNUAL PICNIC THIS YEAR WAS \$16,624.57. Once again, "THANKS" to all who helped or supported our event; AND REMEMBER, if we do not find a new chairperson for next year by November 1st, this sadly will be our last picnic. If interested, see Fr. Sr. Ed right away!

Parish Statistics Recorded Since Our Last Newsletter

Sadly, death has visited our Parish Family once again. On 8/13/18 **Stephanie (Jadwiga) Bach** passed away. To her family our Parish extends its sincerest condolences.

Then on 10/16/18, our Lord reached out to our faithful parishioner and Senior Organist, **Sally Urban**, and gently took her home. Her presence and talents will be sorely missed by our Parish, and everytime our organ plays she will be remembered. To her family, St. Stephen's offers its prayers, love and support during this most difficult time, knowing that our God has embraced her in His loving arms. **MAY THEY REST IN ETERNAL PEACE. AMEN!!!**

**OUR PARISH BOOKS WILL CLOSE FOR THE YEAR 2018 ON SUNDAY, DEC. 30TH...HAVE YOUR DUES BEEN PAID FOR THIS YEAR** or any previous year? Please check with any Member of our Parish Committee, or see or contact Fr. Sr. Ed. **REMEMBER, PARISH DUES ARE:** \$400 per year for a Family Unit and \$200 per year for a Single Unit Membership. **AND REMEMBER ALSO:** If you are experiencing a true financial hardship, or if back dues have accumulated to a high amount, and you still wish to belong to the Parish, see or contact Father Senior Ed as well (610-775-4559), and he will see that your Membership is protected, and will work with you on a settlement, if need be, to bring you up-to-date. **We do not want finances keeping anyone from the Church! We are reaching out to you, and with your cooperation, we will find a solution! All contacts will be STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**, so if you are behind or in need, please do not hesitate to make contact. **Help is here, if you want it!**

**AND PLEASE REMEMBER...**even though our Diocese had raised its portion of our Dues at our last Diocesan Synod from \$12 to \$25 per person (meaning an extra \$26 per Family and \$13 per Single Unit) per year, **we have not raised our Parish Dues to cover the increase**, which last year cost our Parish an additional \$3,000.00 per year from our General Fund. **Therefore, what we ask, and ONLY if you are FINANCIALLY ABLE**, to help our Parish out, **would you on a voluntary basis pay the increase per family or single** when you pay your dues this year? It would help us greatly and would be very much appreciated. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION IN THIS MATTER**, as well as for all else above. --the Parish Committee of St. Stephen's

**OUR PARISH CONTACT PEOPLE HAVE ONCE AGAIN CHANGED SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER. PLEASE SEE THAT THE NUMBERS AND NAMES ARE CHANGED IN YOUR BOOKS OR PERSONAL RECORDS FOR WHEN YOU NEED THEM FROM THE FOLLOWING:**

**IF YOU NEED A PRIEST IN AN EMERGENCY - PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE:**

1. Contact the Rectory (610-775-4559).
2. Try the Church Hall/Library number (610-775-4758).
3. **If still no answer, contact either:** A. Ted Kogut (610-603-6519), B. Donald Barth (610-777-9301) (cell: 610-334-3683) OR, C. Fran Golembeski (610-326-5619) (cell: 610-310-5821). If I am away for an extended period of time, these people will be notified and will be able to provide information to you, or will contact a neighboring priest, if necessary, to serve your needs until I am able to return. **If I am away for only a few hours, leave your message on the rectory answering machine** and I will get back to you as soon as I return.

**IF YOU HAD A RECENT CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER**, please contact me so that our Parish Records can be kept up-to date.

**IF YOU ARE AWARE OF ANY OF OUR PARISHIONERS WHO ARE HOSPITALIZED**, or who may be shortly, please give me a call so that I may visit them with the Sacraments.

**IF YOU HAVE HOME-BOUND, UNABLE TO ATTEND MASS, AND WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION AT HOME**, please inform me and I will gladly schedule a visit to you. **THANK YOU! --Father Sr. Ed**

**OUR PARISH LADIES ADORATION SOCIETY** is planning to hold **AN "OP/ATEK" (after Christmas) DINNER** in the Church Hall on **SUNDAY, JANUARY 6TH (the Solemnity of the Epiphany)** beginning at Noon. The full menu will be announced shortly, and tickets will be available during the Month of December. We bring this to your kind attention now so that you can put the date and time aside and plan to attend along with your family. As always, the cost will be reasonable, there will be more than enough to eat, and we will continue our Polish Tradition of "breaking the wafer" with each other as a true "family in Christ". We hope to see many of you there to help us revive this tradition of our Parish, and spend some Holiday time together as brothers and sisters in the Faith, enjoying Christian fellowship with each other, some good food, and maybe even a song or two. **THANK YOU! --Ladies ANS Society**

THE YEARLY MEETING OF OUR PARISH will take place AFTER ONE MASS on SUNDAY, JAN. 27, 2019. Now is not too early to consider becoming a part of our Parish Committee in this coming year to become familiar with meeting procedures, as some key members, as well as a few of our officers, will be stepping down in 2020, and they will need to be replaced.

If you would like to serve in any capacity, or have any questions as to what would be involved before you commit, please see Father Senior Ed as soon as possible and he will answer any questions you may have. The Committee is an essential part of our Parish, and the work it does must continue each year; such as paying the bills, having necessary repairs and maintenance done to the church and rectory, keeping the books, and anything else that may come up that the Parish has to deal with. By coming on the Committee and learning its system now will make for a smooth transition in 2020. Please consider this well and plan to be helpful to your Church in order to insure its future. THANK YOU!

PARISH SOCIETIES ARE REMINDED NOW AT THIS EARLY DATE to PREPARE and TURN IN YOUR ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS to either Ted Rysz or Fr. Sr. Ed no later than Sunday, Jan. 6, 2019..... ...EARLIER IF POSSIBLE, but please no later, so that they can be included into the printed reports given out to our people at our Yearly Parish Meeting. THANK YOU!

CHECK OUT OUR CONSTANTLY UP-DATED PARISH WEBSITE AT: [www.ststephenspnc.org](http://www.ststephenspnc.org)

CHECK OUT ALSO THE WEBSITE OF OUR GENERAL CHURCH AT: [pncc.org](http://pncc.org)

"Come, you that are blessed  
by My Father!

Come and possess the  
Kingdom which has been  
Prepared for you ever  
since the creation  
of the world."

Mat. 25:34

