

November 13, 2011 Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

St. Stephen's Church 402-266-5581 Email rkuffdog@windstream.net	Rev. Tom Kuffel st.stephen_bulletin@yahoo.com	207 N. Union Ave. Exeter, NE 68351 Cell: (402) 540-3124 Website: www.ststephensexeter.org
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Date	Time	Place	Intention	By	Feast Day
Mon. Nov 14	7:30 AM	Exeter	Frank & Virginia Sudrla	The Family	
Tues. Nov 15	7:30 AM	Exeter	Shelly Billerbeck	Wade & Joni Harre Family	
Wed. Nov 16	6:30 PM	McCool	All Souls	Don & Sue Neville	
Thu. Nov 17	10:30 AM	Care Center	Virginia Sudrla	Verna Steeves	
Fri. Nov 18	7:30 AM	McCool	George & Grace Otoupal	Jan Otoupal	
Sat. Nov 19	8:00 AM	McCool	Connie White	Troy & Ellen Thomas	
Sat. Nov 19	5:00 PM	Exeter	Shelly Billerbeck	Margie Bonta	
Sun. Nov 20	8:30 AM	Exeter	Richard E. Erdkamp	Wade & Joni Harre Family	
Sun. Nov 20	10:00 AM	McCool	For the Parish		

November & December Ministers

Sat 19	A-Mark	L-John	S-Kirby & Jack	U – Suzanne	G – Suzanne Johnson & Mary Anne Votipka
Sun 20	A-Brad	L-Kathy	S-Spencer & Caleb	U – Marion G.	G – Bob & Barb Votipka
Sat 26	A-Gerry	L-Bob	S-Elliot & Mitchell	U – Joan K.	G-Joan Kuska & Ron Kuska
Sun 27	A-Roger	L-Doug	S-Sam & Max	U – Tess M.	G-Tess Moor & Denice Kovanda
Sat 3	A-Ron	L-Pat	S-Evan & Theron	U – Ken & Lisa	G – Ken & Lisa Soukup
Sun 4	A-Rusty	L-Denice	S-Stephen & James	U – Lin & Melanie	G – Lin Schlueter Family

Please Pray For: Christopher Martin Eckrich from St. Peter, Lincoln, NE. He is in College 4 and is studying at St. Gregory the Great. He graduated HS in 2009 from Pius X.

Prayer Intentions: Richard Perkins, Bill Hays, Joanna Geiger Webster, Baby Benjamin Webster, Ann Pospisil, Jean Hoffman, Irene Petrucek, Dawn Welch, Kelley Champion, Bernard & Lorene Zeleny, J.J. Dinneen, Taylor Thomas, Steve Lawson, Tim Becker, Joe Huber Jr., Patrick Hoarty, Carol Smith, Cindy Hogman, Zach Johnson, Lauren Dick, Stephanie Salyer, Mark Thomsen, Noah Lambrecht, & Military Personnel Jason & Lacey Hood, Rob Coffey, Jacque Erks, Zac Hartmann, Anthony & Alex Due.

St. Stephen's Church Support 11-06-2011

Adult Envelopes	\$2462.86	Loose Plate	\$66.00	Children	\$3.00	Total	\$2531.86
Number of Envelops	\$1 - \$5 [1]	\$6 – 10 [9]	\$11 - \$20 [9]	\$21 - \$40 [15]	\$41 & Up [10]		
All Saints Total:	\$82.00	All Souls	\$115.00				

** The actual budget for collections is \$85,305 for this fiscal year. It includes envelopes, loose plate, children, and special collections (i.e. Christmas, Easter, etc). On average, we need to collect \$1640 weekly in order to balance our budget. Check here weekly to see the actual collections compared to the budget. **Fiscal Year-to-Date we are at \$28,163 and we should be at \$31,160.**

Announcements

Holy Hour: Sunday November 13th at 5PM.

Birthdays: Alex Benorden – Nov 13th, Jon Murphy – Nov 15th, Hope Androyna – Nov 16th, Cassia Ruhl – November 17th, Cindy Manning – Nov 20th **Anniversaries:** Bob & Pat Becker – Nov 14th

CCD: Nov 13th – Regular Class. **Nov 20th** – Regular Class. Youth Choir Practice after class at Church. **Nov 27th** – No Class. **Dec 4th** – Practice all Hall for Program. Youth Choir & Angel Practice after class at Church.

CYO: Nov 16th – Mass at 6:30PM & CYO to follow in McCool.

Altar Society: The November Basket is a Savings Bond donated by Frances Pracheil.

Thanksgiving Mass Schedule: Wed. Nov 23rd at 7PM in Exeter. (There will be pie at the rectory after mass.) Thurs. Nov 24th at 8:30 AM in Exeter and 10AM in McCool. The collections will be for the cloistered sisters.

Food Bank Collection: During the month of November the CCD children will be collecting food for the Blue Valley Food Pantry. Please leave your non-perishable donations in the back of the church.

St. Teresa's Parish Bazaar: Sun, Nov 13th. 11AM-4PM. 735 South 36th in Lincoln. Spaghetti Buffet, Raffle.

St. Pat's-Utica Soup Dinner/Raffle: Sun, Nov 20th 11AM-1PM. At Church Hall.

Living Water Rescue Mission Banquet: Nov 14th at 6PM. Free. Call for reservations 362-0127. York City Auditorium.

Friend UCC Ham Loaf Sale: Order by Nov 19th. \$22 for two 2LB Ham Loaves, Sauce & Pan. Call Lori Milton at 402-947-9081. You can pick up your order at the Friend UCC Church between 5:30-6PM Tues, Nov 22nd.

Utica Christmas Open Houses: Nov 26th 2-8PM & Nov 27th 11-4PM at Senior Center (520 D St) & Schriener's (580 7th St). \$5 per person. Decorated trees, Santa collections, Snow collections, Nativity sets, etc. Proceeds to Senior Center.

Nov 15 7:00 PM Parish Council Meeting at Rectory. Please look at proposed drawings in the back of Church

Nov 20 7:00 PM Geneva Community Thanksgiving Service at Methodist Church.

Nov 21 7:00 PM McCool Community Thanksgiving Service at the First Lutheran Church 105 S. 3rd. Community choir practice at 6:00 PM, Collection for the Ministerial Asso which funds many needy families.

Dec 4 at 3:00 PM at St. Stephen's Church "Acoustic Christmas - A Musical Journey from Advent to Epiphany". *The 75-minute concert captures the Christian spirit of season beginning with the joyful anticipation during Advent, continuing on to the celebration of the birth of the Christ child at Christmas, and finally to the visit of the Magi and the first revelation of Christ to the Gentiles at Epiphany. Traditional and contemporary Christmastide songs, along with scripture and stories, by Terry Little.*

Prayer: *Holy Mary, Virgin Mother of God, Health of the Sick, Cause of our Joy, Queen of Peace, and Mother, Immaculate, we beg you with perfect confidence to obtain from our Jesus that we may live, healthy lives, find happiness in our daily walk and be at peace despite the yoke of our burdens. Bring us and our deceased loved ones everlasting life with your Son With perfect trust we confide to your fountain of love and healing, all the needs of our Mother the Church, our beloved country, the whole world, and the salvation of every soul, now till the end of time. Amen*

Quote: When you look at the inner workings of electrical things, you see wires. Until the current passes through them, there will be no light. That wire is you and me. The current is God. We have the power to let the current pass through us, use us, to produce the light of the world, Jesus, in us. Or we can refuse to be used and allow darkness to spread." –Mother Teresa

Think on These Things

The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. Then he sent some more servants and said, "Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner . . . Come to the wedding banquet." But they paid no attention and went off-one to his field, another to his business. (Matthew 22:2-5)

Now for a sobering truth, more sobering than any other we have considered: To be honest, we must understand that not everyone lives happily ever after, not in any tale. This promise of the happy ending-or the new beginning-is only for the friends of God. Many people do not want the life that God offers them.

Remember-he gave us free will. He gave us a choice. We seem to forget-perhaps more truthfully, we refuse to remember-that we are the ones who betrayed him, not vice versa. We are the ones who listened to the lies of the Evil One in the Garden; we chose to mistrust the heart of God. In breaking the one command he gave us, we set in motion a life of breaking his great command. Have you loved God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength? Have you loved your neighbor as yourself?

The final act of self-centeredness is seen in those who refuse to come to the wedding banquet of God, the Eucharist (Matthew 22:2-3). They do not want God. They reject his offer of forgiveness and reconciliation through Jesus. What is he to do? The universe has only two options. If they insist, God will grant to them what they have wanted-to be left to themselves.

Pope Benedict

Today, the day after the Solemnity of All Saints, the Church invites us to pray for the faithful departed. This yearly commemoration, often marked by visits to the cemetery, is an occasion to ponder the mystery of death and to renew our faith in the promise of eternal life held out to us by Christ's resurrection. As human beings, we have a natural fear of death and we rebel against its apparent finality.

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" is recorded by the Gospels of Matthew and Mark as the cry uttered by Jesus dying on the Cross (cf. Mt 27:46, Mk 15:34). It expresses all the desolation of the Messiah, Son of God, who is facing the drama of death, a reality totally opposed to the Lord of life. Forsaken by almost all his followers, betrayed and denied by the disciples, surrounded by people who insult him, Jesus is under the crushing weight of a mission that was to pass through humiliation and annihilation. This is why he cried out to the Father, and his suffering took up the sorrowful words of the Psalm. But his is not a desperate cry, nor was that of the Psalmist who, in his supplication, takes a tormented path which nevertheless opens out at last into a perspective of praise, into trust in the divine victory.

Faith teaches us that the fear of death is lightened by a great hope, the hope of eternity, which gives our lives their fullest meaning. The God who is love offers us the promise of eternal life through the death and resurrection of his Son. In Christ, death no longer appears as an abyss of emptiness, but rather a path to life which will never end. Christ is the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in him will never die. Each Sunday, in reciting the Creed, we reaffirm our faith in this mystery. As we remember our dear departed ones, united with them in the communion of the saints, may our faith inspire us to follow Christ more closely and to work in this world to build a future of hope.

Homily: New Roman Missal Changes

The offertory separates the two parts of the Mass. The first part, known as the Liturgy of the Word, deals with talking and listening to God's word. We plead Him during the Confiteor (I confess), praise Him in the Gloria, and then listen to his preaching in reading the Scriptures. This part of Mass is praise and worship. The second part is sacrifice. We are to offer to God what He offered to us: Himself.

God willingly sacrificed Himself to us through his Son's birth, passion, and resurrection. Jesus teaches us that those who want life must sacrifice. "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. "But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven. Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies will be the members of his household. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." (Matt 10: 35 – 38). Sacrificing our lives is the hardest choice we ever make. It is the same for God, but his love for us forced Him to save us from eternal damnation.

The offertory begins our sacrifice. We are asked to give of ourselves to Jesus. As in the early Church some gave generously, others stole (Acts 5: 1- 11). Much in our church is the same. Some Catholics are thieves and steal from God just as did the Jews in the time of Malachi. "Dare a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!" (Mal 3:8). Stealing from God is commonplace and the Church from its Jewish origin demanded a tithe, an offering, or a sacrifice to ensure that faithful people respond to God's generosity. But as Ananias and Sapphire both lied to Peter about saving money for themselves instead of giving all to God, St. Peter tells him, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart so that you lied to the holy Spirit and retained part of the price of the land? You have lied not to human beings but to God" (Act 5:3 – 5). Immediately Ananias died along with his wife. They robbed God.

Catholics are asked to make an offering to God. This offering is not a mere tithe, or tenth of your income. It is the offering of yourself. "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who seeks to save his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt 10: 39).

As Jesus took up his Cross for the salvation of believers, believers must take up their cross. This cross is to give your life as a ransom for others, just as Jesus gave his life as a ransom for yours. This ransom is the offertory collected at Mass. It is your willingness to give yourself: mind, body, heart, and soul. "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with your mind!" (Matt 22:38). If we do not love God with our whole being we will be afraid to give anything to God, especially our money.

Some people see the Church, their parish, as a store. They come to church as a consumer. They want something from the Church. They offer back to God what they think is a worthy price for the goods they receive. This consumer mentality reflects our earthly desires. We want something in return, if we give something. For many they want the sale price.

Others come to church with the entertainment mentality. Many churches today focus on the entertainment value of their worship service. They want a good show. They want a good homily. They want beautiful music, enthusiastic preaching, technological light shows, and emotional reactions. Many churches have removed the altar of sacrifice and made church a stage; yet, these drama churches are popular and progressive and people pay to see the show – not make a true sacrifice for the crucifixion of Jesus.

The Church has also become an investment tool. People donate to the church for they know that it covers a multitude of sin. They also understand the needs of the church and want to invest in people, programs, and progress. This type of giving is much different than the other two. It is giving of yourself for the betterment of others. It is truly an act of good-will but you know that your reward will be great in heaven.

However, sacrifice is not just an investment to cover sinfulness. It is an act of Charity. Charity is the willingness to give as Jesus gave. It is a total and complete surrender of the will to God, exchanging your life for his. This is the ultimate sacrifice. It is a gift of giving your life: mind, body, heart, and soul, in exchange for divine life. As St. Paul asks us, "What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword. No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us" (Rom 8:35 – 37).