



## SAINT STEPHEN BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

4141 Laurence Avenue, Allen Park, MI      December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
ststephen@parma.org      313-382-5901  
*website: saintstephenbyzantine.church*

Priest:            Rev. John R.P. Russell, M.Div.  
                         412-378-0308  
                         frjrussell@parma.org

Deacon:          Rev. Deacon Lawrence Hendricks

Cantor:          Pani Mary Hendricks

Hall Manager: Victor Azcuy  
                         vazcuy1@gmail.com  
                         (239) 895-8931



### **Glory to Jesus Christ! Welcome to St. Stephen!**

You are welcome here. Join us in prayer and worship  
of almighty God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

#### **About the Parish**

St. Stephen Byzantine Catholic Church, led by the Holy Spirit, is called to evangelize – to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to welcoming and caring for all of God's children.

We are a parish of the Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic Eparchy of Parma, Bishop Milan (Lach) of Parma is our bishop. Archbishop William (Skurla) of Pittsburgh is our Metropolitan. We are in communion with our holy father Francis, the Pope of Rome.

“We are Catholics with the common heritage of our Orthodox brothers but in unity with the Holy Father in Rome.” – Bishop Milan

# LITURGICAL SERVICE TIMES

Sunday & Saturday morning at 10:00am  
Wednesday & Friday evening at 7:00pm

**4:00pm Great Vespers** for Sunday – followed by Confessions

Cantor: Mary R

**Sunday, December 18, 2022**



THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY. THE SUNDAY OF THE ANCESTORS. Tone 3  
The Holy Martyr Sebastian and his Companions (287).

*Vespers Paramia:* Genesis 14:14-20 • Deuteronomy 1:8-11, 15-17 • Deut. 10:14-21.

*6th Resurrectional Matins Gospel:* Luke 24:36-53.

Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40. Matthew 1:1-25.

**8:15am Matins**

**9:30am First & Third Hour** – Reader Service; **Confession** – in the Sacristy

**10:00am Divine Liturgy** (Fr. Michael Kunitz to concelebrate)

Reader: Daniel

- for the people of the parish

intention of Br. Tadey Kherovych, from Melinda Dewitt (12-13)

Good health of Nancy Patterson, from Richardson Family (12-14)

+Melvyn & +Josefa, from Sarah Marron (12-17)

*After Liturgy: Fellowship & Potluck in the hall. Cookie Sale! ECF for all.*

**7:00pm Vespers** (with prostrations) for Monday

**Monday, December 19, 2022**



*Day of Alleluia (no anaphora)*

The Holy Martyr Boniface (290).

Hebrews 3:5-11, 17-19. Mark 8:11-21.

7:00pm Come, Follow Me - online: <https://meet.google.com/njp-zcmn-hok>

or in person: 8461 Barrington Drive, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

**Tuesday, December 20, 2022**



⊗ Pre-festive Day of the Nativity. The Holy Martyr Ignatius the God-bearer (107).

Hebrews 4:1-13. Mark 8:22-26.

**8:30am First & Third Hour**

**9:00am Divine Liturgy**

Cantor: Katya

+Rose Kepich, from Louise Dalbo

## Wednesday, December 21, 2022



Pre-festive Day of the Nativity. The Holy Martyr Juliana of Nicomedia (304).

Hebrews 5:11-6:8. Mark 8:30-34.

**10:00am Third & Sixth Hour**

*6:00pm Confessions*

**6:30pm Vespers &**

Cantor: Daniel

**7:00pm Divine Liturgy for Thursday**

Cantor: Misha

*good health for Ritchie Maire, from Richardson Family*

## Thursday, December 22, 2022



Pre-festive Day of the Nativity. The Holy Great Martyr Anastasia (304).

Hebrews 7:1-6. Mark 9:10-16.

## Friday, December 23, 2022



Pre-festive Day of the Nativity. The Holy Ten Martyrs of Crete (250).

Commemoration of the Dedication of the Great Church of Holy Wisdom in Constantinople.

*First Hour:* Micah 5:2-4a; Hebrews 1:1-12; Matthew 1:18-25.

*Third Hour:* Baruch 3:36-4:4; Galatians 3:23-4:5; Luke 2:1-20.

*Sixth Hour:* Isaiah 7:10-16; 8:1-4, 8-10; Hebrews 1:10-2:3; Matthew 2:1-12.

*Ninth Hour:* Isaiah 9:6-7; Hebrews 2:11-18; Matthew 2:13-23.

Hebrews 7:18-25. Mark 9:33-41.

**10:00am Royal Hours for the Nativity**

Cantor: Mary R

*After Royal Hours: Decorate the Church for Christmas*

*6:00pm Confessions*

**7:00pm Vespers for Saturday**

## Saturday, December 24, 2022



Saturday before the Nativity of the Lord. Vigil of the Nativity. Holy Great Martyr Eugenia.  
Galatians 3:8-12. Luke 13:18-29.

**10:00am Divine Liturgy**

Cantor: Katie

*+Diane Gyulveszi, from Bob & Jane Semak*

*After Divine Liturgy: Decorate the Church for Christmas*

**4:00pm Great Vespers for Christmas**

Cantors: Mary H & Mary R

*followed by Christmas Carols (Koljady) in the hall*

Cantors: Mary H & Daniel

*6:00pm – Holy Supper*

**9:00pm Great Compline for Christmas**

Cantors: Mary R & Daniel

## Sunday, December 25, 2022

⊕ THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

*Vespers:* Genesis 1:1-13 • Numbers 24:2-3, 5-9, 17-18 • Micah 4:6-7; 5:2-4 •

Isaiah 11:1-10 • Baruch 3:35-4:4 • Daniel 2:31-36, 44-45 • Isaiah 9:6-7 •

Isaiah 7:10-16a; 8:1-4, 8b-10 • Hebrews 1:1-12. • Luke 2:1-20.

*Matins Gospel:* Matthew 1:18-25

*for the Nativity:* Galatians 4:4-7. Matthew 2:1-12.

**8:15am Matins for Christmas**

**9:30am Christmas Carols – Koljady; Confession – in the Sacristy**

**10:00am Divine Liturgy of St. Basil for Christmas – for the people of the parish**

Reader: Debra

*Good health for Ritchie Maire, from Richardson Family (12-21)*

*+Rose Kepich, from Louise Dalbo (12-20)*

*+Diane Gyulveszi, from Bob & Jane Semak (12-24)*

**7:00pm Vespers**

## Monday, December 26, 2022

⊗. Synaxis of the Theotokos & Ever-Virgin Mary. Holy Martyr Euthymius, Bishop of Sardis.

*for the Synaxis:* Hebrews 2:11-18. Matthew 2:13-23.

**6:00pm Great Vespers &**

**7:00pm Divine Liturgy for our Patron Stephen**

Cantor: TBD

*+Stephen Lazlo Kastura, from Kathleen Johnston*

## Tuesday, December 27, 2022

⊗ THE HOLY APOSTLE, FIRST MARTYR AND ARCHDEACON STEPHEN.

Venerable Father & Confessor Theodore, Brother of Theophane the Hymnographer (845).  
*for Stephen: Acts 6:8-7:5, 47-60. Matthew 21:33-42.*

## Wednesday, December 28, 2022

*no fasting!*

Post-festive Day of the Nativity. The Holy Twenty thousand Martyrs of Nicomedia (302).  
The Blessed Martyr Gregory Khomyshyn, Bishop of Stanislaviv (1945).

Hebrews 10:1-18. Mark 10:11-16

**8:00am Matins**

*6:00pm Confessions*

**6:30pm Vespers &**

**7:00pm Divine Liturgy for Thursday**

Cantor: TBD

*+Robert Dubensky, from Sarah Dubensky-Obando*

## Thursday, December 29, 2022

Post-festive Day of the Nativity. The Holy Innocents killed by Herod in Bethlehem.  
Our Venerable Father Marcellus, Hegumen of the Akimetes (486).

Hebrews 10:35-11:7. Mark 10:17-27

*6:30pm Parish Council Meeting*

### LEGEND

- ⊕ Great Feast
- ⊕ Feast with an All-night Vigil
- ⊕ Feast with the Polyeleos at Matins
- ⊗ Feast with the Great Doxology at Matins
- ⊗ Feast with Six Stichera at Vespers



by tradition, a strict fast day (no meat, dairy, eggs, fish, wine, or oil)



by tradition, wine and oil are permitted (no meat, dairy, eggs, or fish)



by tradition, fish, wine, and oil are permitted (no meat, dairy, or eggs)



by tradition, dairy, eggs, fish, wine, and oil are permitted (no meat)

## **Guild Cookie Sale Today!**

The next Guild Fund raiser will be the COOKIE SALE taking place today, **Sunday, December 18** after liturgy in the hall. There will be a variety of cookies to pick from. There will be 2 sizes of containers. Small for \$10.00 and a larger one for \$20.00. Just pick your favorites! If anyone would like to bake cookies to contribute, this would be greatly appreciated.

## **The Guild of St. Stephen**

The Guild meets on the second Sunday of each month. The next meeting is **Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup>** after the Divine Liturgy in the small hall. The Guild of St. Stephen has a long and storied history. Come and be a part of its future! The mission of the Guild is primarily fundraising for the parish to help enable our many ministries of worship, service, and evangelization.

## **Philip's Fast (Filipovka)**

Nov. 15th – Dec. 24th

*a translation of the fasting rules provided in Chapter 33 of the Typicon:*

"It is fitting to know that, during the fast of the Holy Apostles, and of the Nativity of Christ, on Tuesday and Thursday, we do not eat fish, but oil and wine only. On Monday, on Wednesday and Friday, we taste neither oil nor wine, but we fast until the ninth hour [3pm], and on these days we eat dry food. On Saturdays and Sundays, we eat fish. If a saint having the [Great] Doxology occurs on a Tuesday or on a Thursday, we eat fish. If on a Monday, likewise. If on a Wednesday or a Friday, we permit oil and wine only. We eat once a day. If a saint having a vigil [occurs] on a Wednesday or a Friday, we permit oil and wine and fish. If the memorial of the saint whose temple it is occurs on a Wednesday or a Friday, we do likewise."

## *Decorating for Christmas!*

We have decorated with trees and red pointsettias for the Phillip's Fast. On Christmas Eve, we will add white pointsettias to the red and fill the trees with lights and decorations in celebration of Christmas!

Thank you to all who have donated an ornament! These ornaments donated by all the various members of the parish become a representation of our community rejoicing together in celebration of the birth of our Lord. It's not too late! You can even bring an ornament in on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day and hang it on the tree yourself. Because these ornaments will be in the church, they should be of a sacred character.



# 2022 Christmas Services

Christmas is on a Sunday this year,

which means the services are arranged differently than usual.

When December 24<sup>th</sup> falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the day of strict fasting and the celebration of the Royal Hours are moved to the preceding Friday, since Saturday and Sunday are never days of fasting in the Byzantine tradition. We do abstain from certain foods, such as meat, on Saturdays and Sundays during fasting seasons and on this Christmas Eve, but we eat other foods after Divine Liturgy in the mornings. *(To fast is to spend some amount of time eating nothing. On strict fast days, such as Friday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Byzantine tradition is to fast (eat nothing) until Vespers (sunset) or until Ninth Hour (3pm). This is not a law in our particular Church but may be followed voluntarily).*

Divine Liturgy is celebrated every Saturday morning (except Holy Saturday). This is true even if Christmas Eve (December 24<sup>th</sup>) falls on a Saturday. On Saturday morning at 10am, therefore, as we usually do, we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.

Since Divine Liturgy is celebrated on the morning of December 24, it is not celebrated again in the evening. *(It is a general rule in our tradition that the Divine Liturgy is only celebrated once per day in each church).* Therefore, Vespers for Christmas will be celebrated by itself, still with the Gospel of the Nativity, but without the Divine Liturgy, at 4pm on Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup>. Our parish Holy Supper will follow this at 6pm and Great Compline for Christmas will begin at 9pm. This will not be joined to Matins as it usually is on Christmas Eve because we will celebrate Matins on Sunday morning, as we usually do, at 8:15am. The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil for Christmas will be celebrated Sunday morning at 10:00am, since it was not celebrated the night before.

*All of this is as described in the Typikon (2022 Typicon, pp. 92 - 93).*

## A Holy Supper

In the Slavic tradition, a special meal called the Holy Supper is shared on Christmas Eve. This is meatless but nonetheless sumptuous. There are usually twelve symbolic courses. **You're invited to join us at St. Stephen for this holy supper. If you would like to come, please sign up in the narthex along with which course you will bring to share.**

Day House | Detroit Catholic Worker

# THURSDAY POTLUCK

Thursdays at 6:30 PM

All are welcome.

Those who can are encouraged  
to bring something to share



2640 TRUMBULL ST.  
DETROIT, MI

## Come, Follow Me

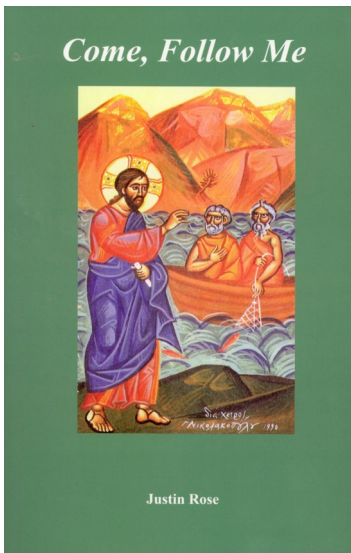
A program of parish renewal and scripture study for discipleship with weekly exercises and homework.

Next meeting: **Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

Jesus called his closest followers and apostles to "Come, follow me." We, too, are called to be disciples of Jesus, but this call is often drowned out by the "noise" of our lives. This is an opportunity to reconsider our call to discipleship. We will meet regularly to examine our lives, to make choices for the Gospel, and to hold one another accountable for our choices. In time, we will form smaller groups (if our numbers make that appropriate) for discussion, prayer, and support. Finally, we will be given the challenge to share what we are learning with our friends, family, and fellow parishioners.

If you would like to participate, contact Fr. Deacon Lawrence at (734) 255-4099 or [frdeaconlawrence@yahoo.com](mailto:frdeaconlawrence@yahoo.com)

Meetings will be both online: <https://meet.google.com/njp-zcmn-hok>  
and in person: 8461 Barrington Drive, Ypsilanti, MI 48198.





## **Adult Eastern Christian Formation Opportunities**

### **Reflections on the Divine Liturgy**

We will gather most Sundays in the coming few months after the Divine Liturgy to reflect upon the Divine Liturgy together. Our next class is **Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>** Fr. John will present information about the Divine Liturgy and there will also be the opportunity for each of us to share our own thoughts and experiences of Divine Liturgy.

### **The Holy Land & Biblical Archaeology**

As we enter into the Sundays of preparation for the Great Fast, Daniel Lauffer will offer us a presentation on his experiences in the Holy Land and of Biblical Archaeology. These reflections will help strengthen our awareness of the real humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, who really lived and died and rose again in a real time and place of history. This is especially good to reflect on as we prepare for the Great and Holy Week which will lead into our celebration of Pascha.

### **Bible Study**

As we enter the Great Fast itself, Kevin Perrotta will again lead us in study and discussion of Holy Scripture. Please continue to share with us what particular books or themes you'd most appreciate.

### **Daily Prayer in the Byzantine Tradition**

Also as we are increasing our life of prayer during the Great Fast, Fr. John will teach and lead discussion on the Byzantine tradition of daily prayer, both in terms of daily liturgical prayer and also in terms of developing our own rules of prayer for private prayer in our homes. This course will be offered on a weeknight during the Great Fast.

## **St. Nicholas Apostolate**

The St Nicholas Apostolate had several successful meetings, and we welcome all parishioners interested to attend future meetings! A monthly meeting will be held every third Tuesday at 7:30 pm via Zoom. Email Fr Deacon Lawrence at [frdeaconlawrence@yahoo.com](mailto:frdeaconlawrence@yahoo.com).

The St. Nicholas Apostolate is a means for members in our parish to practice Christian love through giving charitable donations and volunteering. The St. Nicholas Apostolate is facilitating donations from the parish for three funds modeled after the three purses of St. Nicholas. He was a wealthy man before he became a priest and bishop, and he chose to use his wealth to save three impoverished women from slavery by giving each of them a sack of gold coins for a dowry. St. Nicholas is often shown holding three purses or three coins. The three purses of the St. Nicholas Apostolate will be used to support the following:

- 1) charitable organizations  
(such as Day House, Image of God Pregnancy Center, & Fish & Loaves)
- 2) fellow parishioners in need
- 3) neighbors and strangers who come to the parish seeking help.

One way that parishioners are encouraged to practice Christ's command to "help those that ask" is through monetary donations. Someday soon, a basket next to an icon of St. Nicholas will be placed in the narthex with envelopes for parishioners to donate to a purse of their choosing or simply to make an unrestricted gift. Donations for the first purse, charitable organizations, are given directly to the organizations. Donations for the second and third purses, our parishioners and our neighbors, are distributed by Fr. John Russell as seen fit. All donations are tax deductible. In the near future, volunteer opportunities will also be organized for the parish to participate in.

**The St. Nicholas Apostolate is not a philanthropic club, but rather is a vehicle for the parish community to respond to God's commandment to love our neighbor, especially our neighbors in need.**

"On the subject of mutual charity you have no need for anyone to write you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another.... Nevertheless, we urge you... to progress even more." (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10).

## **Synodal Process**

From the survey and the conversations with parishioners in the context of reflections on the Beatitudes, we have formulated some goals for St. Stephen's.

### **\* Develop opportunities for adult religious education**

In the survey, parishioners expressed some reservations about their readiness to share the Christian faith with others. It seems that further education would be helpful. In order to develop something that will best meet parishioners needs, we need to ask more specific questions to discover areas in which they would most like to learn and formats they would find most helpful.

Action: we will create some ways of inquiring into educational needs in the parish during the fall. In the new year we will begin to present new educational opportunities.

Our goal is to involve at least 20 percent of the active adults in the parish in new educational experiences by Pascha next year.

### **\* Encourage and help parishioners to go on retreats**

Most parishioners report that they do not often or ever go on retreats. Taking retreat time is a normal practice in Christian life. While retreats in the eparchy are routinely brought to parishioners' attention, more could be done to encourage and help them.

Action: we will give more attention to helping parishioners see the value of taking retreats and will work to identify and promote retreats and help people attend them (transportation, etc.).

We would like to see 10 percent of the active adults in the parish attend a retreat by the end of 2023.

### **\* Develop outreach opportunities**

In conversation over the Beatitudes, parishioners expressed the need for ways of serving neighbors in need and also for deepening community life within the parish. Developing outreach opportunities in a way that also deepens parishioners relationships with each other would help to meet this need.

Action: We will revive the long defunct St. Nicholas Apostolate as a way of involving parishioners in service to needy neighbors—and to each other in the parish. The apostolate will encourage donations for help to individuals outside and inside the church and will help parishioners learn about, support, and participate in selected local nonprofit organizations.

Our goal is to involve at least 20 percent of the active adults in the parish in this apostolate.

**Please continue to let us know your thoughts about the parish and about these initiatives in particular. You may always call or write:**

**313-382-5901**

**4141 Laurence Avenue, Allen Park, MI 48101**

**ststephen@parma.org**

## House Blessings

House Blessings will begin on Theophany (January 6<sup>th</sup>) and ideally finish before it's leave-taking on January 15<sup>th</sup>. It's not too soon to start thinking about what day would be best to invite the priest for this annual blessing. There are envelopes for this purpose in your boxes for 2023.

## Stewardship



**The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord is this week** and through the liturgies of the Church we have been called to focus on the miracle of the *Incarnation* in the cave of Bethlehem. God the Father will give us the greatest gift in His Son this Christmas. How are you responding to God's gracious gift to us? How will you show your gratitude for the infant Christ?

As you complete your preparations for the Christmas Feast, please remember the Eparchy of Parma and the Church's needs by contributing to the annual Stewardship Appeal. Visit [parma.org](http://parma.org) to make your one-time or monthly donation through our secure website. Thank you for your generosity!

St. Stephen's goal this year is \$6,900. So far, 17 donors from St. Stephen have donated \$2520, putting us at roughly 37% of our goal. Thank you! If our parish exceeds its goal, a rebate will be paid equal to 100% of the amount by which we exceed our goal. Rebates paid will be exempt from the 10% eparchial assessment. This rebate plan will help to strengthen the parishes and provide an opportunity to raise additional funds that are not subject to assessment.

### Reap the Most Tax Benefit While Supporting Your Parish

Maximize your giving dollars before the ball drops on New Year's Eve by using funds in your retirement account to support your parish. The IRA Charitable Rollover/Qualified Charitable Distribution allows donors who are 70.5 years or older to transfer up to \$100,000 from a traditional or Roth IRA to a qualified charity like St. Stephen. In doing so, donors keep their IRA distribution from impacting their gross income and possibly avoid being bumped into a higher tax bracket. The IRA charitable rollover can also count toward your required minimum distribution (RMD), which starts at age 72.

All transfers must be made directly from an IRA custodian to St. Stephen by December 31<sup>st</sup> to qualify as a 2022 rollover and be excluded from the donor's taxable income. If you would like to support your parish through an IRA, please contact Louise Dalbo at (313-382-6788 or [louisedalbo@gmail.com](mailto:louisedalbo@gmail.com)).

## Prayer List

*Pray for Barb Barnes, Edith Santo, Michael Hudak, Chris Lauffer  
and for the healing of all who suffer.*

### *Christmas Flowers Offered*

*in honor of:*

Louise Dalbo  
Victor Jiomkowski  
Trisha & Family

*& in memory of:*

Charles & Mary Burja

the Butella Family

Anthony, Irene, & Jack Bonacor

Joseph Humenik

Joseph Sutyak

Andrew Yatcko

Helen Yatcko



## Church Cleaning

Please sign up to clean our church. Sign up for any week you're available to clean and clean the church on any day of that week. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex of the church.

## CHARITABLE GIVING

*from St. Stephen Parish*

*We donate \$50 per month to Fish & Loaves Community Food Pantry*

*Since our last contributions,*

For the Churches in Central & Eastern Europe, we have collected \$155

for Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan, we have collected \$138

for Catholic Home Missions, we have collected \$85.

For the retirement of our nuns, we have collected \$295.

### **Image of God Pregnancy Center**

Our parish helps to support Image of God Pregnancy Center (4151 Seminole St., Detroit), a place of hope for disadvantaged women on the city's east side for the past 11 years. Their facility provides vital resources at no cost to current and expecting mothers, from pregnancy testing to professional counseling, in Detroit's most underserved area.

We can currently assist them by providing the following donations: **diapers** (sizes 4-6), **Pull-Ups** (2T-3T, 4T-5T), **baby wipes**, **baby lotion**, **baby shampoo**, **baby powder** (no talc), **pacifiers/teethers**, and **diaper bags**. Please bring donations to the basket in the narthex. To volunteer in this capacity, contact Ryan Coffey-Burns at (847) 477-6624 or [rmsijburns@gmail.com](mailto:rmsijburns@gmail.com) for more information. You can also contact the center directly at (313) 923-8018.

**ATTENDANCE** – *Thank you for praying with us.*

Attendance at Divine Liturgy on December 11<sup>th</sup> was **69**. Average Sunday attendance ≈ **54**

Devote yourselves “to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship,  
to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42).

**COLLECTION** – *Thank you for supporting your parish.*

Collection for December 11<sup>th</sup> was **\$1218.65**. Average Weekly Collection: **\$2,028.22**

Sunday: \$745.50; Online: \$306.15; Candles: \$47; Flowers: \$120

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion,  
for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:7).



**Saint Stephen**

BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH