

YOUTH NEWS

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Here's My Heart: How to Enter Into Christmas by AARON HOSTETTER

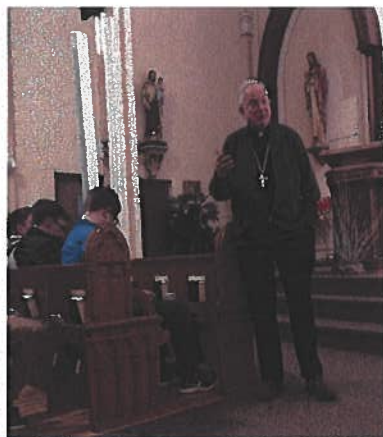
When I think of Advent, I often think about how we witness so many historical events that led up to the birth of Jesus. From Old Testament readings, to Mary's Annunciation, to purple and rose colored candles and more. I started to realize, though, that maybe my involvement in Advent has been more like spectating than participating. Don't get me wrong, by spectating I was still conscious of what was happening each week, and how it all tied in to Jesus' birth at Christmas. The difference is investment. When you invest your time, money, and heart into something you care more about it and its outcome. You have acted and participated toward it's outcome. You change from being a spectator to being a part of the story. In the NFL, there is a tradition that home games bring an advantage because of the "12th man." There are 11 players for each team on the field at a time, so the "12th man" is referring to the fans of the home team. Because they bring their passion, personality, humor, and noise, they can affect the outcome of a game even though they aren't on the field. Whether it's giving energy to the home team or making it hard for the visiting team to concentrate, NFL fans can make a difference. I realize that we can't literally go to the manger scene on Christmas day, but we can invest our hearts and gifts to enter into the Christmas story spiritually. I think we can learn a lot from the example of the three Magi, who invested themselves in the Nativity scene. Jesus coming to Earth was a gift to everyone. The gifts of the Magi were given in response to the great gift of Jesus, our Savior, King, and Lord. They didn't stay home and wait to hear about how it all turned out. They also didn't go through all that trouble just to see the great event for themselves. There were two actions that they did when they arrived. The first was lying down prostrate and paying Jesus homage. The second... "Then they

The Boy's Vocation Dinner

I would like to take a minute and thank our Bishop, Bishop William Callahan, for taking the time and having dinner with our high school young men. They enjoyed dinner, and were given the opportunity to talk about Vocations with the Bishop and our own Very Rev. Father John. What an amazing opportunity our young men were given by these men of God. Let us remember to hold in prayer them and these young men, that whatever vocation they end up following bears much fruit.



Seated Left to Right: Matthew Gunther, Marshal Skiles, Ryle Kobylski, Bishop Callahan, Fr. John, Martin Wolf, Zach Lund, & Connor Randall. Standing Left to Right: Hayden Goodman, Nathan Field, Dustin Ryberg, Gage Kobylski, Elliot Hines, and Eli Boppart



December

- 9th ~ Donuts with Santa after the 10am Mass in Reardon Hall
- 17th ~ Coffee Chat 3:30pm-5pm
- 20th ~ Communal Penance Service 7pm
- 24th ~ Mass times for Christmas Eve will be 4pm & 11pm
- 25th ~ Christmas Day 10am
- 26th & Jan 2nd ~ NO RE CLASSES

WHAT'S COMING UP:



January

- 1st ~ Solemnity of Mary Holy Day of Obligation: Mass at 10 am & 5:30pm
- 6th ~ Youth Night 6-7:30pm
- 9th ~ RE Classes Resume
- 13th ~ Sport's Mass 10 am: Boy's Basketball
- 21st ~ Coffee Chat 3:30pm-5pm
- 26th ~ 1st Reconciliation Retreat

(continued from front)

opened their treasures" (Matthew 2:11). So what can we learn from the Magi and their gifts?

Open your heart.

Humility. The three kings weren't even Jews, but they were able to recognize that Jesus was the Messiah, and the Lord of all. It took great humility for them to see that and lay their lives down before Him. Through humility, we too can recognize the reality of who Jesus is in all His divine glory, and how much He loves us!

Open your treasures.

Our proper response to the gift of Jesus is to give of ourselves to Him. Like gold, we can let Jesus be the King and Lord of our lives, entrusting ourselves to Him in all things. Like frankincense, we can offer our prayers of thanksgiving, petition, adoration and worship to God everyday. Like myrrh, we can offer up our suffering to God and respond to Jesus' death for us by giving our lives to Him.

Let your encounter with Christ change you. "They returned to their own country by a different way." The Wise Men were in a sense the first missionaries. Their encounter with Christ did not keep them in Bethlehem, but made them set out anew on the paths of the world" (Pope John Paul II, 2001). Soak in the grace at the Christmas Mass! In the Eucharist, we will all have the opportunity to be with the same Jesus that came 2,000 years ago to dwell among us. In that Eucharist, we receive the grace and mission to go out living the Good News of Jesus to all peoples in all places. What gifts are you going to give Christ this Christmas? How can you use your time and talents to offer these gifts prayerfully? What are some ways you can serve others and God?

As we prepare to welcome Jesus into our lives during Advent, what can we do to welcome the Lord into our life every day?

May you have a blessed Christmas. Let's welcome Jesus into our lives this Christmas by opening our hearts, our treasures, and our futures to Him!

**Youth Night /
Paint Night!!**

What an fun night we had at our Youth Night/Paint Night. Thanks to all who came and participated! Mark your calendars for the next Youth Night... January 6th at 6pm till 7:30pm!



**Student Athlete
Masses**



As a way to integrate our student athletes more deeply into our parish community and refocus our athletic programs onto the faith that brings us all together, Saint Patrick's would like to introduce you to our Student Athlete Mass Schedule. The Masses will be a way to highlight our parish (and community!) athletes, and to serve as a reminder for all of us to ask for prayer and blessings upon each of them. We pray that each season will be successful and safe, and that the opportunity to use their God given talent will help to instill in them the virtues that sports participation can bring. As Pope St. John Paul II said, "Sports contributes to the love of life, teaches sacrifice, respect and responsibility, leading to the full development of every human person... Sports trains the body and spirit for perseverance, effort, courage, balance, sacrifice, honesty, friendship and collaboration."

Our Student Athlete Masses will occur once each month, and at each Mass a designated Activity will be recognized. Elementary, Middle, High School, College Athletes, and Coaches are **ALL** invited to wear their Team Jersey or Team T-shirt and sit with their family and team in a designated area.

If you have any questions please contact Mrs. Thayer at re@stpatricksmaston.com or 608-847-605 ext 15

Our first Sports Mass will be:

***** **JANUARY 13th at the 10 am Mass ~ BOY'S BASKETBALL** *****



St. Stephen

Feast day: December 26

**Patron of Deacons, altar Servers, bricklayers, casket makers,
& Stonemasons**

Saint Stephen was one of the first ordained deacons of the Church. He was also the first Christian martyr. The Greek word from which we derive the English word martyr literally means witness. In that sense, every Christian is called to bear witness to Jesus Christ, in both their words and their actions. Stephen was so conformed to Jesus in his holy life that his martyrdom was both a natural and supernatural sign of his love for the Lord. It also inspired the early believers as they faced the first round of brutal persecution.

A Prayer by Deacon Keith Fournier

Lord Jesus, you chose Stephen as the first deacon and martyr of your One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. The heroic witness of his holy life and death reveals your continued presence among us. Through following the example of his living faith, and by his intercession, empower us by your Holy Spirit to live as witnesses to the faith in this New Missionary Age. No matter what our state in life, career or vocation, help us to proclaim, in both word and in deed, the fullness of the Gospel to a world which is waiting to be born anew in Jesus Christ. Amen