

In the days of his flesh,

Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission (Hebrews 5:7).

Anyone who reads this verse without knowing how Jesus' life ended might get the impression he was spared. He prayed, and he was heard.

Yet this passage in Hebrews refers to the agony in Jesus' life that Christians know all too well. Jesus asked God to take away the horrible ordeal he faced. We know his deepest prayer was to do God's will. We know he then went to be crucified. And God let it happen.

The author of Hebrews says Jesus' prayer was heard. What does it mean that God heard this prayer? Maybe there is an opening here for us, Christ's followers, to grasp something in our own suffering.

Clearly the incredible way Jesus' prayer was heard was in the resurrection. God vindicated Christ's trust with power; life is stronger than death.

But before that happened, before Easter happened, Christ prayed, trusted, and was heard. Did he know what the outcome would be? It's tempting for us to think Christ could override the suffering of his body. It's tempting to see a Jesus who didn't have to suffer the same way we do. But the Gospels don't allow for that view. Jesus cries out in pain. Jesus asks why he has been forsaken. Christ really suffered.

There is another temptation. Because Jesus died, are we tempted to think his prayers were not heard? When we suffer, we may think our prayers are not heard.

Hebrews teaches differently. We dare not say that suffering is acceptable. It is not. We should relieve it

where we can. But God can transform suffering that does occur. Life is greater than death. Christ knows what we are praying for.

DAN FINUCANE

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Christ really
suffered.

Liguori

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Today's Readings

Jer 31:31-34

Heb 5:7-9

Jn 12:20-33

St. Stephen Catholic Church

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Parish Interfaith Ecumenical

Representative—

LaVerne Cardwell 817-594-3805

Choir Director – Dave Mees

817-596-5097

Parish Pastoral Council President—

Chuck Schabow 817-599-6644

Office Hours – Monday through Friday
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Rectory – 1904 Bethel Road
817-596-9586

Web Page – www.ss-cc.org

Gift Shop – Saturday 5:30 to 6 PM
Sunday 9:45 to 11:00 AM
Noon to 12:30 PM

Club House—817-599-8423
Pro Shop—817-599-8431

MASS SCHEDULE

All Masses are held at the Church on Bethel Road unless otherwise noted

Saturday 6:00 PM ♦ Confessions Saturday 5:00 PM

Sunday 8:00 AM & 10:45 AM (English) ♦ 12:30 PM (Spanish)

Holy Days 7:00 AM & 7:00 PM

Daily Mass 8:45 AM

WELCOME NEW FAMILIES AND VISITORS

Please complete a registration card at the Welcome Table in the church foyer and return it at your earliest convenience. Thank You!

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday	March 28	6:00 PM	Eugene Guelda, RIP	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>
Sunday	March 29	8:00 AM	Fr. Michael McCormack	<i>5th Sunday of Lent</i>
		10:45 AM	Our Community	<i>5th Sunday of Lent</i>
		12:30 PM	La Comunidad	<i>5º Domingo de Cuaresma</i>
Monday	March 30	8:45 AM	A. Donlon, RIP	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>
Tuesday	March 31	8:45 AM	Communion Service	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>
Wednesday	April 1	8:45 AM	Our Youth	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>
Thursday	April 2	8:45 AM	Faithful Departed	<i>Memorial of St. Francis of Paolo, hermit</i>
Friday	April 3	8:45 AM	C. Briceño, RIP	<i>Lenten Weekday</i>
Saturday	April 4	6:00 PM	Eline Debruijn	<i>Memorial of St. Isidore, bishop and doctor of the Church</i>
Sunday	April 5	8:00 AM	Ignatius Dugosh	<i>Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion</i>
		10:45 AM	Francisca Rivera, RIP	<i>Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion</i>
		12:30 PM	La Comunidad	<i>Domingo de la Palma de la Pasión de la Señor</i>

Marriage – six months notice required – please see Fr. Casey. **Aviso para el Matrimonio** – seis meses es necesaria

Baptism Instruction—English (1st Thursday of each month); Spanish (1st Monday of each month)

Quinceañera – three month notice required – girl must be attending CCD and Mass *regularly* – please see Fr. Casey

Prayer Chain Coordinators—Ann Allen (817-594-8637) Bette Binzer (817-599-0454) LaVerne Cardwell (817-594-3805)

Weekly Visitation of the Sick & Shut-Ins. Contact the church office to be on the schedule.

Census Information—Please notify the church office if you are new to our Parish, have a change of address or phone number, or move to another Parish.

Bulletin Notices are to be written or typed and in the office at least one week prior to event – notices may be e-mailed – deadline for bulletin is Noon on Tuesday – your cooperation is greatly appreciated – Thank You!

REGULAR COLLECTION

March 21-22

\$8,815.00

SECOND COLLECTION

March 21-22

Catholic Relief Services

\$1,688.00

Holy Thursday, April 9

Mass of the Lord's Supper

7:00 PM

Good Friday, April 10

3:00 PM Way of Cross (English—Church)

4:00 PM Via Crucis (New Property)

5:00 Lectura de la Pasión (Español—Church)

7:00 PM Passion of Our Lord (English)

Holy Saturday, April 11

Easter Vigil Service 7:00 PM

(Not 6:00 PM Usual Saturday Evening Schedule)

Chrism Mass

Thursday, April 2 at 5:30 PM

St. Patrick Cathedral

The Faith of the Church—The Church firmly holds that the significance of death has been transformed by the dying and rising of Christ. His Paschal Mystery does not only give us an example to follow. It offers a way in which both life and death are made holy and take on a new meaning. This grace is extended to all people, who through the Holy Spirit are associated with Christ's saving mystery (Cf. *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World 22*).

Questions of the Week—The Gospel of John sees Jesus' death as a glorification. Today's Gospel announces the beginning of that hour of glory. The image of the grain of wheat illustrates how the action of dying to self will lead to a triumphant future.

Visit us at www.FaithFirst.com

(click on "Faith First for Families," click on "Gospel Reflections")

and share today's Gospel reading as a family.

LENTEN SOUP & SANDWICH SCHEDULE

Come join us for Soup & Sandwiches from 5:30-6:30 PM followed by Stations of the Cross

April 3—Youth Group

The Church office will be closed on April 9 & 10 in observance of Holy Thursday and Good Friday.

Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by the Knights of Columbus **Saturday, April 11 at 1 PM for ages 10 and under.** Come join the fun and see the Easter Bunny! Prizes and refreshments furnished. Country Club building behind the Church. Call Rick Maitlen at 817-594-6527 for questions.



A **GARAGE SALE** will be held in the St. Stephen parking lot **Saturday, April 4 from 8 AM to 3 PM.** This sale is to help raise money for Max Mucino, a youth member of our Parish, who was selected to tour the United States this summer with the world class Blue Knights Drum and Bugle Corps. If you have anything that you would like to donate to help Max, it will be greatly appreciated. Please call 817-694-6612 if you need someone to pick up items.

THE LADIES ALTAR SOCIETY will have wonderful baked goods available before and after the Palm Sunday Masses as well as the Saturday night Vigil Mass. Our Bake Sale proceeds go directly to the Parish to defray the debt for the Land Purchase. Save yourself the time and enjoy the baking talents of the Ladies Altar Society members.

CALLED TO PROTECT—Keeping Children Safe will have a review on **Monday, April 6 at 6:30 PM.**

CATHOLIC CHARITIES. A counselor from Catholic Charities, Diocese of Fort Worth, will be available at St. Stephen on Thursdays. To make an appointment, please call 817-534-0814.

ATTENTION YOUTH. All youth entering 6th grade and up next year are eligible and encouraged to participate in DCYC '08, **July 10-12.** The annual Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference is a dynamic weekend for youth that offers keynote presentations from nationally known speakers, workshops where youth learn to deepen their faith and build life skills, a music ministry pre-conference, hands on activities, service experiences, Sunday Mass with a thousand other Catholic youth, a coffee house, games, dance, karaoke, and much more. **An information meeting for parents and youth will be held Sunday, April 5th at 2:30 PM in Room 19.** Contact Jeanette Houle for more information 817-613-8008 or doschicas@att.net

PASTORAL COUNCIL. Are you a good listener? Are you able to listen to the hopes and dreams of your fellow parishioners for the future of this parish? Are you willing to spend time in prayer so as to listen to our loving God as God speaks to you of what God's hopes and dreams are for the future of this community? This council will not be an action council. It is to be an advisory council. Members are needed who will be willing to pray and discern together. Are you willing to grow in your ability to share your faith in dialogue with fellow parishioners about what God's desire for this community of faith might be? Are you willing to prayerfully envision what God has in mind for this community and assist Fr. in articulating that vision to the parish? Give your name to the Church Office. Do you know someone else in this community who has these gifts? Please ask fellow parishioners whom you think have the qualities needed for this ministry if they are willing to serve. Then forward their name to the Church Office. There will be a discernment process and training will be provided for the new council. Please give this ministry your prayerful consideration. Also keep in your prayers the accomplishment of this effort. Joe Rodriguez will be here for an **Informational meeting Monday, March 30, 7 PM.**

AROUND THE DIOCESE

24th Annual Good Friday Vigil for Life, Join Bishop Kevin Vann, other clergy and fellow laity in prayer on **April 10, 1—2:30 PM,** Planned Parenthood Abortion Center, 301 S. Henderson, Fort Worth, Texas. **"Can you not pray with me one Hour?"** For more information call 817-738-1086.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM. As St. Stephen will form an Emergency Management Team in the near future, there is a severe storm program offered at Weatherford College on **Monday, March 30. The two-hour program will be held at Mince Auditorium from 7 to 9 PM.** Attendees should be ushers, greeters, and heads of all church organizations.

PROPERTY PURCHASE INFORMATION

Cost of New Property—\$1,631,842.00
 Monthly Interest Payment—\$7,600.00
 Total Contributions to Date—\$84,553.59
 Interest Paid to Date—\$86,807.57

TEEN CORNER

YOUTH MUSIC MINISTRY: Interested in joining a group of teens and young adults who share their musical talents with the Lord? Practice is held weekly. We are currently seeking a percussionist, guitarists, and vocalists. Please contact Hilary Maitlen at 817-771-8573; or Jeanette Houle at doschicas@att.net or 817-613-8008.

LENTEN LOCK-IN: Mark your calendars for Friday, April 3. See poster in Church Foyer for the schedule of activities. Please sign up at Youth Group or call Susan Ourada at 817-596-3872. Hope to see you there.

DCYC, July 10-12. An informational meeting for parents and youth will be held **Sunday, April 5th at 2:30 PM in Room 19.** Please see the **ATTENTION YOUTH** announcement for more information.

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(All activities held at Bethel Road)

Sunday, March 29

9:15 AM Religious Education Classes (English)
 9:15 AM Adult Catechism (Room 19)
 9:15 AM Adult Bible Study (Room 3)
 11:15 AM Religious Education Classes (Spanish)

Monday, March 30

7:00 PM Boy Scout Troop #72
 7:00 PM RCIA
 7:00 PM Parish Council
 7:00 PM Grupo de Oracion

Tuesday, March 31

9:30 AM Ladies Bible Study (Library)

Wednesday, April 1

6:00 PM Youth Group (Clubhouse Ballroom)
 6:30 PM Choir Practice
 6:45 PM Divine Mercy Chaplet

Thursday, April 2

10:00 AM Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
 10:00 AM Quilting Group (Pro Shop)
 6:00 PM Young Adult Bible Study (Room 4)
 7:00 PM English Baptism Instruction
(Copy of Birth Certificate Required)
 6:00 PM Spanish Children Choir Practice (Room 1 & 2)
 7:00 PM Spanish Adult Choir Practice (Room 1 & 2)
 7:00 PM Hora Española Santa

Friday, April 3

5:30 PM Lenten Soup & Sandwich followed by Stations of the Cross
 7:30 PM Adoration of the Sacred Heart

Saturday, April 4

7:00 PM Cursillistas Ultreya—Spanish

How can I keep my mind on the rosary?

Q I just can't keep my mind on my prayers when I say the rosary. I finish a decade, or even the whole thing, and I wonder where I was and what I was thinking of. What's going on?

Distracted

Dear Distracted,

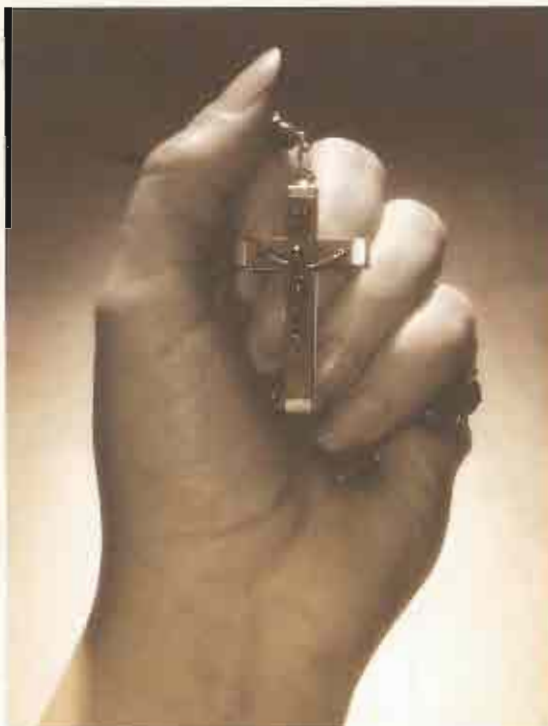
You will never figure it out. When you give yourself over to prayer, even raggedy and distracted prayer, you have jumped into God and, like a swimmer in the ocean, you are in over your head.

The rosary is clearly something to hold on to, *literally* hold on to, like a rope in the ocean. In grave illness or death it will be enough just to clutch the rosary or wordlessly rub the beads.

The rosary is music, a hymn. A woman I knew was unable to keep her mind on her prayers until she began to pay attention to the words. The secret was not in the meaning of each word; it was in the rhythm of beads and quiet words and breathing. This was the music. This was a woman absorbed in her work, lifted by her own soft singing. Afloat on this chant, she could meditate on the mysteries of the rosary: on Jesus' agony, on his birth, on his death, on the glory of his resurrection. The rosary becomes the deep prayer of holy monks and nuns.

A few things in life need repeating: "Please, oh please!" "Thank you. How can I thank you!" "I'm sorry, so sorry." "I love you, love you." Prayer says these same things over and over. Hail Mary, full of grace...Hail Mary, full of grace.

John Hamrogue, C.Ss.R.



SHUTTERSTOCK

Monday

March 30

Lenten Weekday

Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62
or 13:41c-62 • Jn 8:1-11

Tuesday

March 31

Lenten Weekday

Nm 21:4-9 • Jn 8:21-30

Wednesday

April 1

Lenten Weekday

Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95
Jn 8:31-42

Thursday

April 2

Lenten Weekday

Gn 17:3-9 • Jn 8:51-59

Friday

April 3

Lenten Weekday

Jer 20:10-13 • Jn 10:31-42

Saturday

April 4

Lenten Weekday

Ez 37:21-28 • Jn 11:45-56

Sunday

April 5

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Mk 11:1-10 or Jn 12:12-16
Is 50:4-7 • Phil 2:6-11
Mk 14:1-15:47 or 15:1-39

