

Sunday, February 5th

9:00 am – Mass (Anthony DiNonno)
10:15 am – Parish Registration (Rm 1)
11:00 am – Mass (Mass for the Parish)
12:45 pm – RCIA
12:45 pm – Blaze
2:30 pm – Blaze
4:00 pm – Youth Ensemble Rehearsal
5:00 pm – Mass (Muriel Delk)

Monday, February 6th

8:30 am – NO DAILY MASS
6:15 pm – Blaze

Tuesday, February 7th

8:30 am – NO DAILY MASS
10:00 am – Bible Study (Rm 7)
6:15 pm – Girl Scouts (Rm 5)
7:00 pm – Prayer Shawl (Rm 1)

Wednesday, February 8th

6:30 am – NO DAILY MASS
8:30 am – NO DAILY MASS
7:00 pm – AA Set up
7:30 pm – Choir Rehearsal (WS & Rm 2)
8:00 pm – AA Meeting (Rm 3 & 4)

Thursday, February 9th

8:30 am – NO DAILY MASS
6:30 pm – NO DAILY MASS
7:00 pm – Bible Study (Rm 3)
7:00 pm – KOC (Rm 5 & 7)

Friday, February 10th

8:30 am – NO DAILY MASS
7:00 pm – Art Auction

Saturday, February 11th

8:00 am – RCIA Retreat (WS)
8:30 am – NO DAILY MASS
9:00 am – Women Cursillista Group Reunion
(Rm 3)
9:00 am – AA Meeting (Rm 5 & 7)
4:00 pm – Reconciliation
5:00 pm – Vigil Mass (Dr. Norman Moore)

Sunday, February 12th

9:00 am – Mass (Ginger Groves)
10:15 am – Parish Registration (Rm 1)
10:15 am – Baptism Prep Class (Rm 1)
11:00 am – Mass (John Jupina, Jr.)
12:45 pm – RCIA
4:00 pm – Youth Ensemble Rehearsal
5:00 pm – Mass (Mass for the Parish)
(Rite of Welcome for Confirmands)
6:15 pm – Lifeteen

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

February 12th – 6th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Leviticus 13:1-2,44-46

Psalms 32:1-2,5,11

1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

Mark 1:40-45

Prayer for Our Troops:

Lord, hold our troops in Your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need, and bring them home safely. May their sacrifices bring about a lasting and just peace in all lands. I ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord and Savior.

Amen.

Please pray for our men and women in the service, especially: Tracy Vincent, Andy Zyra, & Nathaniel Anemaet, Megan Bittner, Stephen Fleet, Karen Holden Guerra, Andrew Lundgren

If you would like to add to this list the name of a family member who is in harm's way, please call or email the office. (421-7416 or ssm@ssmrcc.org)

Baptism: If you are expecting a child in the next few months, or have an older child in need of Baptism please contact the office to discuss the parish preparation program and scheduling of Baptism. The next baptismal prep class will be held on Sunday, February 12th at 10:15 in Room 5. Please call the office to sign up.



Your prayers are cherished for those from our parish: Jeff Kelleher, Rosalie LaRosa, Veronica Casari, Bill Herb, Patrick Brown, Jean Scherrer Mooney, Fran Holden, Bob Webster, Bill Campbell, Connie DiNardo, Ron Jernigan, Barbara Holloway, Ray Hinds, Margie Childers, Loretta Jones.

Pray For: Danny Kirkby (by Kirkby family), Margaret Warren & Frank Chebetar (by Chebetar family), Nancy Hardin (by Mary Williams), Charlotte Cloud, Fran & Hal Clinger (by Mike Siedlecki), Cole Brennan, Anna Lobay, Kurt & Betty Ann Eberling, Carol Baker, Jackie Molovinsky, Andrew Winebrenner, Carsyn Paige Hawthorne (by Mary Hawthorne), Carol Currens & Larry Norman (by Priest family), Steve Wiggins, Gerald Gerloff, Biff Pearson, Gary Garrison, Jim Silkwood & Megan Berotti & Berotti family (by Gerloff family), Arlene Eylor, Ron Montgomery, Faye Cobb, Jo Nancy Reckling, Roberta Stuchkus, Jenny Cannon, John Walters, Virginia Brown & Carolyn Johnson (by Flynn family), Zachary Calvert, Kristen Bernard (by Kathy Lesko), Barbara White, Arlene Johnson, Emily Gargiulo & Roberta Lopez (by Carol Ehrbar), Ann Frick, Cardell Patillo, Quintel Austin (by Ann Cady), Taylor Beal (by Senich family), Joseph Conner Neary (by Neary family), Bradley Alli, Paula Rix, (by Rix family), Bill Johnston (by Daly family), Marian Wolff (by Dawson family), Jean Trotter (by Gyori family), Laura Yates, Dave Ralston, Aldo Mastrocola, Jr. (by Osborne family), Emily McClung (by Cindy Urben), Jean Jantzen (by Mike Dorchak), Frances Seddon (by Cheryl Van Buren), Lauren Newell (by Pat Newell), Fred Castaldi, Lynne York, William Schmid, Fred Wright, Christopher Hanes (by Schuchhardt family), Tia Cordell, Karen Warren (by Cathy Barrick), Genevieve Johnson (by Ellen DeBlaker), Leslie Wildman (by Ritamarie Searles), James Heiles (by Huysman Family), D'Anna Lineberry (by Troy Munday), Rod Manzano, Helen Cronk, Marcia Downey, Dorothy White, Alice Chase (by Cynthia Owens), Kimi Maurer, Bonnie Lynn Munroe (by Dave Munroe), Seth Martin (by Glackin/Senich family), Mary Beth Hensley, Alice Lenker (by Wilson family), Bill Davenport (by Maryellen Therrien), Keegan Outland, Joe Sapere (by Shipman family), Frank Gross & Michele Ramey (by Unger family), Ann Steegall, Max Leber (by Gary Schuchardt), Stephen Ciesielski (by Ciesielski family), Robert Jeter & Louis Rios (by Jeter family), Rose Ivory, (by Cathy Lahouchuc), Jeff Stroehlein (by Eileen Lane), John Barrientos (by MaryAnn David), James & Price Kilway (by Dickman family), Karen Laughon (by Sam Simmons Conaway), Harcourt Malone (by Klauss family), Eileen & Harold Keatts (by Carscallen family), Nellie Pasion-Callueng (by Loop family), Benjamin Mason, Miles Lynn & Lee Eyler (by Joan Bastian), Stasia West, Mary Petchel (by Petchel family), Kristen Winslow, Mabel Winslow & Ed Caffrey (by Winslow family), Jean Davis (by Eichelberger family), Eileen Brink (by Puchalla family), MaryLou Winkelman (by Rita Szarwark), Lee Addison (by Saltarelli family), Don Simmons (by Mickey Saunders), Parker Curran (by Rodriguez family), Pete G. Decker, Jr., Andy Phelps (by Ann Waibel), Darrell Fleming & Lambert Haupt (by VanZandt family), Ron Berkebile (by Vaughn family), Ida Ann Cannon, Benjamin Liles (by Ellington family), Braden Hennis, Michael McKenna (by Fitzpatrick family), Charlie Miller, Alessandra Senserini, Vivian Smith, Heather Williams Gaona (by Bob Williams), Cecelia Cain-Bohmert (By Cain family), Margaret Phillips (by Francher family) Ted Burzyk (by Stephanie Walling), Dave Demers, Joyce Ethridge (by Giardina family) Lori Noel, Jerry Holt (by Lil Blansett), Margaret Mavrocih (by Younkin family), Virginia Rafferty Ciciano (by Fr. Brian), John Bonanno, Lee Eyler (by Joan Bastian), Elaine Newell (by Newell family), David Short.

REST IN PEACE..... Joshua Reist (son of Rosemary and Jay Reist), Angelo Yakis (father of Missy Dietz), Magdalena Pasion (by Loop Family), Mercedes Collado (mother of Raf Collado), Nell Delk (aunt of Lisa Morris).

Please help us keep this list updated by calling the office to remove or add a name

February 4th & 5th
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Well Done my Good and Faithful Servant
St. Stephen, Martyr a Stewardship Parish

Total Offertory for last weekend	\$17,102
Other	\$ 443
Capital Campaign	\$ 1,596
Samaritan Fund	\$ 256
Youth Ministry	\$ 70
Haiti	\$ 75
Respect Life	\$ 225



PALMS — please bring in last year's PALMS and place in the basket in the commons. They will be burned to make ashes for Ash Wednesday on February 22. Please remove all rubber bands or other ties and take them out of bags.

RENEWAL OF VOWS — will take place after the 5pm Mass on Saturday, February 18. The cost for dinner will be \$20 per couple. We are also in need of people to help set up and clean up. Bring your wedding photo the night of the dinner to share with others. Sign ups continue this weekend.



St. Patrick's Day Dinner — We need someone to coordinate our annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner on Saturday, March 17th. If you are interested, please call the office at 421-7416. (The dinner is catered by the Culinary Arts Program at Oscar Smith High School.)

Are you looking for a place to serve at St. Stephen, Martyr? We are always looking for folks to serve in the liturgical ministries (Lectors, Altar Servers, Mass Coordinators, Eucharistic Ministers, Hospitality). All training is provided. If you are being called to any of these ministries, please email Renee Cunningham at renee@ssmrcc.org

ASH Wednesday is February 22nd — Masses will be at 6:30am, 8:30am, Noon and 7pm. Liturgical Ministers— please go to the MSP to sign up and serve at any of these liturgies.

PANCAKE SUPPER — Our Knights of Columbus Council is sponsoring a FAT TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER on Tuesday, February 21st from 5:30pm-7pm. Please sign up if you plan to attend at the table in the commons. No cost but donations will be gladly accepted.



CROSS IN EVERY HOME Join us on Sunday, February 26th, 2012 at 12:30pm to make a GLASS-FUSED cross for your home. It is a process where you take small pieces of smooth glass to make a design on a cross mold. Once fired, it looks like a stained glass cross. You must pre-order the crosses you would like to complete. See the table in the commons for prices, samples and to sign up. A FUN, FAMILY FUNCTION on a FROSTY FEBRUARY afternoon.

On four Fridays during Lent, Father Brian will be having PASTA WITH THE PASTOR. These will be held on Friday, February 24th, March 9th, March 16th and March 30th. Please sign up on the middle table in the commons if you would like to bring meatless pasta or bread to share. Each evening will begin at 6pm with Stations of the Cross, 6:30pm Pasta with the Pastor, and 7pm an Adult Education Talk. Watch the bulletin for more details.

Altar Floral Arrangements: Parishioners have the opportunity to order a floral arrangement to be used in front of the altar. You may call the church office to request a particular weekend and the arrangements may be in honor or memory of someone. The arrangements will be \$80 and payment should be made in the office.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS and prepare to take off to “SKY” – where EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE WITH GOD! Our summer Vacation Bible School will be held Sunday, July 29 through Thursday, August 2 from 5:30pm-8pm. We need LOTS of FLIGHT CREW LEADERS – if you are an adult, high schooler, or middle schooler that would like to help in any way with SKY, please email Renee Cunningham at renee@ssmrcc.org.



CPR OFFERING: CPR/AED training will once more be made available through the sponsorship of our Parish Nurse Ministry and the expertise of Mary Montero, our resident EMS representative. The projected date for this is Saturday morning, April 28, 2012, and it will be offered first to our youth, 16 years and older. A small fee will be charged to hold a spot in the class. Signups will be at a later date. **Instructors who are trained in the American Heart Program are needed to make this happen.** Please contact Mary at bubufxr2@aol.com or Carol Flach at nurses@ssmrcc.org to if you have the time to volunteer your instructorship skills.

PARISH NURSE MINISTRY MEETING—the next PNM meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8, 2012, 7 – 9 p.m., Nolette Hall. Currently licensed RNs are invited to participate in this ministry. Please feel welcome to attend to see how you might be able to contribute your time and talent toward the health of your parish. Contact Person: Carol Flach at nurses@ssmrcc.org or at 757-482-9506 (H).

World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life “Everyone is searching for You.” If your search for the Lord is leading you to a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life, please call Father Michael Boehling at (804) 359-5661 or write mboehling@richmonddiocese.org.

CATHOLIC PASSION MINISTRIES PRESENTS – "PREPARING FOR ETERNITY!" an ongoing educational forum will take place on Wednesday evenings beginning February 29, 2012 from 7:00 to 8:00 PM in the Minor Worship Space at Prince of Peace. Each session will be follow by an optional half-hour of Q&A. Join us for the Rosary at 6:30 PM. The weekly program will cover "how to prepare an eternal retirement plan". Each session will cover an individual topic, so if a class is missed you will still be able to continue with the program. The individual sessions will be led by Adrian Marchi, Ph.D. Visitors and guests from other churches are welcome to attend. Come enhance your knowledge of the basis of our faith and be sure to bring a friend. Questions regarding the classes may be directed to Adrian at (757) 651 4953.

40 Days for Life Campaign 40 days for life starts from February 22nd to April 1st, 2012. This is an intensive effort designed to raise awareness, save lives, bring healing and lead our nation to repentance for the sin of abortion through: 40 days of prayer and fasting, 40 days of peaceful vigil and 40 days of community outreach. Please check the table in the commons for more information and signs up for prayer vigil at Planned Parenthood on Newtown Road in Virginia Beach.

EGIVING: Sign-up for E-giving to make your Weekend Offering, Debt Reduction/Capital Campaign, Christian Formation Fees, Catholic Virginian, Haiti Donations, Mass Intensions, Initial Envelope Offerings, Christmas/Easter Flowers and Samaritan Fund Offering. Simply go to <http://e-giving.org> and put in the zip code 23322 and select Catholic Church of St. Stephen, Martyr. From here you will need to create your account. All you need is your credit card (Visa, Master Card, Discover, American Express or Debit Card) and your envelope number. It's that simple!

St. Gregory the Great Church Women's Club Craft Show and Flea Market will take place on Sat., March 10th in the gym. (5345 Virginia Beach Blvd. VA Beach) Each six foot table rental is \$20. Applications are available by calling Peggy at 497-6753.

Contemporary Church Lawn Art Auction.



How would you like to know where you would be parking when you come to Mass? Your prayers may be answered. The first items to be auctioned at the Art Auction on February 10, 2012 will be for the coveted first spot in our parking lot. It will be auctioned four times – once for each Mass. The highest bidder from each Mass will win parking for that spot from February 10th through June 10th, 2012. Parking applies only during weekend mass times. Keep in mind that this is meant to be fun and used as a fundraiser with the monies raised to refurbish Nolette Hall. We are accepting sealed bids if you cannot attend the art auction. Be aware that we will open the highest bid at the auction and the auctioneer will auction that amount as a starting bid open to the people in attendance. Please come to the Art Auction table for your paperwork. We will accept sealed bids until February 5th at the 5:00 PM Mass. Please come out and support our auction in Memory of Gordon Hawthorne, who loved working on this project. Also, we would like to mention Theresa Williams, who brought a lot of fun to auction night. Support your church and help us refurbish Nolette Hall.

Thank you,
The Art Auction Committee

ART AUCTION RAFFLE ITEMS

We will be selling raffle tickets for the following prizes:

Trip to NYC – 2 airline tickets, 3 nights stay at a 3 star hotel.

Heart shaped diamond in gold pendant with white gold necklace, total diamond weight .31 carats.

Ipad - 16mb WiFi

One Pandora Sterling Silver Bracelet with pink daisy Pandora enamel charm

“Welcome Friend” Lithograph by Denise Patchell Olsen, hand signed and numbered

Four photographs by Fred Flach

2 free green fees at Cahoon Plantation

1 night stay in Hampton Inn in Newport News with complimentary breakfast and 2 tickets to the Virginia Living Museum

1 night stay in Hampton Inn in Gloucester with complimentary breakfast

We will update our lists as we receive new prizes.

Tickets will be \$5. We will draw at 7:45 in the church prior to the auction that will start at 8:00 PM.

Need not be present to win. Come to our table in the commons where we will have photos and some of the items displayed. Only 1,000 tickets are to be sold.

NEST: Thanks to everyone who helped make our NEST week a welcoming place for the homeless by giving of their time on service teams or providing food and supplies. A special thanks to our evening, food and team coordinators who ensured that all preparations were made each day. Our guests appreciated the hats, socks, snacks, fruit and many toiletries provided to them. Many expressed appreciation for our hospitality. We keep them in our prayers so that they may find permanent lodging and no longer be on the streets.

Fair Trade Coffee, Tea & Chocolate will be sold in the Commons after the Sat. 5pm and Sunday 9am & 11am Masses next weekend, Feb 11th & 12th. Delicious fairly traded products support small-scale farmers across the world. Farmers earn a fair price for their crops, have access to affordable credit, and can invest in education, health care and sustainable agriculture, building a better future for their families.

Nurse Ministry Red Cross Blood Drive: Our 1st annual Winter St. Stephen, Martyr sponsored blood drive will be held in the church commons on **Tuesday, February 28th from 1-7pm**. Anyone 17 years of age weighing at least 110lbs. and in good health may donate blood. This year, donors meeting certain donation criteria may elect to make a “double red cell” donation. Blood has a limited shelf life and blood donors are the only means of keeping an adequate community supply. **Mark your calendars to donate.** First time donors are especially encouraged to give. Volunteers are also needed to help set-up and clean-up, and serve in canteen area. Please stop by the Nurse Ministry table in the commons to sign-up the weekends of February 11/12th, 18/19th, and 25/26th.



HAITI ORPHANAGE NEWS – Everyone interested in finding out more about Maison Fortune Orphanage is welcome to attend the committee meeting Monday, February 13th at 7 PM in Room 2. We will be starting to plan our next trip to the orphanage. Come see photos, learn what clothing and items you can collect for the children. Buy Blank Art Note Cards next weekend in the commons! All funds benefit the orphanage! Go to www.mfofoundation.org for more information Call Susan 421-0732 or Julie 403-9383 for more info. Follow your heart.

REGULATIONS FOR FAST AND ABSTINENCE

Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2012 and Good Friday, April 6, 2012, are days of fast and abstinence. Fridays of Lent are also days of abstinence.

Fasting is to be observed by all 18 years of age and older, who have not yet celebrated their 59th birthday. On a fast day one full meal is allowed. Two other meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids, including milk and juices, are allowed.

Abstinence is observed by all 14 years of age and older. On days of abstinence no meat is allowed. Note that when health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. When in doubt concerning fast and abstinence, the parish priest should be consulted.

Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2012 and Good Friday, April 6, 2012, are days of fast and abstinence. All the Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence. Fasting, almsgiving, and prayer are the three traditional disciplines of Lent. The faithful and catechumens should undertake these practices seriously in a spirit of penance and of preparation for baptism or of renewal of baptism at Easter.

YOUTH MINISTRY

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR THE ART AUCTION on Friday, February 10th for either or both times – 3:00 – 4:00 pm or 6:45pm – 10:30pm. The truck will be unloaded from 3-4pm. From 6:45 – 10:30pm, volunteers are needed to display and package purchased art work. The theme of the evening is a tail gate party, therefore attire is blue jeans and or any sports associated attire. Pizza dinner provided for volunteers. If you are in need of service hours for NHS or would just like to help out, please contact Larry Bittner at lbittner@verizon.net

ANNUAL YARD SALE DONATIONS are needed. Start cleaning out your closets and attics! Youth Ministry will have another yard sale this spring. Donation drop off dates & locations are still being determined. Please do not begin leaving items at the Church; we have no place to store them yet!

TIRED OF ANGRY BIRDS AND OTHER OUTDATED APPS? Here is a unique way to help end hunger and spend some spare time! Free Rice, freerice.com for every vocabulary question you get right, the website donates 10 grains of rice through the UN World Food Program to help end hunger. Try it today!

RITE OF WELCOME FOR CONFIRMATION STUDENTS February 12. For instructions and “rehearsal” please be checked in and seated no later than 4:30pm.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION will be conferred on Wednesday, May 23, 2012 at 7:00 pm here at St. Stephen. Please mark your calendars & tell your sponsors!

CONFIRMATION INTERVIEW SIGN UPS – it’s time to sign up for your Confirmation interview! Sign up lists will be posted on the Confirmation bulletin board in the education hallway. The interview is one-on-one with an adult from the Confirmation Team and about 15-20 minutes in length. Interviews are scheduled for Sunday afternoon on March 11, 18 & 25. See your teen or parent handbook for the interview questions and for more details.

CONFIRMATION ASSIGNMENTS DUE – The “Community” assignment is due February 28th and, last but not least, sponsors should submit their letter regarding the teen’s readiness to receive the sacrament by March 1st. All three of these items may be e-mailed to Suzanne@ssmrcc.org.

CONFIRMATION CATECHISTS FOR FEBRUARY 25 & MARCH 3 please plan to meet on Sunday, February 19th at 3:00 pm to receive teaching materials and instructions regarding the next weekend’s class. If you are unable to meet at that time, please contact Suzanne as soon as possible to arrange another day and time to prepare.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TALENT SHOW at a local senior center on February 18th. **There are still talent spots available to be filled!** If you are a 6th, 7th, or 8th grader and play an instrument, sing, dance, act, juggle, know a card trick, or have any other special talent, e-mail ssmmiddleschoolyouthgroup@gmail.com to let us know!

INNER TUBE WATER POLO is on February 20th. We have had a lot of Middle School students mention they are coming, but we **need you to e-mail us at ssmmiddleschoolyouthgroup@gmail.com** so we can get a better count and have enough food. Always good to have enough food! Cost is \$7 per person. This is going to be a FUN event!!!!

STOP HUNGER NOW Middle School Students...we need YOU to decorate cereal-size boxes however you wish so we can have enough boxes for parishioners to take home with them when Lent begins (Ash Wednesday is February 22). Remember to incorporate the "STOP HUNGER NOW" words on the boxes along with "Eat One/Give One ...set aside 25 cents (or more) at every meal." After Easter, we are going to provide 10,000 meals in 2 hours!!!! Questions? E-mail ssmmiddleschoolyouthgroup@gmail.com.

CPR/AED TRAINING will once more be made available through the sponsorship of our Parish Nurse Ministry and the expertise of Mary Montero, our resident EMS representative. The projected date for this is Saturday morning, April 28, 2012, and the class **will be offered first to our youth, 16 years and older**. A small fee will be charged to hold a spot in the class. Signups will be at a later date.

LIFETEEN is scheduled for Sunday, February 12th. See you for the 5pm Mass, dinner and a Life Night! This evening's topic is on the 6th Commandment, "Thou shall not commit adultery"....easy Commandment to follow, right? Well, not so fast kiddo, maybe not! Parents you are more than welcome to join us this evening, especially if you would like to know what the Church teaching is regarding sexuality.

GO ASK YOUR FATHER! Fr. Brian is holding another round of Q & A on Thursday, February 23rd from 7:00 – 8:00 pm. See you there! Bring with you any questions you have ever wanted answered by a man in black!

STEUBIE & WORK CAMP FOLKS – Our first fundraiser will be working the pancake dinner on Tuesday, February 21st. If you want to go on one of or both of the trips, we need your help from 4:15 pm – 8:00 pm. Invite all of your friends and their families to come dine from 5 – 7 pm.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO NET MINISTRIES!!! NET Ministries, Team #4 was with us & 120 other area Confirmation students on Saturday. Team 4 did an AMAZING job with the Vicariate wide Confirmation Retreat and leading the teens closer to Christ. Powerful dramas & testimonies were shared, great music was made and some wonderful time was spent in prayer and reflection! It was a fabulous Saturday & we wish Team #4 the best as they spend four more months on the road together traveling the country and putting on retreats for other Catholic Teens! May God continue to bless you.

Knights of Columbus Mulch Sale



**\$3.50 bag
pick up**

**\$4.00 bag
Delivered**

**\$5.00 per bag
Delivered/Spread**

**2 Cu.ft bag of
Coco Brown**



**Long lasting dyes are environmentally safe
will not harm pets, plants, or people
Same product used on parish grounds for years**

**For more information about product visit www.cypress-mulch.com
Final order date is February 26th after 5pm mass
Delivery date scheduled for March 17th,
alternate date will be March 24th
(2 weeks before Easter)**

2 CUBIC FOOT

Depth of Mulch	100 sq ft	1000 sq ft
2"	10 bags	100 bags
3"	15 bags	150 bags
4"	20 bags	200 bags

To place order

**fill out a form after mass,
call 421-7416 ext 314,
email order to alex@ssmrcc.org**

On January 20, days before the observance of the thirty-ninth anniversary of the US Supreme Court's Roe V Wade decision which has resulted in the deaths of tens of millions of preborn children, the US Department of Health and Human Services announced that all employers, including Catholic employers, will be forced to pay for sterilization, abortion inducing drugs, and contraception under the Health Care Law.

The United States Bishops rightly called the demand an "Edict". Efforts by the Bishops to secure conscience exemptions were disregarded. They were given 13 months to comply. This edict is a direct violation of the First Amendment to the US Constitution guarantee of the **Free Exercise of Religion**.

Fortunately, our courageous Bishops immediately responded. Cardinal - Designate Timothy Dolan, the President of the Bishops Conference, released a video statement. He mentions the irony that this edict from the Secretary came days after a unanimous decision of the US Supreme Court reaffirming the primacy of Religious Liberty and the freedom of Churches as protected by the First Amendment to the US Constitution.

Cardinal-Designate Dolan also stated, "The Obama administration has now drawn an unprecedented line in the sand. The Catholic bishops are committed to working with our fellow Americans to reform the law and change this unjust regulation. ..In effect, the president is saying we have a year to figure out how to violate our consciences. To force American citizens to choose between violating their consciences and forgoing their healthcare is literally unconscionable. It is as much an attack on access to health care as on religious freedom. Historically this represents a challenge and a compromise of our religious liberty. The government should not force Americans to act as if pregnancy is a disease to be prevented at all costs."

This Edict from the Secretary of Health and Human Services came just one day after Pope Benedict XVI addressed one group of US Bishops during their *ad limina* visit to Rome, warning them of the growth of radical secularism in the United States and the accompanying threats to the fundamental Right to Religious Freedom.

We present a letter from our own Bishop Francis DiLorenzo and a statement from Bishop Paul Loverde of the Arlington Diocese. We encourage all parishioners to go to the Bishops web site to participate in the necessary opposition to this unjust edict. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/conscience-protection/index.cfm> (Deacon Keith Fournier)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I write to you concerning an alarming and serious matter that negatively impacts the Church in the United States directly, and that strikes at the fundamental right to religious liberty for all citizens of any faith. The federal government, which claims to be "of, by, and for the people," has just dealt a heavy blow to almost a quarter of those people-the Catholic population-and to the millions more who are served by the Catholic faithful.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced last week that almost all employers, *including Catholic employers*, will be *forced* to offer their employees' health coverage that includes sterilization, abortion-inducing drugs, and contraception. Almost all health insurers will be *forced* to include those "services" in the health policies they write. And almost all individuals will be *forced* to buy that coverage as a part of their policies.

In so ruling, the Administration has cast aside the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, denying to Catholics our Nation's first and most fundamental freedom, that of religious liberty. And as a result, unless the rule is overturned, we Catholics will be compelled either to violate our consciences, or to drop health coverage for our employees (and suffer the penalties for doing so). The Administration's sole concession was to give our institutions one year to comply.

We cannot-we will not-comply with this unjust law. People of faith cannot be made second class citizens. We are already joined by our brothers and sisters of all faiths and many others of good will in this important effort to regain our religious freedom. Our parents and grandparents did not come to these shores to help build America's cities and towns, its infrastructure and institutions, its enterprise and culture, only to have their posterity stripped of their God given rights. In generations past, the Church has always been able to count on the faithful to stand up and protect her sacred rights and duties. I hope and trust she can count on this generation of Catholics to do the same. Our children and grandchildren deserve nothing less.

And therefore, I would ask of you two things. First, as a community of faith we must commit ourselves to prayer and fasting that wisdom and justice may prevail, and religious liberty may be restored. Without God, we can do nothing; with God, nothing is impossible. Second, I would also recommend visiting www.usccb.org/conscience, to learn more about this severe assault on religious liberty, and how to contact Congress in support of legislation that would reverse the Administration's decision.

With my gratitude and every best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Our lord,
Most Rev. Francis X. DiLorenzo
Bishop of Richmond
January 26, 2012

ARLINGTON, VA – *The Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde, Bishop of Arlington, today commented on the decision by the Obama Administration to mandate sterilization and contraceptive coverage, including abortifacients, in health insurance plans offered by religious institutions, such as colleges and hospitals. He released the following statement:*

“The decision by the Department of Health and Human Services is a direct attack against religious liberty. This ill-considered policy comprises a truly radical break with the liberties that have underpinned our nation since its founding. I have just returned from Rome, where I and my brother U.S. bishops discussed with Pope Benedict XVI and other Vatican officials the vital importance of religious liberty to human freedom and the proper functioning of a just society. While there, I was deeply troubled to learn of this terrible lapse in judgment by our civil leadership here at home.

“I am absolutely convinced that an unprecedented and very dangerous line has been crossed that goes to the heart of the freedom of religion, and that this action does intolerable violence to our First Amendment rights. Catholic hospitals, charitable organizations, colleges and other Church-affiliated entities, as well as individual Catholic employers who seek to follow their consciences in the provision of healthcare to their employees, will be required to cover sterilizations and artificial contraception, including abortifacients, in insurance plans, violating the clear teachings of the Church.

The meager religious exemption grudgingly allowed by the Obama Administration is structured so narrowly that any Church institution that serves a considerable number of non-Catholics would not be protected, directly harming our various ministries throughout the community.

“I will speak out consistently in the weeks and months ahead on this gravely important struggle for the freedom to practice our faith as full citizens of this great nation. I urge the faithful of Northern Virginia and all citizens of good will to understand what is at stake in this unavoidable confrontation, which has been thrust upon us, and to be prepared to engage in a strong defense in the civil arena of the basic human right of religious liberty.

I have been gratified to see the strong reaction so far against this outrageous decision in newspapers and among Americans of all faiths. For now, we should all be united in prayer that President Obama and Secretary Sebelius will reconsider the action they have taken.”