



St. Stephen the Martyr
CATHOLIC CHURCH
Encounter, Know, Proclaim

February 17, 2022

Dear St. Stephen the Martyr Students, Teachers & Families,

At some point, all of us struggle under the weight of a difficult situation. However, there's no need to struggle through it alone, because we have the support of fellow parishioners, teachers, clergy, friends, and family. We are here together to bear one another's burdens.

We can't wait until life is free from problems before reaching out to others—that day may never come. Though everyone one of us has his or her own needs, it's important to remember we can do all things through Christ's strength. And that includes sharing someone else's burden.

When we're willing to wade into another person's troubles to help, that person is blessed, and we're fulfilling the Lord's command to "love our neighbor as ourselves."

Earlier this month, our school rallied together to make a **major** contribution to our food pantry as a part of Catholic Schools Week. Our shelves are full, and we are prepared to share our wealth with the Juan Diego Center and their pantry. Our pantry provides food for families 5 days a week. Most of the family requests have on average 3-5 children per family. St. Stephen's Food Pantry has been open for more than 15 years and we have **never** turned away a family due to lack of food on our shelves. Our school faith family came together and has shared their generosity for those who are struggling to eat. Some families eat one meal a day. Most of us ask the question: "What time do we eat?" These struggling families ask the question: "Do we have anything to eat?"

On behalf of our parish food pantry ministry team (who receives the calls, shelves the food, sacks the groceries for our families), I want to personally thank you for ensuring that our families are being fed. God alone knows what is in our hearts when we reach out. May God continue the GREAT work He has begun in each of you.

Blessings and Thank You,

Deacon Denny Dethlefs
Pastoral and Spiritual Care

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St. Stephen the Martyr Catholic Church is a community for all people to encounter Christ, know Christ, and proclaim Christ.