

## News Release and Request for Coverage

### St. Stephen Church to Host Annual 'Luck of the Irish' Fundraising Event

#### ***Celebration will kick off the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary year for Niles' oldest Catholic Church.***

**NILES, Ohio** – St. Stephen Church, 129 W. Park Ave., Niles, will be hosting its annual Luck of the Irish fundraising event on Saturday, March 18, 2023.

The event will be held at Ciminero's Banquet Centre, 123 N. Main St., Niles, beginning at 5:30 p.m., with one lucky winner going home with a grand prize of \$2,500.

Luck of the Irish, named for the early Irish settlers who founded St. Stephen Church in 1853, is an annual community-wide event that includes a reverse raffle with more than \$5,000 in cash prizes, live music from DJ Jeff Burke, silent and basket auction items and numerous exciting games and prizes to be won.

The event is open to the public. Tickets are \$60, which includes entry into the reverse raffle, appetizers, buffet dinner, dessert, beer, wine and Irish coffee bar. Tickets for the raffle only are \$40.

Tickets may be purchased at the St. Stephen Church rectory, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., or after weekend Mass. Advance tickets are required; no tickets will be sold at the door on the day of the event. Anyone interested in tickets may call the rectory at 330-652-4396.

###

St. Stephen Parish, (<https://ststephenchurchniles.com/>) founded in 1853, is celebrating its 170<sup>th</sup> year of serving the religious needs of Catholics in Niles and surrounding communities. The church was founded to serve the earliest Catholic settlers in Niles — Irish immigrants who had come to work in the emerging steel industry of the Mahoning Valley.

The church is named for St. Stephen, who is recognized as the first martyr of the Roman Catholic Church. In its earliest days, Mass was celebrated in the homes of the faithful, with the first church being constructed in 1864. The current large, red brick structure, a landmark in downtown Niles, was constructed between 1888 and 1891 and has stood as a testament to the faith community ever since.

The church is known for its elegant stained glass windows, including its large and impressive window depicting the Crucifixion of Christ, which was added over the main altar in May 1923, as part of a restoration after a fire damaged a section of the church.

While founded to serve the needs of Irish immigrants, over the years the church has welcomed those of all ethnic backgrounds into its faith family, including some of the Valley's newest immigrants. St. Stephen and its parishioners support the temporal needs of the Niles community with donations to Niles Community Services, Catholic Charities and the St. Vincent DePaul Society.

St. Stephen has a proud 170-year heritage of providing a welcoming faith family to serve the spiritual needs of all in our community.

---

---

*Rev. Richard Murphy, pastor of St. Stephen Church, and Luck of the Irish publicity chair Lisa Abraham are available for questions, comments or interviews. Please contact Lisa Abraham at 330-207-9704 to arrange coverage.*