



Diocese of
OWENSBORO

Friday, December 17: Day of Prayer and Fasting for those affected by the tornados

God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in distress. (Psalm 46:1)

During this time of great suffering endured by so many due to the tornados, many people have been reaching out to the Diocese of Owensboro to ask how they can offer assistance. It has been a blessing to know that so many people have a desire to relieve the grief of others. While many desire to give money and other goods—which is very much needed—we also ask for the help of your prayers.

As a diocese, we are joining together on Friday, December 17th to fast and pray together for the victims of the recent tornados. We are one Body of Christ... “so that there be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it...” (1 Corinthians 12:25-26). As we mourn together as a diocese, we also put our all our trust and hope in Christ, in whose name we unite together in prayer, for “God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in distress” (Psalm 46:1). If for any reason you are unable to join on Friday, please consider choosing another day to add to our prayers during this time of great need.

Below are some ideas for prayer and fasting. Many are familiar with the fasting of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, but there are additional ways to fast and lift up our prayers in solidarity. We encourage you to do what you can as we unite ourselves in prayer and remember our brothers and sisters that are suffering.

❖ Prayer ideas:

▪ Parishes:

- Universal prayer ([link](#))
- Holy Hour ([link](#))

▪ All:

- Novena to St. Stephen begins Dec. 17 ([link](#))—join Bishop Medley in praying this novena to the patron saint of the Diocese of Owensboro
- At your family Christmas gatherings, take an intentional time of prayer to intercede for those who will not be feasting this year.
- Praying the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet with a group of friends or family

❖ Fasting ideas:

▪ Food—many victims and relief workers have gone without food, we can join them in prayer by:

- Having only one full meal plus two small snacks that don't add up to the one full meal

- Other ways to fast from food: no meat, no sweets, no condiments or seasonings, no coffee, drinking only water as a beverage, no alcohol
- Comforts—many victims of the tornado lost comforts that we often take for granted, in solidarity, we can join with them by:
 - Not indulging in unnecessary warmth by not turning up our heat in the home, not using extra blankets/heating blankets, eating your meals cold, taking a cold shower
 - Sleep without a fan or background noise on (think about those who don't have electricity and how it contributes to your comfort)
 - Don't light scented candles (that are usually lit for ambiance or scent) or turn on unnecessary lights (try not lighting the Christmas tree for just one day to remember those who will have a very different Christmas experience this year)
- Other ways of fasting:
 - Not listening to music in the car, and praying for tornado victims during that time instead
 - Not spending money; don't make any purchases that aren't absolutely necessary (e.g., morning coffee run, etc.), donate whatever money you may have saved to the tornado relief fund
 - Take a day off social media, TV, and the internet to spend some extra time in prayer

Sometimes the most encouraging thing to know is that someone is praying for you. You can anonymously submit how you or your parish community are praying or fasting for those who are suffering *here*.



St. Stephen Novena

Begins Friday, December 17

St. Stephen Novena - Day 1 (victims in most dire need)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Stephen as an example of holiness and as the patron saint for the Diocese of Owensboro. Help us to imitate the love of You he showed in choosing to devote himself to Your service as a deacon in the early Church.

St. Stephen, you were chosen by the Apostles to serve the Church as one of the first deacons. You served God faithfully in this role.

Please bring our petitions before God Whom you served so faithfully!

You tended to the material needs of the poor in the Church, and you worked to lead others closer to God.

Pray for us, that we may always be eager to serve God and His Church by serving those in need. Pray that we may never hesitate to do all we can to answer God's call in our lives to be selfless in service to others. Pray especially for the victims of the tornado in most dire need, known only to God our Father, that they may be provided for.

Pray for all the victims of the recent tornado, especially those who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and stability.

St. Stephen, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

St. Stephen Novena - Day 2 (all affected communities)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Stephen as an example of holiness and as the patron saint for the Diocese of Owensboro. Help us to imitate the devotion to You he showed in his important work for your early Church.

St. Stephen, you were one of the first deacons of the early Church. You did a lot of important work for the early Church, out of love for God.

Please bring our petitions before God Whom you loved so dearly!

You worked to serve the poor and assist with the material needs of the less fortunate in the Church.

Pray for us, that we may always be eager to serve God and His Church by serving those in need, especially those affected by the recent tornado. Pray especially that all affected communities may be provided with the assistance they need to rebuild from this disaster.

Pray for all the victims of the recent tornado, especially those who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and stability.

St. Stephen, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

St. Stephen Novena - Day 3 (emergency and first responders)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Stephen as an example of holiness and as the patron saint for the Diocese of Owensboro. Help us to imitate the virtue he showed in working to provide for the needs of the poor in the early Church.

St. Stephen, you were chosen by the Apostles to serve the Church as one of the first deacons. In this role, you worked to provide for the material needs of the poor. You did all you could to carry out this work faithfully.

Please do all you can to bring our petitions before the throne of God!

You did a lot of important work for the early Church. Your care for the poor contributed to the growth and strength of the early Church.

Pray for us, that we may always be conscious of the needs of those around us, especially in times of such great need. Pray that we may be eager to serve God through charitable service to our brothers and sisters in Christ. Pray especially for emergency first responders working long and unseen hours without adequate food or rest, that they be given the strength and hope to carry on.

Pray for all the victims of the recent tornado, especially those who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and stability.

St. Stephen, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

St. Stephen Novena - Day 4 (healing for the injured)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Stephen as an example of holiness and as the patron saint for the Diocese of Owensboro. Help us to imitate the love of You he showed in his openness to the Holy Spirit.

St. Stephen, you did a lot of important work for the early Church. The Acts of the Apostles says that you were full of faith and that the Holy Spirit was in you, as you continued to carry out your holy work.

Please continue to bring our petitions before the throne of God!

Your openness to the Holy Spirit allowed God to work miracles through you. These works helped bring many others to conversion.

Pray for us, that we may grow in openness to the workings of the Holy Spirit in our lives, especially in times of disaster and great loss. Pray that we may allow God to use us as His instrument each day, especially by our prayers and assistance. Pray that those injured may receive healing by the work of the Holy Spirit, and that all may rest in hope for the future.

Pray for all the victims of the recent tornado, especially those who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and stability.

St. Stephen, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

St. Stephen Novena - Day 5 (pastors and faith leaders of affected communities)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Stephen as an example of holiness and as the patron saint for the Diocese of Owensboro. Help us to imitate the devotion to You he showed in holding fast to his Faith amidst persecution.

St. Stephen, you were one of the first deacons in the early Church. Christians were facing a lot of persecution during your time as a deacon, but you persevered in your Faith.

Please persevere in bringing our petitions before the throne of God!

Those you bested in religious debate were determined to put a stop to the holy work you were doing for the Church. After you rebuked them publicly, your enemies stoned you to death.

Pray for us, that we may never allow any difficulties to deter us from our faith in Christ. Pray that we may never waver in my Faith, no matter the cost. Pray especially for pastors and faith leaders of the affected communities, that they may be strengthened and able to unite their communities in faith, being a witness of Christian hope.

Pray for all the victims of the recent tornado, especially those who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and stability.

St. Stephen, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

St. Stephen Novena - Day 6 (traumatized and suffering from new or worsening mental illnesses)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Stephen as an example of holiness and as the patron saint for the Diocese of Owensboro. Help us to imitate the love of You he showed through his deep trust in You.

St. Stephen, you did a lot of important work for the early Church. There were many enemies of Christ seeking to stop this holy work, but you did not waver in your trust or commitment to God.

Please do not waver in bringing our petitions before God!

Even when you were brought before the Sanhedrin on charges of blasphemy, you were not disturbed or worried. You placed your trust in God and held fast to your Faith.

Pray for us, that we may grow in trust in God each day. Pray that we may never waver in our Faith, no matter what difficulties we might face. Pray especially for those affected by the tornado who are traumatized and suffering from new or worsening mental illnesses, that they may find peace and trust in God.

Pray for all the victims of the recent tornado, especially those who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and stability.

St. Stephen, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

St. Stephen Novena - Day 7 (those who died)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Stephen as an example of holiness and as the patron saint for the Diocese of Owensboro. Help us to imitate the virtue he showed in courageously holding fast to his Faith to the point of death.

St. Stephen, you served the Church faithfully as one of the first deacons. Though the enemies of the Church were persecuting Christians, you courageously continued your holy work.

Please continue to bring our petitions before the throne of God!

You boldly rebuked your persecutors for their evil actions. Even when you were carried from the city to be stoned, you courageously held fast to your Faith and your trust in God.

Pray for us, that we may be as courageous in our Faith as you were. Pray that we may never allow any sufferings to deter us from serving God. Pray especially for those who faced death from the tornado, that they may be welcomed into eternal happiness with God in heaven.

Pray for all the victims of the recent tornado, especially those who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and stability.

St. Stephen, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

St. Stephen Novena - Day 8 (those taken advantage of during disaster)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Stephen as an example of holiness and as the patron saint for the Diocese of Owensboro. Help us to imitate the love of You he showed in choosing to follow Your example by asking for forgiveness for his persecutors.

St. Stephen, your rebukes to the Sanhedren enraged them so much that they carried you from the city to stone you. Even at the point of death, you did all you could to help bring others to God.

Please do all you can to bring our petitions before God!

Your last words before death were a prayer asking Jesus to receive your soul and a prayer asking for forgiveness for your killers.

Pray for us, that we may always be forgiving of all who hurt us. Pray that we may always seek to forgive others even when it is most difficult, out of love for God. Pray especially for those who have been and will be taken advantage of during this time of disaster, compounding their sorrows and loss, that they may be given the grace to forgive, justice for any wrong-doings committed against them, and that many kind and generous people be put in their paths to help them along the way.

Pray for all the victims of the recent tornado, especially those who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and stability.

St. Stephen, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

St. Stephen Novena - Day 9 (those who have offered their assistance to victims)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. Stephen as an example of holiness and as the patron saint for the Diocese of Owensboro. Help us to imitate the devotion to You he showed in serving Your Church faithfully as one of the first deacons.

St. Stephen, you were chosen by the Apostles to be one of the first deacons of the early Church. You served God faithfully in this role and did a lot of important work for the Church.

Please bring our petitions before God Whom you served so faithfully!

Your holy work helped bring many into the Church. Your assistance to the Apostles helped enable them to devote themselves to preaching and priestly ministry.

Pray for us, that we may always be open to serving God and His Church in whatever ways He calls us to. Pray that we may be as devoted a servant of God as you were. Pray especially for all those around the world who have offered their prayers and assistance to those affected in the Diocese of Owensboro, that they may be abundantly blessed for their kindness in our time of need.

Pray for all the victims of the recent tornado, especially those who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes, and stability.

St. Stephen, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Adapted with permission, *Pray More Novenas*. Read more at: <https://www.praymorenovenas.com/st-stephen-novena>



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Holy Hour for Tornado Victims
Prepared by the Office of Worship – Diocese of Dallas
Adapted by the Office of Worship – Diocese of Owensboro

English worship aid:

All texts and suggestions taken from the ritual text, *Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist* (Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1993).

NOTES REGARDING SOLEMN EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

- ‡ The presiding minister for Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is normally a priest or a deacon.
- ‡ Incense should typically be used; it can be eliminated, for pastoral reasons.
- ‡ Need: priest or deacon, one or two servers (incense and boat), any assisting deacons
- ‡ Worship aid may be reproduced without any special permission, on 8 ½ x 14 legal size paper, two-sided. All texts in worship aid may be reproduced, using a different layout, if the parish chooses. Order of events is accurate, regardless of format selected.
- ‡ Appropriate reverence for the exposed Blessed Sacrament is a genuflection.

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Entrance of Ministers

Ministers are vested and approach the altar while a song is sung or instrumental music played

Exposition

Deacon brings host (in luna) forward, and places it into monstrance, then genuflects.
Monstrance is venerated with incense by the presiding minister

Incensation and Song

Greeting

The presiding minister (priest or deacon) greets the people
Presider may briefly introduce the celebration (in these or other words):

We gather tonight (today) for a Holy Hour, along with other parishes within the Diocese of Owensboro. In solidarity and with prayer, we ask God's comfort, protection, and gift of hope for all those who have lost homes and their economic stability because of the recent tornados. We ask God to be present and to comfort especially those who mourn loved ones who have died as a result of this disaster.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

**O God of Consolation, we come before you
stunned and dazed by the tragedies that have unfolded in these days.
Hear the prayer of lament your people raise to you as we plead "Why?"
You are all-giving. You are all loving.**

**Your people are in pain.
Send your spirit of comfort among us and bring us one day to healing.
We ask this in the name of the one who consoled Martha and Mary
at the death of their brother, Lazarus,
Jesus Christ, your Son, for ever and ever.
R. Amen.**

Liturgy of the Word

Selected scriptures below – others may be used as appropriate. Choose two or three, leaving time for silent reflection between readings.

John 6:44-47	Whoever believes has eternal life.
John 11:17-28	I am the resurrection and the life.
Lamentations 3:17-26	The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.
Romans 8:31b-39	Nothing will ever separate us from the love of God.
Psalms 80: 1-7, 14-19	Stir up your might and come and save us!
Matthew 5:1-12	The Beatitudes
Revelation 7:9-17	These are the ones who have come through great tribulation.
1 John 1:5-10	Live in the light.
Romans 8:18-27	Creation is waiting for the fullness of time.

Homily (optional)

Adoration and Silent Reflection

Parishes may ask people to bring a bible for quiet reading and reflection (mention scripture above, in worship aid to direct them).

Intercessions

For intercessory prayer during Solemn Exposition, kneeling is the appropriate posture.

My brothers and sisters, our heavenly Father sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world that the world might be saved and all might be delivered from the power of sin and death. As a pilgrim people seeking Christ's gift of everlasting life, let us pray for all people according to their needs.

- 1. For those who have lost their lives as a result of the tornados, that God will comfort their families with the sure knowledge that they now sleep in the peace of the Resurrection, let us pray to the Lord...**
- 2. For those who now struggle each day with economic worry and fear of the future, let us pray to the Lord...**
- 3. That our brothers and sisters who have been injured, uprooted from their homes, and who feel they have lost hope, let us pray to the Lord...**
- 4. For the gentle healing of all those who face mental health issues - women, men, and Children - as a result of the trauma from the tornado, let us pray to the Lord...**
- 5. For all public officials, public leaders, and organizations, that the relief and assistance that they provide for victims may come swiftly, and in abundance, let us pray to the Lord...**

6. For the communities of Resurrection Parish in Dawson Springs, and St. Joseph Parish in Mayfield, that they will one day be brought back to worship together in their parish churches, let us pray to the Lord...

OR Invocation of Christ (substitute for Intercessions)

Lord, be merciful	<i>Lord, save your people</i>
From all evil	“
From every sin	“
From the snares of the devil	“
From anger and hatred	“
From every evil intention	“
From everlasting death	“
By your coming as man	“
By your birth	“
By your baptism and fasting	“
By your sufferings and cross	“
By your death and burial	“
By your rising to new life	“
By your return in glory to the Father	“
By your gift of the Holy Spirit	“
By your coming again in glory	“

Lord's Prayer (recited or sung)

Benediction

Presiding minister goes to the altar, genuflects, and then kneels.

At this time, a suitable Eucharistic song may be sung by the assembly, kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament.

Presiding minister incenses the Blessed Sacrament.

After the song and incensing, the presiding minister says the prayer.

**Lord our God,
in this great sacrament
we come into the presence of Jesus Christ, your Son
born of the Virgin Mary
and crucified for our salvation.
May we who declare our faith in this fountain of love
and mercy drink from it the water of everlasting life.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

Priest or Deacon puts on humeral veil, takes the monstrance, and blesses the people in silence. Monstrance is place back on altar.

Optional: Priest or Deacon kneels again and leads the Divine Praises (see worship aid).

Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Priest or Deacon removes the luna with the consecrated host, and returns it to the tabernacle. Meanwhile, an Acclamation or Song of Praise is sung.

Ministers depart in simple procession. Instrumental music may accompany the procession.

Acclamation or Song of Praise



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UNIVERSAL PRAYER (PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL)

Presider: Heavenly Father, with hope in Your loving mercy, and sorrow for those who suffer, we call out to you in our need.

- For the Church: that we may be a sign of Christ's compassion and love for one another, let us pray to the Lord...
- For civic leaders, emergency personnel, and all who risk their lives to aid in the tornado disaster relief: that they may dwell in the shadow of the Lord and be sheltered by His protection, we pray...
- For those who have been injured in the recent tragedy, especially the poor and marginalized: that God's love will sustain them as they heal from this trauma and devastation, let us pray to the Lord...
- For the parishes in our diocese that suffered damage, especially for Resurrection Parish in Dawson Springs and St. Joseph Parish in Mayfield: that their parish community will be encouraged and strengthened by the grace of God, and that they may one day be able to worship together again as a parish community, let us pray to the Lord...
- For those whose lives are forever changed by grief and loss: that they may be assured of Christ's closeness to them in their sorrow and find strength and comfort through their faith in Jesus our Risen Savior, let us pray to the Lord...
- For this gathered assembly: that we may remember at all times, but especially now as we are shaken by this tragedy, that we are surrounded by God's unfailing love, let us pray to the Lord...

Presider: God of mercy and compassion, help us never to doubt your power and love, even in the midst of the effects experienced by natural disaster, give us the compassion and devotion to reach out to those in need, especially by help of our prayers.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

INTERCESSIONS FOR LITUGY OF THE HOURS

Leader: Standing in God's Holy Presence, we seek to understand this tragedy and be made whole once again. Let us offer our prayers for one another, confident that the Lord hears the cries of the poor and afflicted.

Leader: Eternal God, the life that we once knew now holds tremendous change. Come into our turmoil, quiet our anxieties, and surround us with your peace and guidance so that we might know the constancy of your love.

All: Give us comfort, O God!

Leader: Almighty God, as the harsh voice of reality thrusts its dagger into our hearts, and images we do not want to see get lodged in our memories and scrambled in our minds, grant us courage to face the days and weeks ahead so that peace of mind and heart may once again return to us.

All: Give us comfort, O God!

Leader: All-Powerful God, now is the time for us to stand strong, remain vigilant, and continue to be present to one another. Give us an unfaltering faith to trust in you no matter how powerless or hopeless we feel.

All: Give us comfort, O God!

Leader: Compassionate God, your generous presence and the loving touch of your embrace comes to us in the gift of those who stand with us during times of great sorrow and pain. Wrap us in your loving care and console us with your kindness so that we may know that we are not alone.

All: Give us comfort, O God!

Leader: Faithful God, the heaviness of our burdens overwhelm us now, and the immensity of our pain presses down upon us. Speak to us those promising words of consolation, "Come to me, all of you who are weary, and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

All: Give us comfort, O God!

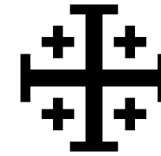
Leader: God our Father, Hear these our prayers during this time of great need. Turn our sorrow to hope as we await healing and peace. Relieve the ache in our spirit and bring solace to our heart. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

A Holy Hour for Tornado Victims

Eucharistic Service Outside of Mass



Entrance of Ministers

All stand.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

All kneel after host is placed in monstrance.

Incensation and Song

Greeting

Opening Prayer

Insert Scripture citation here, if desired

All sit.

Homily

Period of Adoration and Silent Reflection

Intercessions

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

OR Invocation of Christ

R. Lord, save your people.

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

Incensing of the Blessed Sacrament and Eucharistic song during incensing

All kneel.

All stand.

All kneel.

The Divine Praises (repeat after Presider)

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus.

Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart.

Blessed be His Most Precious Blood.

Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most Holy.

Blessed be her Holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be her Glorious Assumption.

Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.

Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.

Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints. Amen.

Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

All stand.

The Blessed Sacrament is returned to the tabernacle.

Acclamation or Song of Praise

