

 **AnITConsultant** LLC

Whaylon Coleman
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Office : PO BOX 22998
Owensboro, KY 42304-2998

Phone : 270-883-1450
Email : it@anitconsultant.com

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Blessed Sacrament

602 Sycamore Street • Owensboro, KY 42301 • 270-926-4741

www.blessedsacramentchapel.org or email at pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org

Mission Statement:

Established in the Spirit of Jesus Christ with an Afro-centric focus, Blessed Sacrament Chapel is committed to spreading the "Word" through fellowship and good works.

Sunday Mass: 10:00AM

St. Stephen Cathedral Parish Office: 270-683-6525

Pastor: Father John Thomas

john.thomas@pastoral.org

Parochial Vicar: Father Shibu Cheriyanunnel

mocshibu.cheriyankunnel@pastoral.org

Parish Life Coordinator: Sr Jeannette Fennwald,
SSND pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org



Sunday's Readings:

First Reading:

Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven. (Sir 28:2)

Psalm:

The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger, and rich in compassion. (Ps 103)

Second Reading:

None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. (Rom 14:7-8)

Gospel:

"Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times." (Mt 18:21-22)
Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

September 17, 2023, 24th Sunday Ordinary Time.

Christ died and came to life that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Rm. 14.



24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Peter approached Jesus and asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times." - Mt 18:21-22

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD

GLP

My Dear Parishioners:

That’s not fair!” You’ve heard that complaint as much as I. Parents have had to deal with that cry from their kids a zillion times more than I have. That complaint is on the lips of children, comes forth from teens, rises us from broken hearts trying to deal with rejection, and is heard in funeral homes among those paying their last respects to friends and relatives who have just died. What’s fair and what’s not is the stuff of political campaigns, labor contract negotiations, and deliberations of parish pastoral councils. Pastors are called “unfair”, bishops and the Church in general are accused of it. Hardly a week goes by when we’re not in some sort of conversation about what’s fair and what’s not. Ultimately, as we mature, we must come to terms with the reality that life is unfair. This leads us to eventually realize that every single individual has his or her standard of measuring what’s fair and what’s not. If you’ve ever tried to get a group of people to wholeheartedly agree on what’s fair you’ll know what I’m saying. Fairness is an elusive standard. Fairness is something we all struggle to attain. Rarely do we succeed; most of the time we don’t. Most of the time we wrestle with the question of fairness when it comes to the distribution of this world’s material goods, especially money. How many of the deliberations of our state and federal legislators are devoted to the attempt to be fair? I daresay that the great majority of legislative bills put before our state houses and our U.S. Congress’ representatives and senators deal with the distribution of our nation’s wealth and resources, along with treating all people fairly under the law. Dealing with the question of fairness and who deserves what is a fertile field in which jealousy, envy, hatred, spite and the desire for “getting even” find their roots.

The question of fairness and its related judgments about who deserves what ultimately takes us on a journey deep within our hearts and souls. The issue ultimately becomes a spiritual issue, something that affects not just our thinking and judgments, but affects our hearts and our souls. We are here at this Mass in order to present our hearts and souls to God. We know and He knows that our hearts and souls are not in good condition. God knows and we know that we need help, we need healing, we need His antidotes for the diseases, the spiritual diseases, and we are suffering. Jesus told us, didn’t He, that He was here among us to heal those who knew they were sick, not those who didn’t think they needed any healing. If we think we don’t need any help, that we don’t need God’s help, we ought to ask ourselves why we’re here! So what’s the spiritual message, what’s the spiritual medicine, we need when we’re wrestling with those dislocating and fracturing questions of fairness? When we wrestle with the question: “Who deserves what?” we ought to pay attention to God’s Word and what He wants to teach us when it comes to answering these questions.

The parable of the prodigal son is probably the best known of all of the parables Jesus taught. It goes right to the question of fairness; it deals with what the younger son and the older son deserved. We all like to identify with the younger son because we’ve all sinned. We’ve all taken God’s treasures and squandered them on wine, women and song. We’ve all wallowed with the pigs. And many, if not most, of us have come to our senses and come back to our Father confessing our sins and asking for His forgiveness. The problem is that we’re likely to stop there and not see ourselves in the elder son. But the uncomfortable truth is that we’ve all stood in his shoes, too. We’ve all complained, even bitterly complained, that God our Father hasn’t been fair. All too often we think of ourselves as the elder son did. We compare ourselves with others, particularly those whom we consider to be greater sinners than we are, and we get jealous over their good fortune. That fact that bad people, and some very bad people at that, receive the good things of life really upsets us. Are we prepared, then, to deal with the reality that God never gives any of us what we deserve, that He gives each one of us, no matter what condition we’re in, more than we deserve? That’s certainly the point behind today gospel reading about the younger son and his elder brother.. .

We all, each and everyone one of us individually, has received far more from God our Father than we deserve. So while we know it’s true that life isn’t fair, we need also to know that it never has been -- and it never will be. And it’s true we don’t get what we deserve. Instead we get far more than we deserve. But there’s more yet to draw from the waters of God’s spiritual well. We need to go one step beyond and see ourselves not just in the shoes of the younger son, and not just in the shoes of his elder brother, we need to see ourselves in the shoes of the father.

The most missed point of this parable is that we should locate our hearts in the father’s heart. We should see those around us, our brothers and sisters, through his eyes. We should love them with his love. For if we do, then questions of fairness and arguments about who deserves what all become useless, even silly. Love is never given to those who deserve it. As a matter of fact, great love is given to those who have no claim on it. Great love is freely given, no strings attached, no conditions demanded, with no expectations of receiving anything in return. Love is freely and unconditionally given unfairly and without anyone deserving it. That’s what makes it so wonderful. That’s what makes it do God-like. That’s what brings us to be made, through the power of Jesus and His Holy Spirit, into the image and likeness of God. Can we do that on our own? Of course not! “With man it is impossible; with God all things are possible..

So I am here with you today to receive the Bread of Life. I am here with you to receive that which will feed my soul and give nourishment and strength to my spirit. For it was from the pierced heart of Christ that His Precious Blood flows into your heart and mine, there to wash away all struggles with questions of fairness and deserving and to drown out our complaints. May all who see you and who see me recognize the love of the father seen in today’s beautiful parable of the prodigal son who found the answers to life’s questions in the arms of his father – in his father’s heart Blessing. Father John

CONGRATULATIONS

Bishop Medley awarded Cindy Clark the Sophia Award on Sunday. Pictured below is a picture of her family ad friends who were present to support and congratulate her.



September Birthdays

- 6--Shelby Webster
- 7--Aubrey Ottofy
- 8--Mary Hagan, Mamie Farish
- 9--Luke Bisel
- 18--Samuel Hollis
- 20--Mary Katherine Gough

October Birthdays

- 6--Jarrod Malone, Holly Hollis



SMILE OF THE WEEK

Morning Prayer

“So far today, God, I’ve done all right. I haven’t gossiped, haven’t lost my temper, haven’t been selfish, grumpy, nasty, or over-indulgent. I’m really glad about that. But in a few minutes, God, I’m going to get out of bed, and from then on I’m probably going to need a lot more help. Thank you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Mass Intentions

- September 3---Frances Johnson
- September 10--June and Bill Johnson
- September 17--Burnell and Joseph Hamilton, Robert and Elizabeth Johnson, Theresa Hill,, Mary Ruth Simmons
- September 24--Bern Tooley

Let us remember to pray for those who have recently died or those in the process of dying. Remember to pray for the souls in purgatory, especially for those who have no one to pray for them.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the sick: Charlie Brown Sr, Steven Moorman, Rachel Mattingly, Philip Moorman, Jr., Jim Fennewald , Wynter Keller, Larry Clark, Ruth Coble, Gloria Savet, Shaun Winchell, Mike Lewis, Jeeriah Cruite, Carol Hatchett, Teresa Woods, Larry Allen, Jordan Gertisen, Buddy Adcock, Debbie Moseley, Donna Kaelin, Janice Taul , Pam Wilson, Frank & Gloria Adams, Shelby Webster, Louise Johnson, Larry Conder, Andy Evans, Gary Moorman, , If you know of anyone who is in need of prayer or visitation, please notify the office.

IMP—Kroger

Thank you to everyone who has designated Blessed Sacrament as your community reward partner. We have 39 households that designate Blessed Sacrament as their community partner. Our last donation was \$149.70. If you do not have a community reward partner, please designate Blessed Sacrament. Blessed Sacrament’s # is WX799. Go to krogercommunityrewards.com to register. Thanks to each of you for your support.

Coming Events



Blessed Sacrament Chapel

September 20--Finance Meeting 5pm

September 24--Diocesan Response Fund Commitment Sunday



- September 10--\$1,122
- Budget--\$1094
- MTD Collection--\$2,534.11
- MTD Budget--\$2,188
- YTD Collection--\$13,304.93
- YTD Budget--\$12,034

May each give according to what the Lord has blessed us with.

Thanks to everyone who practices stewardship on a regular basis. An active parishioner attends Mass regularly and practices stewardship (time, talent, treasure).

GOSPEL MEDITATION

When I was in second grade, my prized possession was a metal Star Wars-themed lunch box. After school one day, another student ripped it from my hands. I helplessly watched in horror as my classmate threw it to the ground and violently stomped it into an unrecognizable heap of junk. I came home covered in tears of shame and rage. After a few months, I never thought about it again ... until I was almost thirty years old and on a retreat to prepare for ordination to the priesthood.

That childhood memory — and the attendant outrage — came back afresh. My spiritual director helped me in the process of acknowledging that I was angry because that kid owed me my lunch box. Then she helped me, through the grace of Jesus, to forgive the debt. Almost immediately I felt a new peace. I was amazed that I hadn’t forgotten what I had lost, even from years before. Aren’t we human beings simply amazing at remembering what people owe us?

We see this week in Jesus’ parable a servant who is forgiven much but then commands another servant: “Pay back what you owe!” He can’t forget or let go of how he was wronged. He *remembers* — and he becomes a monster because of it. If only he had remembered not only the debts owed to him, but also his greater debt owed to — and forgiven by — his master. It’s natural for us to remember what others owe us. But when we contextualize those offenses in Jesus’ mercy toward us and them, we’re free to be merciful like the Master and less like a monster who never forgets.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE	
	LECTORS
<u>September 17:</u>	Greg Gough, Kathi Skidd
<u>September 24:</u>	Alexis Hatchett, Misty Sanford
<u>October 1:</u>	Laysob Brooks, Sarah Malone
	Eucharistic Ministers
<u>September 17:</u>	Sarah Malone, Barbara Bisel, Denise Richardson
<u>September 24:</u>	Cindy Clark, Vivian Higgs, Katie Goins
<u>October 1:</u>	Greg Richardson, Lori Robin son, Greg Gough
	Collection & Gifts
<u>September 17:</u>	Fain Family
<u>September 24:</u>	Campbell Family
<u>October 1:</u>	Jacques & Whitney Williams & sons

Acts 2:42

The early Christians “devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of bread and to the pray-ers.”

Small groups will begin to meet in September with the goal of “helping people see what it means to receive and live the Eucharist.”

Sessions include prayer, reading Scripture ex-cerpts and passages from various documents of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and a prerecorded video reflection given by Bishop Medley.

These sessions are designed to take place in people’s home once a month. If you are inter-ested in hosting a session or joining one, please contact Janet Clark or Sister Jeannette.

The Hateful Things We Hug Tight

At the end of “Lord of the Rings: Return of the King,” Gollum fights with Frodo for possession of the One Ring. He wins the fight, but in doing so topples over the edge of the mountain ledge, falling into the cav-ernous fires of Mount Doom. As he falls, we see him smile, and clutch the ring to his chest. He is happy. He has won what he spent his life pursuing.

It is only in the last millisecond before his face slips below the lava that we see his eyes widen in terror as he realizes the truth: the thing he clutches to his heart is the thing that killed him. In choosing the ring, he chooses death.

Sin, and the fallen nature of this world, makes us addicted to something that kills us.

Like any addiction, it is a vicious cycle. The less we forgive, the more hardhearted we become ... and the less we seek forgiveness ourselves.

What breaks the cycle? Reconciliation with God — or, Confession, as we call it. In fact, it does more than break the cycle. It turns it backward. Not only does it detoxify our souls of sin, it weakens our ad-diction to sin’s effects — anger, vengeance, unfor-giveness. The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works, said St. Augustine.

Ultimately, I view our whole human life as a struggle on the ledge of a mountaintop. It is certain that we will choose sin — we always do. We will tumble over the side, toward ruin. But let us be Frodo, and not Gollum. Let us cling to the rock of the sacraments and accept the hand that would drag us away from the flames.

“Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight.” — Sirach 27:30

BY Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Readings for the Week	
Monday:	1 Tm 2:1-8/Ps 28:2, 7-9/ Lk 7:1-10
Tuesday:	1 Tm 3:1-13/Ps 101:1-3, 5, 6/ Lk 7:11-17
Wednesday:	1 Tm 3:14-16/Ps 111:1-6/ Lk 7:31-35
Thursday:	Eph 4:1-7, 11-13/Ps 19:2-5/ Mt 9:9-13
Friday:	1 Tm 6:2-12/Ps 49:10, 17-20/ Lk 8:1-3
Saturday:	1 Tm 6:13-16/Ps 100:1-5/ Lk 8:4-15
Observances for the Week of September 17	
.Tuesday:	St. Januarius, Bishop, Martyr
Wednesday:	Sts. Andrew Kim Tae-gŏn, Priest, and Paul Chŏng Ha-sang and Companions, Martyrs
Thursday:	St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Saturday:	St. Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest
<div><div>PRESENCE</div><div>Wherever you see another, there I am.</div></div>	
<div><div>Prayer for Catechists</div><div>Dear Lord, Anoint those who serve as catechists, those who tell your story of determined love for your people. Be with our catechists in their classrooms, inspire the hearts of those in their care, ignite a new generation disciples for you! Amen.</div></div>	

FORGIVENESS

Nearly ten years before, a son and father had parted ways when the business they shared went bankrupt. The son blamed the father. They did not speak to each other again.

Then the father became seriously ill. The other called the son and told him he had better come soon. The son walked sheepish-ly into the hospital room. The father mo-tioned his son to him and whispered: “Did you ever think you could do anything that would keep me from loving you?”

Resentment and anger are foul things, the first reading from Sirach tells us. Re-member the last things. Stop hating. Live by the commandments. As Saint Paul writes to the Romans, we are to live for the Lord and die for the Lord.

Jesus’ parable in today’s Gospel re-minds us of God’s compassion. The im-mense sin of humanity has been forgiven and stricken from the record. We are to forgive others in the same way. Copyright J.S. Paluch Co.

Laudato Si

We do not stand separate from the planet we share with other life; we are intimately related to it and so are also responsible for its care. What is at stake is nothing less than our chil-dren’s rights to a safe climate, clean water and air, sufficient food, physical security, and the wonders of a planet rich with life. We cannot overcome the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, nor overcome pol-lution, resource degradation, poverty, injustice without transforming outmoded patterns of be-havior, culture, and economics. We must move beyond an exploitative relationship to our plan-et towards one based on stewardship and care. While such a transformation has already begun, the gravity of the situation demands greater ac-tion. As much as this is a moment of crisis, it is also one of opportunity: we can renew our rela-tionship with the planet.