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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:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. (Is 55:8)

Psalm:

The Lord is near to all who call upon him. (Ps 145)

Second Reading:

Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me life is Christ, and death is gain. (Phil 1:20-21)

Gospel:

“What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?” (Mt 20:14-15)

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

September 24, 2023, 25th Sunday Ordinary Time.

Seek the Lord while He may found,
call Him while He is near.



25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

“Are you envious because I am generous? Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last.” - Mt 20:15-16

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

GLP

My Dear Parishioners:

The parable we have just heard raises some critical questions both for believers as well as those who are questioning faith and trying to find out who God really is. The critical question today is: What do we do with those who went out to work at dawn, the one's who worked so hard, who bore the heavy burdens of the day's work and then received the same wage as the last group who only had an hour's work? The questions raised are manifold. Doesn't this knock the pins out from under morality? Why should we observe all the rules of morality if God is going to forgive everybody anyway? Another question raised is about justice. Is there no justice in God's ways if everybody, saint and sinner alike, get the same reward at the end of their lives?

In attempting to answer the questions raised by this parable the first thing we must do is put behind us all feelings of jealousy, envy, and self-pity, along with sort of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" mentality. Also we must set aside all standards of human justice. The justice of God is not the justice of man. Our ways are not God's ways. Our God is the God who justifies sinners, people just like us. God is not like the blindfolded woman holding a sword in one hand and a set of scales in the other. Once we have put jealousy and envy aside, once we stop judging God's mercy, and once we have set to rest our propensity to critically question God's intentions, then we can turn to the first part of the answer, the part that deals with justice. In many counseling situations I have had I've talked with people who are extremely upset with themselves and who judge themselves very harshly and critically because others around them seem to be more favored by God than they. "Why is it, Father, they ask, "that my friends have greater gifts than I do? Why are they always so close to the Lord and I am not? Why is God always doing things for them and I seem to be so distant from the Lord? Mind you, these question are not always couched in jealousy or envy, rather many times they are couched in terms of self-condemnation. Self-condemnation is one of the most insidious works of the devil. The proper responses in such situations is to bring them to where they drop the measuring scales of justice held by the blindfolded lady with the sword. They, and we with them, need to think in terms the God who, because of Jesus Christ, is justifying sinners. We need to pay attention to our own justification in God's mercy. Comparison with others is always odious. Who authenticates you? God and God alone! Who justifies you? God and God alone! Do not judge His love or measure His work within you by comparing yourself with others. Such comparisons can lead to spiritual pride or spiritual despair. Comparisons can likewise lead to gossiping, back-biting, envy, jealousy, and destruction of the peace and communion God has in mind for all of our relationships with all of those around us.

Having then put down the measuring scales of human justice, what do we then do in addressing the questions raised in the parables? Many resort to the economic approach and devise a system whereby we think we can earn God's favor. This approach counsels us to toil and labor in such a way that if we work hard enough God will be obliged to give us His love because we have earned it. He cannot deny us, we think, because through a hard fought life we claim we have earned it and therefore deserve it. No one of us can earn God's love just as no one of us can earn the love of another human being. Love is neither the subject of justice nor of economics. There is no price tag on it... it cannot be bought, just as it cannot be sold. With what, then, are we left? We are left, my friends, with the glory the beauty of working not to save our own skins, not for our own justification, but of working hard to love others and working for their salvation. The owner's vineyard is the field of human relationships in which we labor and toil unselfishly for the good of others, not for our own rights or our favored relationship with God. What we are left with is a system of morality and of behavior that gives us glory and dignity insofar as we love our enemies, do good to those who hurt us. We live in a system wherein the strong stop by the wayside and share their strength with the weak. Just as the Samaritan stopped to share his strength with the battered and victimized man lying helpless in the ditch, so we live to do the same, whether it be the sharing of our surplus wealth or the overflowing excesses of God's graces within us... His mercy and forgiveness included.

The workers in God's vineyard ought to be working for the sake of others, not simply for their own gain. The toil described by St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians, which we read in today's second reading, is a labor of love for the sake of others. Paul frankly confesses that he would rather be dead, that dying would be for his own gain since he would be with Christ in heaven. But he goes on living in the flesh while toiling in the vineyard for the sake of those whom he loves rather than for the sake of his own comfort and gain. All of your work and all of your devotion redounds to His risen life. Besides, you haven't lost a thing. Instead you've gained a brother or a sister. Or are you jealous and envious because you have to share all of these good things with them? We keep our behavior good, not for our own sake but for the sake of others, be they friend or enemy, be they Catholic or Protestant, be they Jew or Gentile, male or female. Isaiah tells us in the first reading: "Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; let him turn to the Lord for mercy, to our God, who is generous in forgiving." Well, my friends, how are they to know that God is generous and forgiving unless He is manifested to the wicked, manifested by we who are members of the Body of Christ? His temple built of living flesh offers God's presence and God's ways to men and women who need to see and receive His mercy, His generosity, and His forgiveness. Far from being cheated, far from being denied justice, far from being defrauded of your wages, you, the sons and daughters of God, you the little ones, the ones with little fame and no renown, you are the hidden power and glory of Christ. For you are the signs of contradiction, you are the hidden Christ tucked deep down within the guts of all that is human. You are Go's salt, God's seed, and God's productive toil for the salvation of those who are lost bt nev-ertheless destined, just as you are to share in His limitless and measureless Love. Blessings, Fr. 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

18--Samuel Hollis
20--Mary Katherine Gough

October Birthdays

6--Jarrod Malone, Holly Hollis
10--Jacques Williams III
13--Vicki Leonard
17--Kelly Hollis
20--Dorothea Melton



Laugh of the Week

Nine-year-old Jeremy’s mother asked him what he had learned in Sunday school. “Well, Mom, our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When he got to the Red Sea, he and his engineers built a pontoon bridge and all the people walked across safely. Then he used his walkie-talkie to radio broadcast headquarters and call in an air strike. They sent in bombers to blow up the bridge, and all the Israelites were saved.” “Now, Jeremy, is that really what your teacher taught you?” his mother asked. “Well, no, Mom, but if I told it the way the teacher did, you’d never believe it.

Mass Intentions

September 17--Bud and Joseph Hamilton, Robert and Elizabeth Johnson, Theresa Hill,, Mary Ruth Simmons

September 24--Bern Tooley

October 1--Angela Clark

October 8--Emma Lou Marrett

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: Randy Taylor, Charlie Brown Sr, Steven Moorman, Rachel Mattingly, Philip Moorman, Jr., Jim Fennewald , Wynter Keller, Larry Clark, Ruth Coble, Gloria Savet, Shaun Winchell, 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.

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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.



Blessed Sacrament Chapel
September 24--Diocesan Response
Fund Commitment Sunday
November 4--Black Catholic Mass at
SSC 11:30



September 17--\$897.50
Budget--\$1094
MTD Collection--\$3,431.61
MTD Budget--\$3,282
YTD Collection--\$14,202.43
YTD Budget--\$13,128

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

Once I gave my three-year-old niece a certain toy for Christmas. When she opened it, she was happy. Shortly thereafter her five-year old sister opened another present from me: the same toy, along with some play jewelry. The three-year-old cried out: “That’s not fair! Why’d she get the jewelry, too?!”

Let’s face it: there’s something about God’s grace in our religion which bugs us. We love to look at others’ blessings and cry out: “That’s not fair!” Catholicism is not fair in the sense that it is a religion founded on God’s grace which is *unmerited* favor. God pours his mercy, love, and divine life upon us not because we’re good but because He is infinitely good.

If you think the “not fair” quality of grace is easy to accept, consider how typically angry we get when we hear the parable of the workers who get paid way more than they deserve. The hyper-generous landowner says to the indignant hard workers, “Are you envious because I am generous?” Well, yes, they are, and so are we! Therefore, we *have* to reckon with this painful truth in order to move into the divine sphere of gifts, which is the world of Christ and his Church. Then we are able to move beyond a tit-for-tat world and into one where gifts are poured forth on those who don’t deserve it — namely, upon us. — *Father John Muir*

HORRIFIED

People in general are equally horrified at hearing the Christian religion doubted and at seeing it practiced

MINISTRY SCHEDULE

LECTORS

September 24: Alexis Hatchett, Misty Sanford
October 1: Layson Brooks, Sarah Malone
October 8: Wayne Stephens, Jacques Williams

Eucharistic Ministers

September 24: Cindy Clark, Vivian Higgs, Katie Goins
October 1: Greg Richardson, Lori Robinson, Greg Gough
October 8: Janet Clark, Charlene Meadows, Holly Hollis

Collection & Gifts

September 24: Campbell Family
October 1: Fain Family
October 8: Michelle Jones, Emma Latta

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 prayers.”

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 excerpts 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 interested in hosting a session or joining one, please contact Janet Clark or Sister Jeannette.

The Invitation to the Vineyard

I have been working since I was 17, and in that time, I’ve encountered my fair share of bosses who don’t like being, well, fair.

There was the retail gig that paid me less than the official minimum wage because I was a minor and scheduled me for long shifts because it meant cheaper labor. There was the restaurant manager who tried to convince me to leave seventh period early so I could waitress on a busy dinner shift (totally illegal, by the way). There was the unpaid internship with the editor who had no sense of work/life balance.

Our resumes are all full of these experiences — it’s capitalism, after all. It conditions us to look out for ourselves, because we know no one else will. And it breeds an attitude of suspicion that often blooms into jealousy when we encounter the reckless mercy of God.

Most of us work hard for what we have in this life, and so we make the mistake of thinking we deserve the good things that come our way. That’s all right and good when we’re talking about a just wage. But sometimes we get our lines blurred and we begin to think we deserve, or have done something to earn, the salvation offered by Christ. I am not the laborer who has borne the heat of long hours in the sun. I am the straggler, the lost one, the idler at the marketplace as the day draws to a close.

“As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts.” — Isaiah 55:9

By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Readings for the Week

Monday: Ezr 1:1-6/Ps 126:1-6/
Lk 8:16-18
Tuesday: Ezr 6:7-8, 12, 14-20/Ps 122:1--
5/Lk 8:19-21
Wednesday: Ezr 9:5-9/Tb 13:2, 3-4, 7-8/
Lk 9:1-6
Thursday: Hg 1:1-8/Ps 149:1-6 and 9b/
Lk 9:7-9
Friday: Dn 7:9-10, 13-14/Ps 138:1--5/
Jn 1:47-51
Saturday: Zec 2:5-9, 14-15/Jer 31:10-13/
Lk 9:43-45

Observances for the Week of September 24

Tuesday: Sts. Cosmas and Damian,
Wednesday: St. Vincent de Paul, Priest
Thursday: St. Wenceslaus, Martyr; St. Lawrence Ruiz and Companions, Martyrs
Friday: Sts. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels
Saturday: St. Jerome, Priest and Doctor

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Thanks to Colin Nelson (See Mark 12:41-44) 10-05-2007
DUE TO A MISUNDERSTANDING, WIDOW HARRIS PUT TERMITES IN THE COLLECTION PLATE

SEEK THE LORD

In today’s opening reading, Isaiah urges us to “seek the Lord” who is “near” and can be “found” (Is. 55:6). Then Isaiah says God’s ways are as high above our ways “as the heavens are above the earth” (Is. 55:9). So we search, not because God is hiding, but because our tendencies are so different from God’s ways that we get lost.

How are God’s ways so high above our ways? The example Isaiah gives us is that God’s way is to be generous in “forgiving” (Is.55:7). And our way? We try to be “fair.” You hurt me, so then I hurt you back, just as hard. Then, of course, you....And on it goes.

In today’s Gospel Jesus teaches that God is not “fair” like that. Instead God is so generous we can hardly understand it. The same wage for one hour as for a whole day of work? Not fair! “Seek the Lord” and we might find a God who calls us to be, not fair, but generous beyond expectations.
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WHO IS LIKE GOD?

Michael--which means: “Who is like God?”-- is the champion of the primacy of God, of his transcendence and power. Michael fights to reestablish divine justice; he defends the People of God from their enemies and above all from the arch-enemy par excellence, the devil. And St. Michael triumphs because in him it is God who acts. The sculpture of St. Michael reminds us, therefore, that evil is vanquished, the accuser is unmasked, his head is crushed, because salvation was fulfilled once and for all by the blood of Christ. Even if the devil is always trying to scratch the face of the archangel and the face of man, God is stronger; his is the victory and his salvation is offered to every human being. --Pope Francis

Do you call upon St. Michael to defend you in your battle against evil? And do you allow God to go before you in all you do, helping you to fight and to stand firm when you are in trouble?