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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
jthomas@sscobo.org

Parochial Vicar: Father Shibu Cheriankunnel
moc_scheriyankunnel@sscobo.org

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



Sunday's Readings:

First Reading:

I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul. (Is 61:10)

Psalm:

My soul rejoices in my God. (Is 61:10b)

Second Reading:

May the God of peace make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thes 5:23)

Gospel:

"I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." (Jn 1:23)

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001,

December 17, 2023 3rd Sunday of Advent

In all circumstances, give thanks. (1Thess. 5)



My Dear Parishioners:

If you go out into the Internet and search for thoughts from notable people about Christmas you will find lots of uplifting and heartwarming thoughts about the holidays, thoughts from people of faith as well as thoughts from people of no particular faith at all rejoicing over the coming of Christmas. Here are but just a few of them:

Said one: “Christmas is a necessity. There has to be at least one day of the year to remind us that we're here for something else besides ourselves.”
Said another: “I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round, as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people less fortunate than ourselves whom we should regard as if they really were fellow passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys.”
A third said: “Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmas-time.”
One of our famous American authors said: “This is the message of Christmas: We are never alone.”

Our Church reminds us Advent is the time of the coming of God into our humanity, into your personal lives, and into mine too. It is that mysterious time of the year when we recognize the tension between what already IS and what is yet to be; between what we ARE and what we CAN BE; between what has been accomplished and what remains unfinished. The birth of Jesus Christ empowers us to move beyond what has been, and to move into God’s kingdom here on earth. We are, after all is said and done, called by God not to usher in His kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. To say it quite simply, we are to be concerned about what is happening now, not just what we hope will happen in the future.

For us, as Christians, we see that a little Child lifts us up to heaven... and heaven, in the birth of that Christ, stoops to earth. The message of Christmas is that the visible material world is now, by the birth of God’s Son among us, bound to the invisible spiritual world. What humans regard as merely material is now invested with the presence of God. It is God’s world, not just ours. My mother once told me: "Happiness is something to do, someone to love, and something to hope for." If you and I can live lives dedicated to making the lives of others a little bit better than they once were, if we can find ourselves giving love to the loveless, and being loved in return, and if we can live each day fully in the Presence of Christ, or rather with His Presence reaching and touching others through us, that is no small thing to have happened to any man or woman.

Here are some personal qualities that should identify who we are and what we are as Catholics who celebrate the Birth of Christ and who receive Him in Holy Communion:

- 1 - We are known for attending Mass and receiving Jesus Christ into our souls every Sunday, and perhaps even known to celebrate daily Masses from time to time.
- 2 - We are known to be moral persons, respected for having high standards of ethics, morality, and character. There should be plenty of evidence by which others could identify us as persons of principle and goodness in the way we conduct our affairs, our businesses, and in the way we treat others. People should be able to take us at our word, without really needing a contract to enforce our agreements and commitments.

3- We are known to be prayerful persons. I don't mean that we ostentatiously pray in public so that we will be seen, but rather that being prayerful persons we have a certain aura about us - an atmosphere of serenity and peace surrounding us - a spirit of peace and calmness that people recognize as coming only from being a deeply prayerful person.

4 - We have an attitude, a habit of being, that is kind, gentle, respectful, sensitive to others, compassionate and caring toward others. We have an attitude that can be seen in the eyes of Mother Theresa of Calcutta, a face that reveals the presence of the heart of Christ, a smile and a tone of voice that can only come from being close to Christ.

5 – We are known as persons who are sensitive to the presence of God in all things, in events, and in the seeming coincidences that occur in our lives and in our worlds, coincidences that point to the activities of God in our lives and in our world.

Today's readings from Sacred Scripture have several significant themes within them. One of them has to do with identity, John the Baptist’s identity, Christ’s identity, as well as your identity and mine. John the Baptist had a firm grasp of who he was not, as well as an inspired grasp of who he was... and what his life was all about. Jesus, baptized by John and anointed by God’s Holy Spirit began His public ministry with these inaugural words: The spirit of the Lord has been given to me; for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord’s year of favor.

These words were taken from the great Old Testament prophet Isaiah. Jesus was quoting them because they were at the core of Isaiah’s prophecies concerning the Messiah who was to come. This was Jesus’ inaugural address, the one He delivered in the Synagogue of Capernaum when He made His first public appearance after having spent forty days and forty nights in the desert wrestling with Satan over His true identity. Evidently Jesus didn’t have much of an identity problem. Nor should we. After all, He suffered and died for you and me in order that we might see and understand ourselves in an entirely new way, in a radically different way than the world sees us. Because of Jesus Christ we now know that we are loved and being saved sinners. Because God the Son was born into our humanity we are endowed by our Father in heaven with certain gifts and characteristics that no power in the heavens or on earth can take from us. To whom, then, is your life dedicated? To what is your life dedicated? What part do you play in the great scheme of things? Would the people who know you succeed in identifying who you are, what you stand for, and what your life is all about? Perhaps in all of your gift-giving this forthcoming Christmas you could give the Christ child a gift He would treasure forever, namely a healthy self-awareness and a healthy self-identity, one in which the presence of Jesus can be found. Father John

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 16--Yulanda Williams
- 18--Robert Johnson
- 22--Yvette Tarver
- 23--Greg Richardson
- 24--Susan Mutter
- 25--Father Shibu
- 30--Sloane Campbell



Advent/Christmas donation ideas

St. Benedict Shelter

- 2 in 1 shower gel/shampoo (Dollar Tree has this product)
- Socks
- Brown Jersey gloves

International Center (on 9th Street)

- Warm clothing, especially coats and outer wear.

Elderly

- Send card, call them

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

God sends a John the Baptist into every person’s life — someone who prepares His way, who calls out His truth. Look for the John the Baptist in your life. Pray you can be this person for someone

Mass Intentions

- December 10--Bern Tooley
- December 17--Sandra Brown
- December 24 (10 am)--Donald Moorman
- December 24 (7 pm)--Kenneth Higgs
- December 31--Margaret O’Bryan Mills

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, Jim Fennwald, Steven Moorman, Rachel Mattingly, Gina Kirby, Philip Moorman, Jr., Yuri Phen, Larry Clark, Ruth Coble, 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, Larry Conder, Andy Evans, Gary Moorman,, Wynter Keller, If you know of anyone who is in need of prayer or visitation, please notify the office.

IMP—Kroger

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- Blessed Sacrament Chapel**
- December 17--Decorate Church after 10 am Mass
- December 24-- 10 am Mass 4th Sunday of Advent 7 pm--Christmas Vigil Mass
- December 31--10 am Mass



- Dec. 10--\$1,665.50
- Budget--\$1094
- MTD Collection--\$6,201.20
- MTD Budget--\$2,188
- YTD Collection--\$32,728.51
- YTD Budget--\$26,226

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

Why do we believe in Jesus and the Catholic Church? Why should we continue to do so? We’ve never seen him face-to-face (at least not most of us, I assume). Most of us have never had mystical visions of angels or saints. We live in the same world as our atheist and secularists friends. Why do we believe in Christ if we’ve never seen him?

The simple, symbolic answer the Gospel presents to us this week might surprise us: we believe because of John the Baptist. Early in John’s Gospel we hear: “There was a man sent from God, his name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him.” The Baptist powerfully announces Jesus. This is a historical fact, and it is also now a pattern at work in our lives.

John the Baptist stands for the entirety of the old covenant, everything entrusted to the Jewish people. And yet he prophetically opens the door to something entirely new in Jesus, to the revival and fulfillment of God’s promises. In every generation, and in every human life, God continues to do this. He has done it through people named Augustine, Francis, Catherine, Theresa, and countless others. In my life, the Baptist’s spirit has come through persons named Eric, Paul, Mary, and Ron. I challenge you to name at least three people through whom God has announced the coming of Jesus in your life. Consciously thank God for their testimony. And let’s commit ourselves to listening to the spirit of John the Baptist testify again this week so that we might more strongly believe in the light. — Father John Muir

MINISTRY SCHEDULE

LECTORS

December 17:

December 24:

(10 am)

December 24:

(7 pm)

December 31:

Greg Gough, Barbara Bisel

Jacques Williams, Wayne Stephens

Layson Brooks, Sarah Malone

Alexis Hatchett, Katie Goins

December 17:

December 24:

(10 am)

December 24:

December 31:

Charlene Meadows, Misty Sanford, Cindy Clark

Barbara Bisel, Katie Goins, Denise Richardson

Greg Gough, Vivian Higgs, Janet Clark

Cindy Clark, Sarah Malone, Greg Richardson

Collection & Gifts

December 17:

December 24:

December 24:

December 31:

Burnell Hamilton, Steven Coble

Kathi Skidd and Emma Latta-Malone Family

Barbara Hammond, Wonet Taylor

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICES

Dec. 17 St. Pius X 2 pm

Dec. 17 St. Stephen 2 pm

Dec. 19 Precious Blood 6 pm

Testimony

When my grandmother heard the news that my cousin had fallen from a second-story window, she immediately went and washed her hair.

Grandma had been sitting alone in her house, listening to the morning radio when the announcer shared a news bulletin stating that the previous night, a little boy with the same name as her grandson, living in the same community and of the same age, had fallen onto the pavement from a window on the second floor of his house. He had been rushed to the hospital but miraculously survived his injuries.

She thought she was hallucinating and wanted to look pretty when the “men in white coats” came to take her away. Thus, the hair-washing. As it happens, the whole story was true — it *was* her grandson, but this was before the age of mobile phones and had happened so late at night that his parents had been unable to notify any family members before the whole thing showed up on the news.

It wasn’t until my grandmother received a phone call from another relative corroborating the story that she realized it hadn’t been a figment of her imagination. What a waste of styled hair, no hospital committal for her that day.

There are certain truths that we cannot accept unless they are supported by the testimony of others. We find them to be unbelievable without the reassurance of another person whispering, “It’s okay. I see it, too.” This is the value of testimony, and the purpose of John the Baptist and every saint who ever died with the name of Jesus Christ on their lips. And this is the sacred duty of all the baptized, to give testimony with our words and our actions. How will you testify today?
“He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.” — John 1:8
By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Prayer for Advent 3

Dear Lord, Give us boldness as we move through the motions of the holiday season, to reflect and remind those around us of Your deep and abiding love for them. Allow them to encounter Your love, through us. Amen.

Readings for the Week

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

Saturday:

Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19/Mt 1:18-25

Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25/Ps 71:3-6, 16-17/Lk 1:5-25

Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-6/Lk 1:26-38

Sg 2:8-14/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21/Lk 1:39-45

1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-8/Lk 1:46-56

Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5, 8-10 and 14/Lk 1:57-66

Observances for the Week of December 17

Thursday:

Saturday:

St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church

St. John of Kanty, Priest

THE GIFT OF EUCHARIST

Pope Francis often speaks about what Jesus does for us in the Eucharist. Each time we come to communion, our God is present to us, and the bread and wine we offer are transformed by the Holy Spirit into his Body and Blood, just as we too are transformed more fully into his body. The Eucharist nourishes us and strengthens us to do God’s work in the world. His gift to us becomes our gift to God--this gift that we can never fully understand or repay; but which we can come to appreciate more and more and use to God’s greater glory.

How often do I think of what Christ does for us in the Eucharist?

REJOICE

Isaiah proclaims truly good news to us! God’s coming brings not sadness, guilt, fear, wrath, or condemnation. No, God’s coming is a source of comfort and joy. Saying it once is not enough, for today’s readings are full of joy. Mary’s Magnificat substitutes for our psalm today, and our second reading encourage us to rejoice, to give thanks and praise. This is the root meaning of the Greek word for eucharist. We are urged to rejoice and give thanks, because the coming of the Lord brings joy, healing, liberty, release, vindication. It makes the very earth spring up with new life! Good tidings.

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Laugh of the Week Time’s A Wastin’

A minister waited in line to have his car filled with gas before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars in front and in back of him. Finally the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump. “Reverend ,” said the young man, “sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip.” The minister chuckled, “I know exactly what you mean. It’s the same in my business.”

I am John the Baptist:

A man who thought he was John the Baptist was disturbing the neighborhood, so for public safety, he was committed. He was put in a room with another crazy one. The new man began his routine, “I am John the Baptist! Jesus Christ has sent me!” The other guy looked at him and declared, “I did not send you!”