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# Blessed Sacrament

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

[www.blessedsacramentchapel.org](http://www.blessedsacramentchapel.org) or email at [pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org](mailto: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](mailto:jthomas@sscobo.org)

**Parochial Vicar:** Father Shibu Cheriankunnel  
[moc\\_scheriyankunnel@sscobo.org](mailto:moc_scheriyankunnel@sscobo.org)

**Parish Life Coordinator:** Sr Jeannette Fennwald,  
SSND [pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org](mailto:pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org)



**March 17, 2024 5th Sunday of Lent**

**I WILL BE THEIR GOD;  
THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.--Jer.31**

## First Reading:

All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more. (Jer 31:34)

## Psalm:

Create a clean heart in me, O God. (Ps 51)

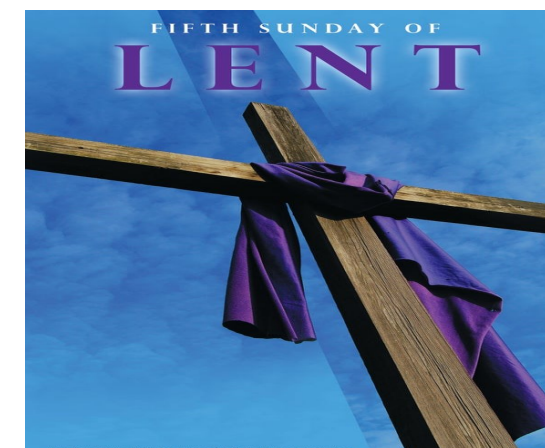
## Second Reading:

Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him. (Heb 5:8-9)

## Gospel:

"Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit." (Jn 12:24)

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



My Dear Parishioners:

.The football game is over and the sportscaster is interviewing the coach of the winning team. They talk knowledgably about the players and critical plays and then the sportscaster asks the coach the big question: “What was the turning point in the game?” Two friends are sharing a whole lot about their lives. The conversation is warm and deep. One of them had just learned the heartbreaking news that his wife was going to divorce him. There were tears as the entire saga of the marriage was reviewed and then his friend asks; “What was the critical moment, the beginning of the end?” Or it could be that a retired general is being interviewed on television about a war in which he was involved. The planning, the execution, and the lost and won battles were discussed, along with the personalities of the critical officers and men that were involved. Finally the interview centers on the hinge point, the defining moment, when victory was assured.

In the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the centerpiece in each one of them is the passion and death of Jesus Christ. All aspects of the four gospels point to that one defining event, not only in our lives but also in the world’s history. The defining event for them all is the final week of Christ’s life is. For the three Sundays leading up to Palm Sunday the Church presents us with gospel accounts taken from St. John’s Gospel. St. John’s Gospel is not arranged according to chronological events but rather according to themes. From all of the miracles performed by Jesus, John selected seven. He presents them as the Seven Great Signs, signs that are miracles revealing Christ as the divine Son of God, God’s Word made flesh, signs revealing God’s divinity made present to us in the humanity of Jesus Christ. The Seven Signs are the wedding feast at Cana where Jesus turns water into wine. He is able to change one substance into another. The healing of the nobleman’s son is next, where, in response to faith, Jesus is able to give life to someone who has died. The healing of the paralyzed man then follows. Jesus is able to restore full life to those who are spiritually paralyzed. Next is the feeding of the five thousand, revealing that God’s caring and nurturing love is limitless. That miracle is followed by Jesus walking on water, revealing that nothing can keep Our Blessed Lord from those who are in peril and in great need. The healing of the man born blind confounds the Pharisees and those who are spiritually blind while at the same time Jesus gives light and sight to those who, in faith, want to see, who want to see our world in God’s Light. The last is the raising of Lazarus from the dead, a powerful miracle that reveals the power of God in a way that none can deny. That was the critical moment in Christ’s life, the tipping point that brought about the inevitable conclusion. As you recall, in Christ’s life there was a gradual build-up of resentment, fear, hatred, and rejection of Jesus Christ. There were a lot of events that culminated in this one great miracle, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The political and religious leadership were now totally threatened. This miracle could not be ignored. Christ’s popularity with the crowds was now so great that the leaders were facing the complete loss of their privileged positions and their power.

It needs to be pointed out that it was not the Jewish people who were threatened by Jesus and wanted to put Him to death. No, it was the Roman and Jewish authorities, the people holding power and privilege who wanted to do away with him. After all, we must remember that the first Christians were, for the most part, Jews. St. Luke was a Greek. He was not one of the Twelve Apostles, they were all Jews. So, too, were Mary and Joseph. It is a great injustice to claim that the Jewish people were responsible for Our Blessed Lord’s crucifixion and death. We all know full well that people on top of our political and economic systems will commit great evil in order to protect their power. Some use their privileged positions to commit terrible acts of abuse. The headlines of our newspapers are filled with more than enough examples of that. History, too, particularly the history of WWII, and many other events in human history as well, point to what the human heart is capable of doing in terms of evil. This is particularly true with dictators.

The Old Testament provides many examples of God’s holy prophets being rejected and put to death. The fact that they were holy people did not guarantee them safety or protection. They performed miracles, astonishing miracles that could only come about by the power of God, and yet these prophets were done in by powerful people who were threatened by them. So here in today’s Gospel account we find more and more of the Jews clamoring for Jesus, seeking him out, and coming to the realization that his teachings were far more authoritative than the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the members of the Jewish elite. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead his popularity ratings soared through the roof. From the perspective of those in power and control of the people, something had to be done... and it had to be done NOW! So they made the critical decision -- they had to kill Jesus of Nazareth. This, of course, was something Jesus knew would happen. He had seen it coming for quite some time. He knew that by bringing Lazarus out of the tomb he himself would be entering a tomb.

The shortest passage in the New Testament is one you just heard. Jesus wept. It is also one of the most profound. Well, why did he weep? Obviously it was not for Lazarus, for Jesus knew the happiness Lazarus and his family were about to receive. Were not those tears the tears of one who knows he has been completely rejected? The agony in the Garden of Gethsemane begins here. We find Jesus on the Mt. of Olives weeping. Lazarus was buried in a new tomb... Jesus is about to be buried in a new tomb. Both had great stones rolled in front of their entrances. Both bodies were wrapped in linens. How can we miss the parallels? Jesus knew he was to see the tomb from the inside. The Lazarus event reported here was an event lasting three days. It foreshadowed Christ’s own three days in the tomb. Now we see that the raising of Lazarus was the most crucial event in Christ’s entire ministry. It was the defining moment, the turning point, the beginning of the end. “Unbind him and let him go free” was Christ’s command to the onlookers. Freedom, our freedom, our freedom to do good, to freely choose to do beautiful things for God, is the reason for it all. Christ emptied Lazarus’ tomb so he could change places with him. Divinity took on our humanity so that our humanity could take on his divinity. Because of Christ we are no longer entombed in sin. We are freed of Satan’s grip and are no longer destined to end up in hell. Because of Jesus Christ we are able now, as St. Paul declares, to “walk in the glorious freedom of the children of God.” Because of God’s grace, we are Lazarus. One day we will hear those same words: “Unbind . . . Set free . . . “ Blessings, Fr. John

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT



**PRAYER**  
**FASTING**  
**ALMSGIVING**



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 2-- Marsha Allen
- 6-- Elizabeth Hatchett, Jax Malone
- 7--Britney Carmona
- 18--Jean Higgs
- 24--Clint Campbell
- 25--Carol Hatchett
- 31--Cameron Malone Frank Fulton,



Blind man and the Dog: A blind man is walking down the street with his guide dog one day. They come to a busy intersection and the dog, ignoring the high volume of traffic zooming by on the street, leads the blind man right out into the thick of the traffic. This is followed by the screech of tires as panicked drivers try desperately not to run the pair down. Horns blaring around them, the blind man and the dog finally reach the safety of the sidewalk on the other side of the street, and the blind man pulls a cookie out of his coat pocket, which he offers to the dog. A passerby, having observed the near fatal incident, can’t control his amazement and says to the blind man, “Why on earth are you rewarding your dog with a cookie? He nearly got you killed!” The blind man turns partially in his direction and replies, “To find out where his head is, so I can kick his rear end

Mass Intentions

- March 3--Hugh Moorman
- March 10--Freddy Payne
- March 17--Charlie Winstead
- March 24--David “Smokey” Millard
- March 28--Freddy Payne
- March 31--Fennewald Family

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: Jamie Bisel, Larry Allen, Charlie Brown Sr, Jim Fennewald, Dana and Danny Maloney, Steven Moorman, Rachel Mattingly, Philip Moorman, Jr., Larry Clark, Ruth Coble, Shaun Winchell, Jeeriah Cruite, Carol Hatchett, Teresa Woods, Jordan Gertisen, Buddy Adcock, 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.

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Coming Events



Blessed Sacrament Chapel

- March 22--Fish Fry--BSC 5-7 pm
- March 26--Chrism Mass 6:30 pm Sports Center
- March 28--Holy Thursday 7 pm Mass
- March 29--Good Friday service 6 pm
- March 31--Easter Mass--10 am



- March 10--\$1,913
- Budget--\$1,094
- MTD Collection--\$3,814.60
- MTD Budget--\$2,188
- YTD Collection--\$51,051.04
- YTD Budget--\$42,354

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

A middle-aged woman sat on the couch in my parish office and recounted to me a shocking list of terrible calamities in her life: addictions, terminal illnesses, financial loss, broken relationships, and so on. She smiled as she did so. “Please forgive me,” I asked, “but you seem to be smiling as you share this.” She said, “Father John, I am totally overwhelmed. But I’m smiling because I just can’t wait to see what good things God does with this mess.” She expected God would manifest His glory when she most needed it.

This week in the Gospel, God speaks from heaven for the third and final time in Jesus’ earthly ministry. It’s at a tough moment. Gentiles seek Jesus, who announces his terrible suffering, and then boldly prays, “Father, glorify your name!” John then writes: Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.” Was the task of drawing the whole non-Jewish world to himself overwhelming? Or was it the terrible specter of crucifixion? Whatever it was, the crushing weight triggers his turning to the Father with an unshakeable expectation of divine glory to burst through. And indeed, it did on Easter Sunday. In our burdens, our greatest strength is to turn to God and boldly ask Him for His glory.

Lenten challenge: This week, I invite you to list out everything which is a burden to you. Write it down. Then add these words: “Father, glorify Your name in all these things!” Put that paper in your pocket or purse when you come to Holy Week liturgies next week. You might smile at the most unlikely times.

— Father John Muir

MINISTRY SCHEDULE	
Lectors	
<u>March 17</u>	Alexis Hatchett, Greg Gough;
<u>March 24:</u>	Leland Herzog, Misty `Sanford
	<u>Passion:</u> Greg Gough, Sarah Malone
<u>Holy Thursday:</u>	Kathi Skid, Barbara Bisel
Eucharistic Ministers	
<u>March 17:</u>	Katie Goins, Misty Sanford, Deanne Richardson
<u>March 24:</u>	Vivian Higgs, Cindy Clark Janet Clark
<u>Holy Thursday:</u>	Janet Clark, Cindy Clark,
Collection & Gifts	
<u>March 17:</u>	Dee Brashear, Yvonne Mundy
<u>March 24</u>	Connie Clary, Michelle Jones
<u>March 31:</u>	Jacques and Whitney Wiliams and sons

LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE	
March 17	Lourdes 2 pm
March 18	Immaculate 6 pm
March 19	Precious Blood 6 pm
March 24	St. Stephen Cath 2 pm
Every Wed.	Sorgho 5 pm



**Fish Fry**  
**March 22 5 pm**  
**Invite family and friends.**  
**Delicious food**

**Lost in the Crowd**

I write my phone number on my kids’ arms when we go into large crowds at summer festivals, in case we get separated. If you think this makes me sound like a neurotic person with an overactive imagination who watches too many true crime documentaries, you would be correct. I am all of those things.

However, I am also practical, and I’ve endured moments of panic after looking up and briefly not being able to locate a child who has wandered off or lagged behind. The phone number, scrawled across their sunscreen-streaked skin, is a safeguard, however insignificant. It’s something they can hold up to show an adult, something they can point to and say, “This is where I need to be. Help me get here.”

When I reflect on my own life, it occurs to me that I was born lost. We all were. It was only in Eden that a human being ever knew what it was to be at home. In Eden, I would imagine, the feeling of safety was so natural that it was only noticed after it was gone. But original sin came like a noisy crowd to bear us away from the place we needed to be, and since that time, our human lives have played out against a backdrop of insecurity and unfamiliarity. We are cold and alone and confused. And God, our heartbroken parent, never stops seeking us, never stops calling our names.

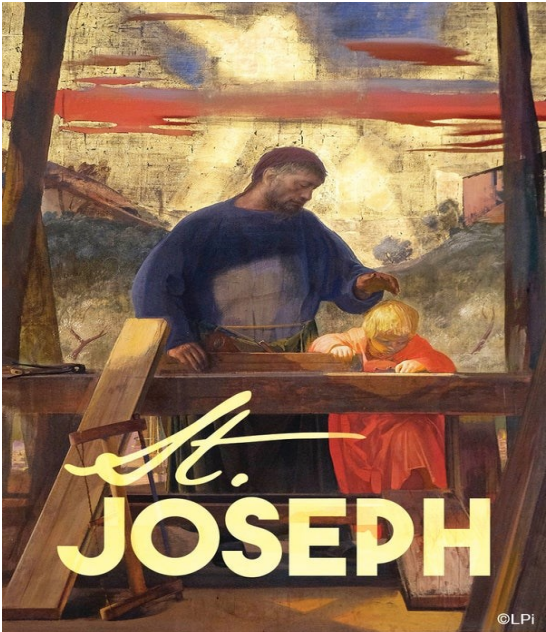
Baptism, the etching of God’s law onto our heart and soul, is not a phone number written on our arms. It’s something far better — it’s a homing signal, planted deep within. And it will lead us back to where we need to be.

*“But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” — Jeremiah 31:33*

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Readings for the Week	
Monday:	Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62/Ps 23:1-6/Jn 8:1-11
Tuesday:	2 Sm 7:4-5, 12-16/Ps 89:2--5, 27/Rom 4:13-22/Mt 1:16-24
Wednesday:	Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95/Dn 3:52-56/Jn 8:31-42
Thursday:	Gn 17:3-9/Ps 105:4-9/Jn 8:51-59
Friday:	Jer 20:10-13/Ps 18:2-7/Jn 10:31-42
Saturday:	Ez 37:21-28/Jer 31:10-13/Jn 11:45-56

Observances of Week of March 17	
Monday:	St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop
Tuesday:	St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Saturday:	St. Turibius of Mogrovejo,
Next Sunday:	Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, Holy Week begins



**THE NEW COVENANT**

Today’s first reading is an enormously important passage, not only in the history of the Jewish people, but also for us as disciples of Jesus, who see in it a foreshadowing of the Christian dispensation. The prophet announces that God has chosen to forgive the people, and that as a sign of divine forgiveness a new covenant will be established. Contrasting the new covenant with the one made with Moses on Mount Sinai, Jeremiah says that the new covenant will be written in the people’s hearts rather than on tablets of stone. No longer will the community’s tradition be the sole bearer of the covenant; henceforth, God will speak directly and personally to each individual forgiving sin and calling for a return to God in faithfulness. No longer will mere outward compliance with the dictates of the Law suffice; henceforth, God asks for an obedience that springs from the depths of one’s heart.

Precisely that kind of obedience is highlighted in today’s second reading, where the author of the Letter to the Hebrews describes Jesus as the mediator of the new covenant whose obedience has made him the source of salvation for all who, in turn, obey him.

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**St. Joseph, spouse of Blessed Virgin Mary**

*Let us think of St. Joseph, who watched over Mary and Jesus, of his care for the family God had entrusted to him, and of the attentive gaze with which he guided it to avoid the perils on the way.*

*St. Joseph is a great model for all of us as we care for and protect the people in our lives. What can we learn from his example of uncomplaining obedience to God’s call and his wholehearted readiness to serve?*