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Blessed Sacrament

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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 Cheriannunel
moc_scheriyannunel@sscobo.org
Parish Life Coordinator: Sr Jeannette Fennewald,
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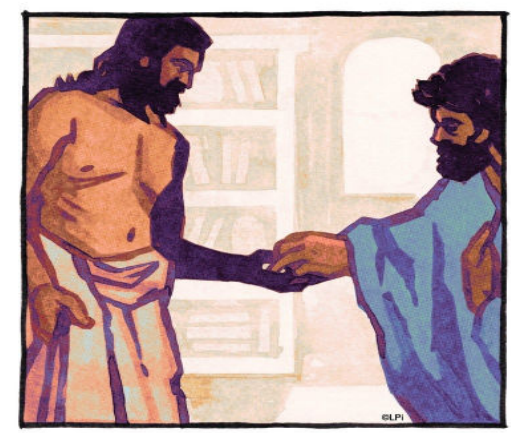
April 7, 2024 2nd Sunday of Easter
Who indeed is the victor over the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, 1 John 5:5

First Reading:
The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. (Acts 4:32)

Psalm:
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, his love is everlasting. (Ps 118)

Second Reading:
For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. (1 Jn 5:3-4)

Gospel:
On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." (Jn 20:19)
Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.



Curious . . . Curiouser . . . Most Curious . . . The Most Curious of all . . . Mercy. Most people believe that they can forgive someone who offends them, particularly if: they are sorry; they apologize; they make up for the offense (pay the damages); they intend not to offend again; and the offense wasn't so bad or the hurt very prolonged. That is, at least, one time. Some people do not believe in forgiving at all. Either they reject the offender and write them off or they exact vengeance. The well of human mercy tends to be shallow, partly because we are so vulnerable and easily harmed or offended. We tend to be defensive or vengeful. Is it any surprise, then, that Jesus' teaching on loving one's enemies and forgiving one's siblings seventy times seven times a day are so largely ignored. "Who can forgive sins, except God alone?" they ask in scripture. It is a well-formed and intelligent question. The biblical answer is that whoever desires forgiveness from God must forgive by God's measure, for the measure we use is the measure by which we will receive. Interestingly, there is not, as far as I can tell, any consideration whatever of anyone deserving God's mercy. God's love and mercy are never deserved. Jesus taught that our love and mercy should be the same.

Curious. For over 30 years, I have been absolving the sins, which people confess with sorrow and intention of avoidance in the future. For the last several years, I have been very aware that this means ministering Jesus taking the sins and guilt upon his own crucified body for their deliverance. On the front side of the crucifixion this was done by the Roman executioners. On the Resurrection side of the crucifixion, Jesus authorized and empowered the Apostles and their successors and assistants to be ministers of his taking away the sins of the world. I have learned that the Lord wants to relieve each person of the burden of their sins and all the effects of the sins committed against them. He offers his own Risen body and blood as restitution and healing to redeem us from the effects of sin. The Cross is the unloading dock, set up for the transfer. It is as private as a one on one meeting with Christ. It is as crowded as necessary to uproot the tangle of each sin. The justice of God is the Divine Act to exterminate sin personally. Its only limit is the freedom required for love to be true. As no one is forced to love, no one is forced to forgive. Hell is not the failure to be forgiven. It is the failure, the refusal to forgive, that is, the refusal to love.

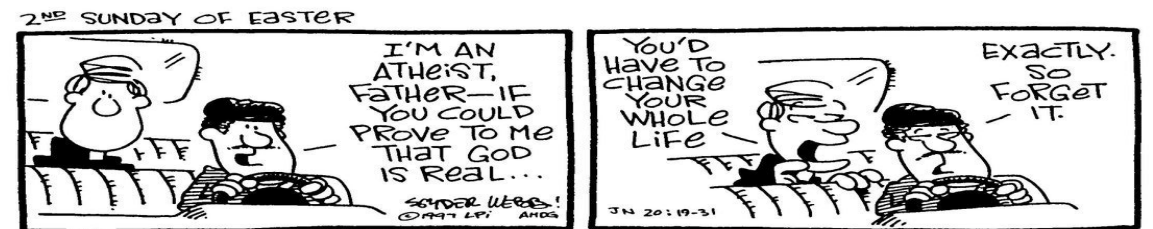
Curiouser. "Who can love except God alone?" This would make a fine biblical question, but it is not found in the bible. No one can truly love except by God's loving them and giving them a communion in Divine love. Mercy works the same way, for it is an aspect of the same mystery. Left to my own resources I am quickly emptied of kindness. If I tap into the flood of God's love being poured into my heart by Christ, I have an inexhaustible supply. I can only be a minister or conveyer of God's love if I let my will be conformed to Christ. Unless I say yes to being personally transformed by God's mercy and love, I cannot be its vessel. To be a bearer I must be an undeserving beneficiary. Just as God teaches me to love, so God teaches me how to forgive and to be forgiven. I learn it all at the foot of the Cross.

Most Curious. Jesus is by Divine Choice a co-defendant and co-plaintiff in every human life. This is an aspect of the mystery of the Incarnation. "Whatever you do to the least of these..." As co-defendant he offers himself to bear the guilt. As co-plaintiff he offers pardon to the offender. More than any other, because God is Love, Christ is the great Meddler in human interrelations. Who does he think he is? Without so much as a 'by your leave' or 'beg your pardon' he intervenes to reconcile us to each other and to God and this lands him square on the cross. This is the justice of God. This is Righteousness. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, the Great Lover and friend of all.

The Most Curious of all. God's mercy is ours for the asking. It is not deserved, it is not earned, and it is not something to which we have a right. Yet it is ours, freely given, always poured out, running over. What we have been given, we are to give. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us. . . ." I remind everyone that we hear confessions every Saturday morning 9:30 – 11:00. Easter Blessings! Father John

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITIONS

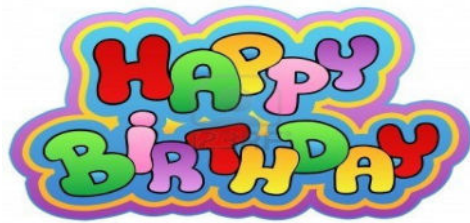
Today was once called "Sunday in white," because the church was full of newly baptized Christians wearing their white baptismal garments. Another old title, best forgotten, is "Low Sunday." There's nothing low about this festive Sunday in Easter, the eighth day since the first "Alleluia" rang out. In Christian tradition, the number eight is a symbol of fulfillment, transition, breaking through the seven-day rhythm of life to a new way of being. That is why many baptismal fonts have eight sides. The greatest feasts of our calendar are always extended for eight days, called an "octave". In a way this means that this first week of Easter is really considered to be one great day. This octave day of Easter sees the best features of Easter still vibrant: joyful alleluias, lush spring flowers everywhere, sprinkling with water, and a lavish table where the Lord gives us himself as bread and wine. -James Field Copyright J.S. Paluch



A few photos from our fish fry. Many, many compliments. Thans to everyone who contributed food and time. Events like this build community spirit.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 3--Rita Moorman, Ethan Gough,
Bobby Hardin
- 6--Marshall Williams
- 10--Steven Fain
- 21--Kathi Skidd
- 23--Misty Sanford
- 25--Charlene Meadows
- 26--Vivian Higgs
- 27--Ruth Coble
- 29--Katie Goins, Jeff McCarter



THE VICTORY OF CHRIST

The grace contained in the sacraments of Easter is an enormous potential for the renewal of our personal existence, of family life, of social relations. However, everything passes through the human heart: if I let myself be touched by the grace of the Risen Christ, if I let him change me in that aspect of mine which is not good, which can hurt me and others, I allow the victory of Christ to be affirmed in my life. --Pope Francis

Mass Inte

- March 28--Gloria and Frank Adams
- March 31--Fennewald Family
- April 7--Freddy Payne
- April 14--David "Smokey" Millay
- April 21--Charlie Winstead

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: Rachel Mattingly, Jamie Bisel, Larry Allen, Charlie Brown Sr, Dana and Danny Maloney, Steven Moorman, 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, 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

Thank you to everyone who has designated Blessed Sacrament as your community reward partner. We have 42 households that designate Blessed Sacrament as their community partner. Last check \$167.63. 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



If you have not had an opportunity to be part of the chapel renovations, it is not too late to make a contribution. Thank you to all who have contributed.



- March 31--NA
- Budget--\$1,094
- MTD Collection--NA
- MTD Budget--NA
- YTD Collection--NA
- YTD Budget--NA

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

2nd Sunday of Easter (Sunday of Divine Mercy)

A protestant pastor friend of mine was invited to meet Pope Francis with a group of other pastors. He noticed the Pope's chair was especially ornate and set at the head of the group. He somewhat playfully said, "Holy Father, why do you get that special chair?" The group chuckled nervously at my friend's audacious chide.

The following year, the group was invited to return. They entered the room to find only simple chairs placed in a circle. Pope Francis entered, sat down in one of the humble chairs and, looking directly at my friend, with a twinkle in his eye, asked, "What do you think of my chair now?" My friend was stunned that the Pope remembered his concerns — and took the time to answer them.

Thomas the apostle was certainly stunned by the Risen Jesus displaying his wounds in person. But he also must have been equally shocked that Jesus knew and answered his particular questions, worries, and even demands related to his faith. How humbled — and perhaps a bit terrified — he must have been to realize God remembers his concerns and cares enough to answer them.

What questions or demands about Jesus do you find in your heart? Like Thomas, will you be bold enough to voice them this week? How wonderful to know that if we do so, God will remember and respond even to our most audacious desires. — Father John Muir

MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Lectors

April 7: Leland Herzog, Sarah Malone
April 14: Katie Goins, Wayne Stephens
April 21: Jacques Williams, Misty Sanford

Eucharistic Ministers

April 7: Greg Richardson, Greg Gough, Katie Goins
April 14: Sarah Malone, Holly Hollia, Misty Sanford
April 21: Barbara Bisel, Deanne Richardson, Rita Moorman,

Collection & Gifts

April 7: Wonet Taylor, Barbara Hammond
April 14: Campbell Family



May the Risen Lord fill you with peace and joy.

**Father John, Father Shibu,
Sister Jeannette**

.Written in the Wounds

For all the condemnation Thomas the Doubter has received in 2000 years of homilies, I think there's something to admire in him.

Thomas is not unique. We all waver at some point, overcome by hesitation, distracted by the clamor of the world which seeks at every turn to shout above the whisper of the divine.

Thomas knows what he saw on Good Friday: his friend nailed to a cross, a sword driven through his body. He saw the blood and the water. He saw these things with his own eyes, eyes given to him by God, eyes which have never failed him before. And God doesn't ask us to suspend reality to believe in Him. He only asks us to be discerning about how that reality is interpreted in our hearts.

Thomas knows the man before him is either a fraud, preying on the hopes and anxieties of the traumatized disciples, or he is the Christ, the Savior of the world, accomplisher of impossible things. But where to look, to tell the difference?

Satan once appeared to the great mystic saint, Teresa of Avila, disguised as Jesus. She knew instantly that he was a fraud. Enraged, he demanded to know where his deception had failed. "You have no wounds," she told him simply.

Could we have accepted a savior who did not bleed? I don't think we could, because sooner or later, we would all stand before him and say, "Here is where the world hurt me. Here, and here, and here. What about you?" Christ can point to his hands, his feet, his side. "Here, and here, and here," he can say. "And I overcame them all."

It's the wounds, you see. The truth is in the wounds.

Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" — John 20:28

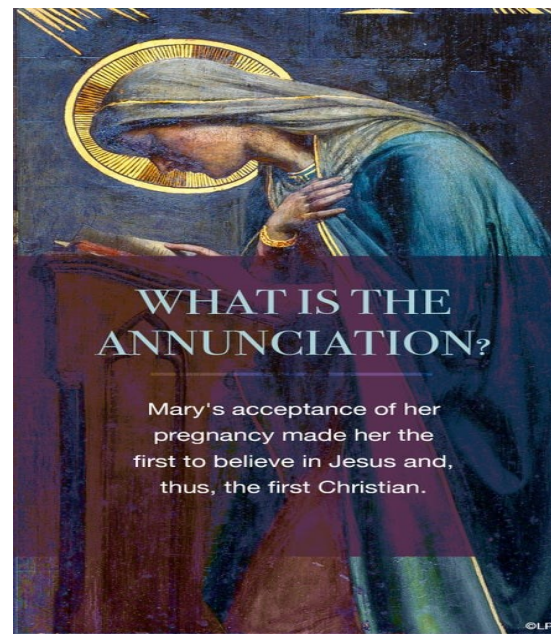
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Readings for the Week

Monday: Is 7:10-14; 8:10/Ps 40:7-11/
Heb 10:4-10/Lk 1:26-38
Tuesday: Acts 4:32-37/Ps 93:1-2, 5/
Jn 3:7-15
Wednesday: Acts 5:17-26/Ps 34:2-9
/Jn 3:16-21
Thursday: Acts 5:27-33/Ps 34:2 and 9,
17-20/Jn 3:31-36
Friday: Acts 5:34-42/Ps 27:1, 4, 13-
14/Jn 6:1-15
Saturday: Acts 6:1-7/Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-
19/Jn 6:16-21

Observances of Week of April

Sunday: Sunday: 2nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy)
Monday: The Annunciation of the Lord
Thursday: St. Stanislaus, Bishop, Martyr
Saturday: St. Martin I, Pope, Martyr



DOUBT

The desire to be able to prove the existence of a divinity has troubled humanity since human consciousness first became aware of the divine. To this very day we are fond of saying that any number of things--from sunsets to hot fudge sundaes--are "proof that there is a God." We get so caught up in the story of "doubting Thomas" that we fail to notice that today's gospel gives us John's account of Pentecost, the bestowing of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples following the Resurrection. Thomas, evidently, missed out not only on seeing the Risen Christ, but receiving the Holy Spirit as well. This is not to be taken lightly and, perhaps, makes Thomas' disbelief a bit easier to comprehend. It also makes his professing that Jesus is his Lord and God--the only time the New Testament explicitly refers to Jesus Christ as "God"--more remarkable

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Prayer for the 2nd Sunday of Easter

Dear Jesus,
As you greeted your disciples after you rose, fill us, too, with your peace.
As you breathed your spirit on them, breathe on us, too.
As your presence was known to Thomas, make it known to us, too.
Help us to live in your peace, power, and presence. Amen.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Each year, on the Second Sunday of Easter, the Church celebrates the Sunday of Divine Mercy. Mankind's need for the message of Divine Mercy took on dire urgency in the 20th century, when civilization began again to lose the understanding of the sanctity and inherent dignity of every human life.

Celebration: Blessed Mother Church 2 pm