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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 Cheriakunnel
moc_scheriyankunnel@sscobo.org
Parish Life Coordinator: Sr Jeannette Fennewald,
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Sunday's Readings

First Reading:
 Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared, then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the mute will sing. (Is 35:5-6)

Psalm:
 Praise the Lord, my soul! (Ps 146)

Second Reading:
 Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him? (Jas 2:5)

Gospel:
 "He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak." (Mk 7:37)
 Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970

Sept. 8, 2024 23rd Sunday Ordinary Time

Say to those whose hearts are frightened:
 "Be Strong! Fear Not! Is. 35:4



.My Dear Parishioners:

When it comes to people it is very difficult for us not to make distinctions. We invariably favor some over others. We choose some and not others. A man chooses one woman to be his wife out of several he may have come to know. A woman chooses one man to be her husband. We choose our friends, and some people choose their friends carefully. Parents will favour their own children over other children - - we try not to show it . . .but it is true. It is natural and human for us to make distinctions. In this morning's second reading, James calls on the members of the church not to show favour on the basis of social class, making a fuss of the better off. James is saying that certain forms of favouritism are never acceptable within the community of believers. Everyone is to be treated equally regardless of their social background; in the context of worship there are to be no special seats for the more socially prominent. He in all areas of church life everyone should feel equally valued. That second reading from James prompts us to ask if any form of unhealthy favouritism is to be found in our own church, our own parish. Are there people we are not noticing? Are they voices we are not hearing? Are there people who would like to be involved in the life of the parish but who feel that they are not welcome, that their potential contribution is not valued? I hope not but it is something we all need to keep alert to.

The gospels strongly suggest that Jesus was not partial to people on the basis of social class. Indeed, the portrait of Jesus we are given in the gospels suggest that he favoured the vulnerable, the poor, the weak, the defenceless. This morning's gospel bears that out. A man who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech was brought to Jesus by his friends. In an oral culture where people were largely illiterate, not to be able to hear or speak properly was an enormous liability. Those who could neither hear nor speak were invisible; they could not be communicated with in any meaningful way and they could not communicate. This man was fortunate to have people who cared enough about him to bring him to Jesus who had a reputation for giving new life to the broken. The personal attention that Jesus goes on to give this man is striking. He takes the man away from the crowd, so that the two of them could be alone. Although the man cannot hear or speak, he can experience the sense of touch, and so Jesus touches the man's ears, putting his finger into them, and touches the man's tongue with his own spittle. Jesus also looked up to heaven, in prayer; it was Jesus' relationship with God that would bring new life to this man. Jesus invests himself in a very personal and tactile way with this man's healing. The Decapolis where the healing story is set was a predominantly pagan region. Jesus favoured the voiceless and the afflicted, whether they were Jew or pagan.

The behaviour of Jesus in the gospel is an even more powerful message than the words of his relative James in the first reading. If, as people who have been baptised into Christ, we are to have favourites, they are to be the voiceless, the afflicted, the vulnerable and the weak. The friends of the man in the gospel can be our inspiration in that regard. They brought man to Jesus, and, in so doing, they opened him up to a whole new life, a life that was richer and fuller than he had ever known. They were strength in his weakness. Their voice, their speaking to Jesus on his behalf, led to him coming to have a voice of his own. Even though he could not speak, his friends heard him; they heard the stirrings and longings of his heart, and their attentive listening lead on to him being able to hear for himself. Their attentive listening to him was prior to their speaking on his behalf. If they had not first listened to him, they would not have taken the initiative to speak up for him. Very often, our own sharing in the Lord's life giving work, in response to our baptismal calling, begins with attentive listening to someone, a listening to the whole person and not just to the words they speak. Blessings, Fr. John



***75th Anniversary Celebration
of Dedication of
Blessed Sacrament Chapel***



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1--Wonet Taylor
- 2--Emma Latta
- 3--Venice Higgs
- 6--Shelby Webster
- 7--Aubrey Ottofy
- 8--Mary Hagan, Mamie Farish
- 9--Luke Bisel
- 18--Samuel Hollis, Lila Clark
- 20--Mary Katherine Gough



Mass Intentions

- September 1--Harry Baumgarten
- September 8--David "Smokey" Millay
- September 15--DJ Clark
- September 22--David "Smokey" Millay

Our thoughts and prayers are with the sick: Phil Armendarez, Cindy Heckmann, Joe Washington, Judy Stinett, Shaun Winchell, China Dulin, Rachel Mattingly, Yuri Phen, Larry Allen, Charlie Brown Sr, Steven Moorman, Philip Moorman, Jr., Ronnie Hollis, Chandra Hagan, Larry Clark, Ruth Coble, Carol Hatchett, Jordan Gertisen, Pam Wilson, Shelby Webster, Andy Evans, Gary Moorman. If you know of anyone who is in need of prayer or visitation, please notify the office.

ACTING IN JESUS' NAME

Jesus does not give us the gift of himself so that we can hoard it for ourselves, Pope Francis says. Instead, it is meant to transform us into people who are filled with God's love and who act out of mercy and compassion, not out of a quest for power or domination. And we don't do this alone; we are meant to journey with others--to raise our voices and hearts with theirs--in solidarity and community. Peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation are often not popular words in today's world, because they might imply weakness. But, says Pope Francis, these are the words that give us our strength, because they were the principle as that Jesus lived by. We can ask for no better model.

Coming Events



Blessed Sacrament Happenings

September 8--Parish meeting picnic and celebration, future planning)

September 15--Religious Ed begins

Every act of love is a work of peace, no matter how small. --Mother St. Teresa



Sept, 1--\$1,291.50

Budget--\$1300

MTD Collection--\$1,291.50

MTD Budget--\$1,300

YTD Collection--\$11,433.50

YTD Budget--\$11,700

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

One of the most touching YouTube videos I've ever seen is one in which a deaf woman receives new technology to heal her hearing. She hears her husband's voice for the first time — and her own, too — and bursts into tears of overwhelming joy. It must have been like an immovable wall between her and her loved ones came tumbling down.

We are all like this woman, to some degree. We believe in the presence of God's love, but we can't hear Him. We can't speak well about Him. The deaf man who can't speak properly in the Gospel today is an image of what God wants us to experience again and again. Jesus takes the man aside to a private place away from the crowd, touches his ears and tongue, and says, "Ephphata!" The man's ears are opened, and he speaks clearly. Contact with Christ has this effect on us.

This experience happens to us in our baptism, almost exactly. It happens to us in the liturgy. It happens in our private prayer. It happens when we hear the voice of God in our conscience. The more we engage these privileged channels of Jesus' healing, the more we are empowered to hear and speak of the presence of God's perfect love.

— *Father John Muir*

Prayer for Grandparents

Dear God,
 What a grace to live in a world of all ages and stages. Bless our grandparents, today and always. Thank You for their experiences, wisdom, and insight. Thank You for the gifts they bring the Church. Thank You for the lessons they teach the next generations. Amen.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Lectors

September 1: Layson Brooks, Katie Goins
September 8: Greg Gough, Leland Herzog
September 15: Misty Sanford, Kathi Skidd

Eucharistic Ministers

September 1: Barbara Bisel, Kathi Skidd,, Sarah Malone
September 8: Cindy Clark, Vivian Higgs, Misty Sanford
September 15: Greg Gough, Katie Goins, Rita Moorman

Collection & Gifts

September 1 Steve Coble, Wayne Stephens:
September 8: Clint and Cassidy Campbell family
September 15: Jacques and Whitney Williams and sons

LAUGH OF THE WEEK

A little boy was overheard talking to himself as he strutted through the backyard, wearing his baseball cap, and totting a ball and bat. "I'm the greatest hitter in the world," he announced. Then, he tossed the ball into the air, swung at it, and missed. "Strike One!" he yelled. Undaunted, he picked up the ball and said again, "I'm the greatest hitter in the world!" He tossed the ball into the air. When it came down, he swung again and missed. "Strike Two!" he cried. The boy then paused a moment to examine his bat and ball carefully. He spit on his hands and rubbed them together. He straightened his cap and said once more, "I'm the greatest hitter in the world!" Again, he tossed the ball up in the air and swung at it. He missed. "Strike Three!" "Wow!" he exclaimed. "I'm the greatest pitcher

Be Opened

There are several moments throughout the calendar year when we are tricked into thinking we can reinvent ourselves.

One of them is New Year's Day. The barista at my coffee shop told me that they sell more decaf coffee in January than in the entirety of the remaining year, because everyone is swearing off caffeine. By February, she said, the trend subsides: folks have realized they're not actually superheroes just because the last digit of the year has increased by one.

The beginning of a new school year is another of those moments. Every pencil is freshly sharpened, and every lesson plan is painstakingly plotted. Our heads are full of what we plan to do this year, how we plan to do it, who we plan to become. But by May, the wind is out of our sails. We've learned the concepts, we've used up the pencils, yes — but we've remembered that underneath it all we're basically the same people, with the same shortcomings and the same obstacles as we always were. The only difference in September was we had new planners.

The truth is that we cannot reinvent ourselves. We can't change ourselves at all, not on New Year's Day or the first day of school or on our 40th birthday or after quitting a bad habit. We are what we are: blind in some ways, deaf in others, crippled in still more, moving through life with uncertainty, stumbling in the dark. People don't change. Not without miracles. But being a Christian means believing in miracles and being ready for them at any moment — in January or in September, in the middle of a hopeless week or at the end of a bad day, when you feel strong and when you don't, when you want to be better and when you feel too tired to try. No, we can't change ourselves, but we can *be* changed. There is one who can change us if we will let him. He is waiting — now, tomorrow, yesterday, next week. The time is always right for a miracle.

"He put his finger into the man's ears ... and said to him, 'Ephphatha!'— that is, 'Be opened!'—And immediately the man's ears were opened ..." Mark 7:34

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Readings for the Week

Monday: 1 Cor 5:1-8/Ps 5:5-6, 7, 12/Lk 6:6-11
Tuesday: 1 Cor 6:1-11/Ps 149:1-6 and 9/Lk 6:12-19
Wednesday: 1 Cor 7:25-31/Ps 45:11-12, 14-17/Lk 6:20-26
Thursday: 1 Cor 8:1b-7, 11-13/Ps 139:1-3, 13-14, 23-24/Lk 6:27-38
Friday: 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-27/Ps 84:3, -6, 12/Lk 6:39-42
Saturday: Nm 21:4-9/Ps 78:1--2, 34--37, 38/Phil 2:6-11/Jn 3:13-17

Observances for the week of September 8, 2024

Monday: St. Peter Claver, Priest
Wednesday: Patriot Day
Thursday: The Most Holy Name of Mary
Friday: St. John Chrysostom,
Saturday: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

St. Peter Claver was born at Verdu, Catalonia, Spain, in 1580,.. While studying [philosophy](#) at Majorca, the young religious was influenced by [St. Alphonsus](#) Rodriguez to go to the Indies and save "millions of perishing souls."

In 1610, he landed at [Cartagena](#) (modern Colombia), the principle slave market of the New World, where a thousand [slaves](#) were landed every month. He dedicated himself by special vow to the service of the Negro slaves—a work that was to last for thirty-three years. He labored unceasingly for the [salvation](#) of the African [slaves](#) and the abolition of the Negro slave trade, and the love he lavished on them was something that transcended the natural order.

SEE BEYOND OUTWARD APPEARANCES

The phase "Sunday best" has lost much of its meaning in our society today. Some lament the loss of people dressing up for church on Sunday; others think it's a healthy sign that we're as casual in attire gathered before the Lord as we are elsewhere. No matter which school of thought on this topic we belong to, James would probably chastise us. In either case, we are still focused on external appearances, mistaking it for some sort of favored position before God. True, James criticizes the community that favors the rich and well-dressed while ostracizing the poorly clothed, but even more he criticizes the making of distinctions, making choices based on criteria that having nothing to do with the reign of God. James might turn our attention to the reign of God described by Isaiah in which people are healed and the earth becomes ripe to bear fruit. Jesus today is focused on this reign of God, healing a Gentile man in a region hostile to his Jewish faith, not mindful of the man's origins or clothing or status or ability to repay. Isaiah, James, and Jesus in Mark's Gospel all call us to look more deeply to find where the will of God needs to be done, and has been done, on earth as in heaven. Copyright J.S. Paluch Co.

