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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 Fennwald,
SSND pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org



Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

Many signs and wonders were done among the people at the hands of the apostles.
(Acts 5:12)

Psalm:

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

Second Reading:

When I caught sight of him, I fell down at his feet as though dead. He touched me with his right hand and said, "Do not be afraid." (Rv 1:17)

Gospel:

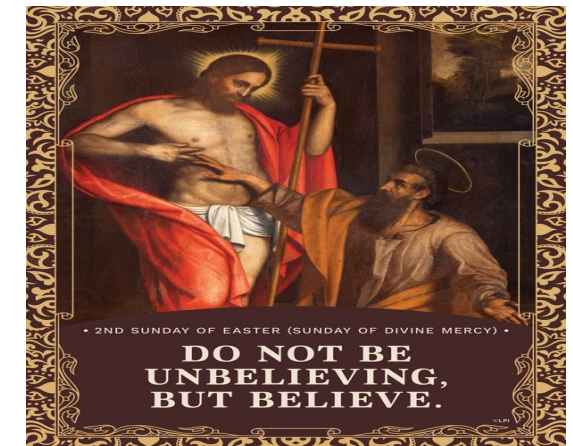
On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." (Jn 20:19)

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass

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April 27, 2025 2nd Sunday of Easter

This is the day the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad. Ps. 118



The Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven,
may the faith you have gifted us in
your son Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of charity
kindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us, the blessed hope
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into diligent cultivators of the evangelical seeds
that make humanity and the cosmos rise
unto the confident expectation
of the new heavens and the new earth,
when with the powers of Evil overcome,
your glory shall be manifested eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
the yearning for heavenly treasures
and pour over all the earth
the joy and peace
of our Redeemer.

To you God blessed in eternity,
be praise and glory for ever and ever.

My Dear Parishioners:

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 almost 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. For that matter, it is the busiest port in the cosmos. It is as private as a one on one meeting with Christ. It is as crowded as necessary to uproot the tangle of each and every 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 to be 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 in the Holy Spirit being poured into my heart by Christ, I have an inexhaustible supply. Unlike a hose or pipeline, however, 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 am learning 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 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 More than any other, because God is Love, Christ is the great Meddler in human interrelations. 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, 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. . ." Fr. John

.TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

The Lenten journey is now complete, its mission of renewal and preparation to receive new life fulfilled. The call to worship the Risen Lord has been received, and we gather to experience together the consoling presence of Christ in word and sacrament.

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 give us himself as bread and wine.

--James Field, copyright @J./s. Paluch Co.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

23--Misty Sanford
25--Charlene Meadows
26--Vivian Higgs
27--Ruth Coble
29--Jeff McCarter

May Birthdays

8--Mary Ann Terry
12--Cindy Clark, Brent Hatchett
14--Steve Coble
18--Tina McHenry



Easter Egg Hunt

Thanks to all who participated and who contributed eggs for the young ones to find.



Mass Intentions

April 17--Sam Thruston
April 20--Larry Allen
April 27--Larry Allen
May 4--Michael Bogdan
May 11--Larry Allen

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:
Kathi Skidd, Ray Higgs, Mary Hagan, Debbie Gabbert, Pam Wilson, Donna Fennewald, Emma Latta, Phil Armendarez, Cindy Heckmann, Judy Stinett, Shaun Winchell, China Dulin, Rachel Mattingly, Charlie Brown Sr, Steven Moorman, Philip Moorman, Jr., Ronnie Hollis, Chandra Hagan, Larry Clark, Ruth Coble, Carol Hatchett, Jordan Gertisen, Shelby Webster, Andy Evans, Gary Moorman. **If you know of anyone who is in need of prayer or visitation, please notify the office.**



Coming Events



Blessed Sacrament Happenings

May 3--Clean-up/flower planting

9 am---All are welcome

May 4--First Communion--10 am

Quinn and Hank Fain



April 20--\$1,946.50

Budget--\$1,300

MTD Collection--\$4,332

MTD Budget--\$3,900

YTD Collection--\$58,704.89

YTD Budget--\$54,600



GOSPEL MEDITATION

It's common for Catholics to hear the question, "Why do I have to go to a priest to have my sins forgiven?" I've never liked that question because not only is it clunky (confession is the ordinary way for the pardoning of serious sins, not lesser ones). But it misses the larger context: the wonderful origins of the sacrament itself. And this context is deeply Jewish.

Ancient Jews associated forgiveness of sins with priests offering sacrifices in the Jerusalem temple. It was a solemn, public, and tangible way to access God's mercy. So when the risen Jesus breathes on the Apostles and says, "**Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained**" (John 20:23), the upshot is remarkable: he is the new temple and his Apostles are the new priests. Jerusalem is no longer the place to find forgiveness from sin. Jesus' body, the Church, is.

So why should we go to the Sacrament of Confession? For the same reason ancient Jews went to the temple in Jerusalem: to experience the intimacy, joy, and life-giving power of God's eternal forgiveness.
— Father John Muir ©LPi

As we reflect on the life and legacy of our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis, we invite you to keep his spirit of humility, peace, and compassion alive through prayer and remembrance. Taking after his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis was a compassionate leader admired for his humility, simplicity, and reverence for the beauty of creation. May his example motivate and inspire us all to seek a deeper relationship with God and to see the face of Christ in all those we encounter.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE	
	Lectors
<u>April 27:</u>	Greg Gough, Jerry Fuchs
<u>May 4:</u>	Jacques Williams, Wayne Stephens
<u>May 11</u>	Layson Brooks, Misty Sanford
	Eucharistic Ministers
<u>April 27:</u>	Misty Sanford, Barbara Bisel, Holly Hollis
<u>May 4:</u>	Janet Clark, Denise and Greg Richardson
<u>May 11,</u>	Katie Goins, Greg Gough, Rita Moorman
	Collection & Gifts
<u>April 27:</u>	Jamie, Beau, Luke Bisel
<u>May 4:</u>	Fain Family
<u>May 11:</u>	Natalie, Lila, Ivan Clark

**Thank you for the donations for
Easter flowers**

Jean Higgs-- in memory of Rachel Hersey,
Lucile Higgs

Steve Coble

Ruth Coble

Cindy Clark--in memory of Chick, Betty Jo,
Holly Thompson

Yvonne Mundy

Janet Clark--in memory of Ethel, R.T.,
Tommy, Pam, Jack and Mary Ethel Clark.



Mini Reflection: It does sound unbelievable, the story of the Resurrection. But lots of things are unbelievable. That doesn’t mean they’re not true. Take Thomas’ example: stay close to the people you trust. Be willing to recognize Jesus when he’s in front of you.

Wonder, Don’t Wander
My daughter recently asked me if it’s okay to “wonder if all the Jesus stuff is true.”

I wasn’t surprised by her question. I’ve expected it, in fact. If you’re raising a child to be a critical thinker, you don’t want them to accept everything you tell them simply because it comes from your lips. I have promised my children that I will always give them the truth about God. But that’s all I can do — give it to them. Whether or not they accept it, ultimately, is their own choice.

“I know it’s true,” she told me. “But sometimes it just all sounds so...unbelievable.”

She’s not wrong. It *does* sound unbelievable that an all-powerful God could create us for no reason other than sheer love, that He could be generous enough to give us free will to accept that love, that he could be merciful enough not to destroy us when we reject that love, and finally that he could be faithful enough in that love to become flesh and die in order to save us from the consequences of our own poor choices.

But lots of things are unbelievable. That doesn’t mean they’re not true.

When Jesus says, “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed,” he isn’t calling Thomas a fool for questioning something that sounds a little outrageous. He’s just highlighting the fact that Thomas is afforded a luxury that none of the Christians born after him, my daughter included, will have: he gets to see proof with his own eyes.

I told my daughter it’s fine to wonder — just don’t wander. Take Thomas’ example. Stay close to the people you trust. Return to the warmth of the upper room. Be willing to recognize Jesus when he’s in front of you. Never be afraid to believe.

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Readings for the Week	
Monday:	Acts 4:23-31/Ps 2:1-3, 4-9/ Jn 3:1-8
Tuesday:	Acts 4:32-37/Ps 93:1-2, 5 /Jn 3:7b-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:	1 Cor 15:1-8/Ps 19:2-5/ Jn 14:6-14
Observances for the week of April 27	
Sunday:	2 nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy)
Monday:	St. Peter Chanel, St. Louis Grignion de Montfort,
Tuesday:	St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church
Wednesday:	St. Pius V, Pope
Thursday:	St. Joseph the Worker; National Day of Prayer
Friday:	St. Athanasius, Bishop
Saturday:	Sts. Philip and James, Apostles



Prayer of Divine Mercy
O Blood and Water that redeems and saves,
have mercy on us!
O Blood and Water that heals and restores,
have mercy on us!
O Blood and Water that strengthens and renews,
have mercy on us!
Amen.

DO NOT BE AFRAID

Did you notice? Today is called the “Second Sunday of Easter”, not the “First Sunday after Easter.” Our celebration of Easter is not over. These Sundays of Easter continue to present the mystery of Jesus Christ’s victory.

The readings begin with the “sign and wonders” abounding in those earliest days. Sick people lay in the street, hoping that at least Peter’s “shadow might fall on one or another of them.” Then in a powerful passage from the Book of Revelation, the visionary falls down “as though dead” upon seeing the victorious Christ. But Christ extends a gentle touch: “Do not be afraid...once I was dead, but now I am alive forever.”

In the Gospel, that same Christ appears and breathes on the disciples, and gently leads Thomas to believe. This Christ--more powerful than any evil force, victorious over death itself--touches us and whispers, “Do not be afraid.” copyright@J.S. Paluch Co.

