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Blessed Sacrament

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

www.blessedsacramentchapel.org or email at pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org

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.**

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_scheriannunel@sscobo.org

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



April 6, 2025 5th Sunday of Lent

I consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Jesus.. Ph. 3:8

Sunday's Readings

1st Reading Question:

Thus says the LORD, who opens a way in the sea in the mighty waters. (Is 43:16)

Psalm:

The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy. (Ps 126)

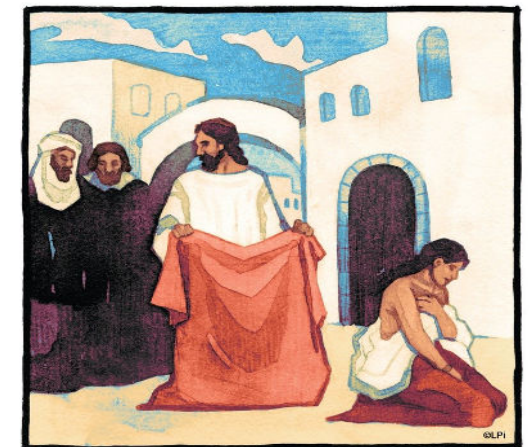
Second Reading:

I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus. (Phil 3:14)

Gospel:

Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more." (Jn 8:10-11)

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998,



My Dear Parishioners:

What should we make of the Pharisees in today's gospel story? They brought the woman taken in adultery into the Temple precincts, crowded with all kinds of people, and made her stand before everyone in as public a manner as possible. They insisted that her penalty should follow the full rigour of the Mosaic Law, namely death by stoning. But their motive was not so much zeal for the Law, as to use the woman merely as a pawn to discredit Jesus. If his response to their query, "What have you to say?" was, "Leave the woman along; let her go free," they would accuse him of breaking the Law and condoning adultery. If, however, he were to say, "Let her be stoned to death," then he would be seen as lacking in mercy, and also as going against the legal restrictions of the Roman authorities, who reserved the right to impose the death penalty. Jesus saw through their plotting and made them withdraw in confusion.

The intriguing question is what did Jesus write with his finger on the ground. The Gospel account gives us a possible clue. It does not use the normal Greek word for "write" (graphein), but rather one (katagraphein) which means to draw up a condemnation. Possibly Christ may have listed on the ground the sins of each of the woman's accusers, and so his challenge that the one without sin should cast the first stone met with no response. Although Jesus did not condemn the woman, neither did he condone what she had done. "Don't sin any more," was his invitation and warning to her.)

In the case of the Pharisees, as we see, and indeed in the case of most of us, there is the subtle danger of creating God in our own image and likeness, imagining him to be a stern and demanding God, who takes revenge, who loves to punish, who can be persuaded to forgive only after we have made a great show of repentance. Such of course is a mere caricature of God. At best this kind of religion can be cold and loveless. At worst, as St Paul says in the 2nd Reading, trying to form a right relationship with God by mere adherence to the Law and all its ways can be as worthless as the rubbish one throws away. It is only when we allow the love of God, as seen in Christ, to encompass our lives, to change our inner being, that we begin to understand Christianity.

Contrary to the thinking of the Pharisees, we must fight the tendency to regard ourselves as better than others, no matter what commandments we keep; nor must we judge and condemn others. Rather should we be generous, forgiving and loving towards others. From the gospel story we see that the worst of the seven deadly sins is not lust as so many think. Indeed, Christ's harshest condemnation was reserved for those who, like the Pharisees, in their pride and self-righteousness shut themselves off from God, who felt no need to ask God for help and grace. We cannot be true followers of Christ unless we acknowledge our frailty, our sinfulness, our need for his help which alone can save us. When we do fall we gain a deeper understanding of the extraordinary mercy God is prepared to extend to the sinner. For our sins make no difference to God's enduring love for us.

St Paul says that all things work together for the good of those who love God (Rom 8:28). St Augustine adds, "Yes, even sin!" for from bitter personal experience, he more than most knew all about the false allure of sin, how difficult it is often to break away from it, and how God's love alone can help us conquer it.

Blessings, Fr. John

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

Next weekend many churches provide palms to be carried in the opening moments of the liturgy, as we gratefully recall Jesus' entry into the holy city of Jerusalem. The children who greeted him on that day used what was both handy and traditional, since palms were carried to inaugurate the joyful harvest feast of Succoth. To this day, faithful Jews are directed to take a beautiful palm branch, green and straight as possible, called a *lulav*, and bind it with three myrtle branches fifteen inches long, and two longer willow branches. At the end of the temple service, everyone carries the *lulav*, circling the sanctuary in a dance called the *Hoshanot*....., singing hymns of joy.

In other climates, Jews and Christians alike have had to make accommodations over the years. In Italy, everyone carries olive branches today, often brought from their own garden. In England, forsythia branches are preferred, a relative of the olive, sign of peace. Germans prefer pussywillows, and others look for flowering spring branches. In our part of the world, what do you think would be the best choice to express joy and welcome, and to remind us of the joy of Christ's victory even as we prepare to commemorate his passion?

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5th SUNDAY OF LENT



THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

A young man lying on a hospital stretchers just before his operation turned to a sympathetic woman who stood nearby and said: "I'm so nervous. This is my first operation."

"So am I," said the woman, "my husband is the doctor and it is his first operation too."

One important expression of true love for others, which this doctor's wife seems to have forgotten, is tactfulness: saying or doing what is encouraging, not discouraging; being honest without being brutal; showing Christ-like consideration for the feeling of others (no matter how mistaken they may be); and avoiding abruptness and sarcasm. Tactfulness is a habit which can be developed anywhere--in the home, the factory, the office.

The tongue is a little member and boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire. (James 3:5)

Father James Keller M.M.

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



Congratulations, Ethan Gough

May God be your guide and love as you finish high school and move to the next adventure in life. Our prayers are with you.



Mass Intentions

April 6--Sam Thruston
April 13--Larry Allen
April 17--Sam Thruston
April 20--Larry Allen
April 27--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: Mary Hagan, Kathi Skidd, Ray Higgs, Debbie Gabbert, Mike Bogden, Pam Wilson, Donna Fennwald, 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.



GOSPEL MEDITATION

“The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle” (John 8:3). Why do they make her stand in the middle? Why not expose her on the periphery? The reason is something that affects us practically every day.

The center is what stabilizes a community’s identity. We humans tend to center ourselves around an accused and condemned victim — though we rarely admit it. This renews our fragile communities and our power as those who weaponize the accusation. This is effective because it is often a victim who represents something truly dangerous for the group. In this case, adultery stands for the breakdown of a community and those within it, because it forces questions like: who is my father? Whose child is this? Is this child one of us, or that of an outsider? The accusers place the adulteress in the center because their community, like most, is built around turning an enemy into a victim.

Once you understand this, you’ll see it almost anywhere humans group together (families, politics, workplaces, sports, schools, etc.). The good news is Jesus exposes this dynamic by deftly pointing out the sin-infected hearts of everyone besides the woman. They all leave, symbolizing the breakdown of the old order, and she is **“left alone before him.”** A new community has begun, structured around the merciful love of Christ.

What is in your center? What is in the center of our parish and family communities? Strive to center on Christ’s forgiveness, and we experience the new, lasting community we call the Church.

— Father John Muir

Coming Events



Blessed Sacrament Happenings

April 8--Evening Prayer for Victims of Abuse 6 pm--SSC

April 11--Fish Fry 5-7 pm

April 15--Chrism Mass 6:30 pm Sports Center

April 17--Holy Thursday 7 pm



March 30--\$1,176.50

Budget--\$1,300

MTD Collection--\$7,192.23

MTD Budget--\$6,500

YTD Collection--\$54,372.89

YTD Budget--\$50,700

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).

MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Lectors

April 6: Layson Brooks, Greg Gough
April 13: Jerry Fuchs, Katie Goins,
Passion: Misty Sanford, Jacques Williams
April 17: Wayne Stephens, Jacques Williams
April 18: Layson Brooks, Katie Goins
Passion: Barbara Bisel, Greg Gough
April 20: Layson Brooks, Misty Sanford

Eucharistic Ministers

April 6: Misty Sanford, Greg and Denise Richardson,
April 13: Holly Hollis, Janet Clark Barbara Bisel
April 17: Denise and Greg Richardson
Misty Sanford
April 20: Greg Gough, Cindy Clark, Rita Moorman

Collection & Gifts

April 6: Laverne Thames,
April 13: Barbara Hammond, Wonet Taylor
April 20: Fain Family

Mini Reflection: Too often, we don't care about righteousness or truth. We just care about being right. We have a terrible tendency to see only decisions, and in doing so we dehumanize the people behind them. But when God looks at us, he sees more than the worst decisions we've ever made.

The Allure of Being Right

It wasn't a real question.

"The law of Moses says we should stone her. What do you say?" the Pharisees asked Jesus as they brought the adulterous woman before him. But they weren't *really* asking. They didn't care what Jesus' answer was. They didn't ask his opinion because they wanted to know. They asked because they wanted to use his words against him.

Righteousness, truth — that wasn't the goal. The goal was being right. And in the middle of the whole scene, dragged before Jesus, used as a literal prop in this staged drama, is a woman. A real flesh-and-blood woman.

I find myself wanting to know more about her. She had been "caught in the act," they claimed, but I wonder what that even means. With whom was this act committed, and what were the reasons for her participation in it? Was she coerced? Was she scared? Was she confused? Was it really a cut-and-dry, black-and-white situation of adultery, of lust, of making the wrong decision?

We will never know the answers to these questions, and it doesn't matter — it's not our business. God knows the answers. God knows the truth of the matter: what she did, what she chose, what she felt. Because she wasn't a prop to Him. She was a person.

When God looks at us, he sees more than the worst decisions we've ever made.

I worry that we use one another as props even today, when we try like the Pharisees to illustrate "What is Right." We have a terrible tendency to see only decisions, and in doing so we dehumanize the people behind them.

Too often, we don't care about righteousness or truth. We just care about being right.

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Readings for the Week

Monday: Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62/Ps 23:1-6/Jn 8:12-20
Tuesday: Nm 21:4-9/Ps 102:2-3, 16-18, 19-21/Jn 8:21-30
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 for the week of April 6

Monday: St. John Baptist de la Salle,
Friday: St. Stanislaus, Bishop, Martyr
Next Sunday: Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

FORGIVEN

Today's liturgy continues the message of forgiveness and reconciliation that we heard last week. The Church seems to be doing its utmost to deliver one simple message: "Your sins are forgiven!" What good news this is....!

Isaiah declares that God's saving action on our behalf is not something trapped in the past, but here and now. Paul urges us to recognize that true life is not "won" by following laws, however strictly, but is a free gift of God. Thus, our focus must be on the future, not on past misdeeds. Our eyes must be on the prize of life forever with God.

In the Gospel Jesus is challenged to demonstrate that he is a law-keeper, but knows that this is a trap. If he counsels mercy, he will be declared an opponent of the law. If he follows the law and condones its punishment, he will be denounced as an inciter to murder. Jesus decides to do neither.... Instead he turns the tables and invites the crowd to forgo "legality" for the sake of forgiveness and reconciliation.

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LENTEN RECONCILIATION SC

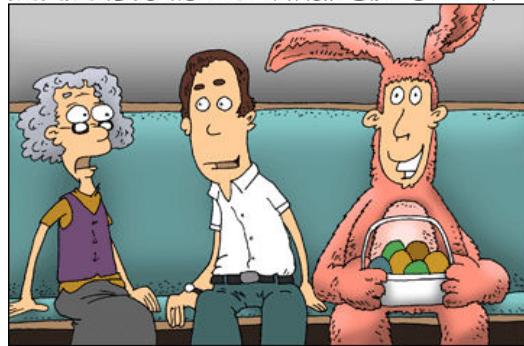
April 7 Immaculate 6 pm

◇ April 10 Precious Blood 6 pm

◇ April 13 St Stephen Cathedral 2 pm

God's grace within me and God's strength behind me can overcome any hurdle ahead of me.

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04-22-2011

YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE HIM ... HE'S NEW TO THE FAITH AND THIS IS HIS FIRST EASTER