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Blessed Sacrament

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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 Fennewald,
SSND pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

They said, "Why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

Psalm:

God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord. (Ps 47)

Second Reading:

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, give you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. (Eph 1:17)

Gospel:

As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven. (Lk 24:51)

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



June 1, 2025 Ascension

**God mounts his throne
amid shouts of joy. (Ps. 4)**



My Dear Parishioners:

Throughout most of the Catholic Church we celebrated the Ascension of the Lord this past Thursday. In some places, the Feast is transferred to this Sunday (and this is becoming a more common practice throughout dioceses in the United States). Sadly, the Feast seems to have lost its depth and meaning in the experience of too many Catholics and other Christians. Does the Ascension affect our lives in the here and now? Is it a commemoration of an event which occurred 2000 years ago? Or, could it be the key that helps unlock the very meaning of our lives and the plan of God for the entire created order?

The great western Bishop Augustine proclaimed these words on the Feast: "Today our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; let our hearts ascend with him. Listen to the words of the Apostle: If you have risen with Christ, set your hearts on the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God; seek the things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For just as he remained with us even after his ascension, so we too are already in heaven with him, even though what is promised us has not yet been fulfilled in our bodies."

When we went down into the Font of Baptism, we were incorporated into Jesus Christ, made members of His Body, the Church. Therefore, as Augustine also wrote, "Where the Head is, there is the Body, where I am, there is my Church, we too are one; the Church is in me and I in her and we two are your Beloved and your Lover." In other words, we have ascended with the Lord! He is the Head and we are members of His Body. We cannot be separated. Augustine, reflecting the clear teaching of the early Church Fathers reminds us that the Head and the Body are the "One Christ." So, this is our Feast as well!

Pope St Leo the Great reflected on the joy the disciples experienced on that glorious day in these words: " (T)hat blessed company had a great and inexpressible cause for joy when it saw man's nature rising above the dignity of the whole heavenly creation, above the ranks of angels, above the exalted status of archangels. Now would there be any limit to its upward course until humanity was admitted to a seat at the right hand of the eternal father, to be enthroned at last in the glory of him to whose nature it was wedded in the Person of the Son."

Both of these Saints remind us why we should rejoice on this Feast of the Ascension. The Ascension does not mark the end of Jesus' relationship with the Church but the beginning of a new way of His relating to the world, in and through the Church. This way includes every one of us who bear His name. You see, we have also ascended with the Lord. When viewed with the eyes of Resurrection faith the Ascension is capable of transforming the way we view ourselves and live our daily lives. We are joined to Him and He to us! Jesus Christ bridged heaven and earth. Through His Incarnation, His Saving Life, Death and Resurrection, we have been set free from the consequences of sin, including the sting of death. (See, 1 Cor. 15:55) We are being created anew in Him daily as we freely cooperate with His grace. One of the Catechism's definitions of grace is "a participation in Divine Life". (See, CCC #1997) It calls to mind the wonderful words of the Apostle Peter in his second letter. He reminded the early Christians that they were "participants in the Divine Nature". (2 Peter 1:4) So are we!

This Divine Life is mediated to us through the Word and the Sacraments - in the Church. We are incorporated into the Trinitarian communion of love, beginning now. The Church is not some "thing", the Church is Some-One, the Risen Christ truly present in the world which was created through Him and is being re-created in Him. The Church is the new Israel sent into the world to continue His redemptive mission until He comes again. Then He will complete the work of Redemption. The Church, as the fathers were fond of saying, is the new world, and the world in the course of transfiguration. The Christian vocation is about learning to live this new relationship in Christ together, with the Father, through the Holy Spirit and for the sake of a world that still awaits its full redemption.

The Ascension of the Lord is not a final act in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. Nor is it some kind of "intermission" to be concluded upon Christ's Bodily return - which will most certainly occur. Rather, it is about a new way of being, living in Christ in the here and now. The Apostle Paul wrote to the early Christians in Galatia: "No longer do I live but Christ lives in me and the life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God." (Galatians 2:19, 20) That is how we are invited to live, now.

Jesus said "Abide in me as I in you" (John 15:4). These are not mere sentiments of piety but meant to become reality, now. Christians can live differently - now - because we live "in" Jesus Christ. We can love differently now - because we love "in" Jesus Christ. We can "be" differently - now - because, as St. Paul wrote to the Colossians, "For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God". (Coll. 3:3) Our lives are "hidden in Christ"- now.

On this Feast of the Ascension, we should ask ourselves this question, "How are we doing?" The Feast presents us with an invitation to assess the relationship between our profession of faith and its manifestation in our daily lives. St. Paul encouraged the Christians in Corinth in his second letter to take such an examination: "Examine yourselves to see whether you are living in faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you? Unless, of course, you fail the test. I hope you will discover that we have not failed"

Philosophers and Theologians speak of "ontology" as the essence of being, what makes something what it is. There is an "ontological" meaning to this Feast of the Ascension. We have ascended with Him and are called to live on earth the very realities of heaven, beginning now. This Feast also gives us insight into the Feast of Pentecost which we will soon celebrate. The "breath" of God, His Spirit, has been breathed into this Church - and thus into each one of us - in order to capacitate us to live this way and engage in His ongoing work of redemption.

That work will not be complete until the One who ascended returns and hands the re-created cosmos back to the Father. That is "the plan", the "mystery" now revealed in Jesus Christ. That is what I meant as I began this reflection when I asked whether the Ascension is the key that helps unlock the very meaning of our lives and the plan of God for the entire created order?

As we now prepare to move to the end of the celebrations of the Easter Season, we recall Christ's saving work in the past - - but remembering it is happening today as well. We are part of His story. How are we doing? Blessings, Fr. John



May Birthdays

30--Karen Leachman
31--Barbara Hammond, Layson Brooks

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

2--Anthonia Hagan
4--Larry Leachman
6--Ivan Clark
9--Alvin Leachman
16--Sister Jeannette
23--Pam McCarter, Michelle Jones
27--Leland Herzog
30--Trent Hatchett, Father Sinjo



LAUGH OF THE WEEK

Jesus was walking along one day, when He came upon a group of people surrounding a lady of ill repute. It was obvious that the crowd was preparing to stone her, so Jesus made His now-famous Statement, “Let the one who has no sin cast the first stone.” The crowd was shamed and one by one began to turn away. All of a sudden, a lovely little woman made her way through the crowd. Finally getting to the front, she tossed a pebble towards the woman. Jesus looks over and says, “I really hate it when you do that, Mom.

Mass Intentions

June 1--Barbara Jones
June 8--Sam Thurston
June 15--Larry Allen
June 22--Sister Jeannette
June 29--Sam Thruston

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: , Barbara Bisel, Charlotte Hagan, Kathi Skidd, Ray Higgs, Debbie Gabbert, Pam Wilson, 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, 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.

Prayer of Mission

Surround us with your presence, Lord, as we labor to spread Your story to the world, and especially in the pocket of the world we find ourselves today.
Go before us and guide our way.
Walk beside us and be our companion.
Help us to bring others to You. Amen.

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Coming Events



Blessed Sacrament Happenings

June 8--Father Shibu’s last Sunday at BSC
June 22--Sister Jeannette’s 60th Jubilee and Farewell 10 am



May 25--\$424.50
Budget--\$1,300
MTD Collection--..\$4,880
MTD Budget--\$5,200
YTD Collection--\$64,609.89
YTD Budget--\$61,100

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

It was a Delta flight from Salt Lake City to Phoenix, and it looked like an on-time departure. As the large plane rolled away from the gate, the pilot announced over the intercom: “Ladies and Gentlemen, the crew outside didn’t fill up the tanks with fuel. We are going back to the gate to wait for them.” The passengers groaned with impatience. But over the next hour, we knew the waiting had a purpose: it meant fuel to get us to our destination.

The disciples at the Lord’s Ascension are in a similar predicament but on a massively higher plane. They want the Kingdom of God to begin on earth as it is in heaven. But Jesus says, **“I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49).** They stay together in prayer in Jerusalem and wait nine long days until the Holy Spirit descends. Empowered by supernatural gifts, they go forth to the ends of the earth and to their deaths proclaiming the Good News of Jesus. The wait was worth it.

Before you begin a task or endeavor, do you take time to patiently pray for the Holy Spirit to come? The bigger the task, the more ardent the prayer should be. Try it this week, and you’ll be clothed with power to get where God wants you to go.
— Father John Muir @LPI

SILLY SIGNS

They said to follow your dreams...so I went back to bed.

Nothing tops a plain pizza

Someone stole my coffee cup. I’m headed to the police station to look at mug shots.

To the thief who stole my glasses. I will find you. I have contacts.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE	
	Lectors
<u>June 1:</u>	Layson Brooks, Jerry Fuchs
<u>June 8</u>	Jacques Williams, Misty Sanford
<u>June 15:</u>	Greg Gough, Wayne Stephens
	Eucharistic Ministers
<u>June 1:</u>	Denise & Greg Richardson, Michelle Jones
<u>June 8:</u>	Katie Goins, Holly Hollis, Janet Clark
<u>June 15:</u>	Rita Moorman,, Misty Sanford. Greg Richardson
	Collection & Gifts
<u>June 1:</u>	Dee and Brennah Brasher
<u>June 8:</u>	Barbara Hammond, Wonet .Taylor
<u>June 15:</u>	Jamie, Beau, Luke Bisel



Mini Reflection: The Ascension begins a period of waiting for the disciples. In a sense, we are all waiting, every moment of our lives — lingering in expectation of a promise not yet fulfilled, bound by instructions we only partially comprehend.

Now We Wait
You can tell a lot about a person by how they wait in line.

The driver who leans on her horn if the car in front of her pauses before turning on a red light is probably also the woman who says, “I thought you forgot about us” to the waitress who’s slow to bring water to the table.

The shopper with a full cart who lets someone buying two bananas cut ahead of him in the checkout line is probably also the guy who says, “Here, take mine,” if the creamer runs out in the morning coffee queue.

Here’s how I wait: I pull out my phone. I check my email. I make shopping lists in my head. I busy myself. The anxiety of falling behind is just too overwhelming. Waiting scares me.

I’m not saying the first person is nasty and bad, the second one is a saint, and I’m a neurotic workaholic. I’m only saying that it’s hard to press “pause” on the fulfillment of any desire we have, even if it’s just the desire to move on. It’s hard to be made to wait. It’s a test, and like all tests, it either proves our strengths or reveals our weaknesses.

The Ascension begins a period of waiting for the disciples. Christ has been with them, blessed them, taught them — and now he’s gone in a cloud, leaving behind a vague promise that they can’t really understand.

Make no mistake: this is a test. And it reveals them to be faithful. They return to Jerusalem “with great joy” (Luke 24:52) and receive, a few days later, the Holy Spirit.

In a sense, we are all waiting, every moment of our lives — lingering in expectation of a promise not yet fulfilled, bound by instructions we only partially comprehend.

This is a test. What will it reveal about us?

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Readings for the Week

Monday:	Acts 19:1-8/Ps 68:2-7/ Jn 16:29-33
Tuesday:	Acts 20:17-27/Ps 68:10-11, 20-21/Jn 17:1-11
Wednesday:	Acts 20:28-38/Ps 68:29-30, 33-36/Jn 17:11-19
Thursday:	Acts 22:30; 23:6-11/Ps 16:1-2 and 5, 7-11/Jn 17:20-26
Friday:	Acts 25:13-21/Ps 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20/Jn 21:15-19
Saturday:	Morning: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31/Ps 11:4, 5, 7/Jn 21:20-25

Observances for the week of June 1

Monday:	Sts. Marcellinus and Peter, Ma
Tuesday:	St. Charles Lwanga and Companions, Martyrs
Thursday:	St. Boniface, Bishop and Martyr
Friday:	St. Norbert, Bishop

For us there are many signs through which the Risen One makes himself known: Sacred Scripture, the Eucharist, the other sacraments, charity; all those acts of love which bring a ray of the Risen One. Pope Francis

WAITING FOR THE SPIRIT

In today’s Gospel from Luke, Jesus recalls his (and the apostles’) mission. He directs them to return to the city and wait for the promise of the Father. He blesses them and is “taken up” into heaven. This “taking up” suggests being carried up like an acceptable sacrifice ascending to the throne of God. The apostles, nourished on scriptures that spoke of acceptable sacrifices., understand this. They go to Jerusalem to wait and pray.

The first reading reiterates and further develops this experience. Here too, Jesus directs his apostle to return to Jerusalem and wait. But something new is disclosed: they re to await the powerful baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We know that in a few short days the powerful Spirit will come to the apostles. We can be grateful that they stayed and waited, whatever their trepidation. From their example, we learn what it takes to wait and be open to the coming of the Holy Spirit.

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TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

The mystery of the Ascension has to do with holding in tension a sense of God’s nearness, along with the burden caused by apparent signs of absence. Jesus’ physical presence to the disciples was temporary. It was a gift fro their transformation, and after forty days, he vanished from their sight and hearing, though never out of their consciousness.

They do not mourn at his going this time: there is not trace of the disciples who hid in fear at his crucifixion. Instead the scriptural accounts show them full of joy, comforted by his promise to be with them forever, and open to the Spirit’s power. They are joyful, energized, aware, and united with one another in love. They seem to grasp an awareness that if the mission to the whole world was a serious one, then the presence of the Risen Christ could not be pinned down to any one place or time, but had to be always and everywhere completely available. All peoples, all times, all cultures were opened to receive him in this moment of the Ascension. The energy of this feast is drawn from deeper presence. --James Field@J.S. Paluch