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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 Christopher Grief
cgrief@sscobo.org

Parish Life Coordinator: Sr. Monica Seaton, OSU
office@bscobo.org

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

I know their works and their thoughts, and I come to gather nations of every language; they shall come and see my glory. (Is 66:18)

Psalm:

Go out to all the world and tell the Good News. (Ps 117)

Second Reading:

So strengthen your drooping hands and your weak knees. Make straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be disjointed but healed. (Heb 12:12-13)

Gospel:

For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last." (Lk 13:30)

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



August 24, 2025 21st Sunday Ordinary Time



• 21ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME •
**"STRIVE TO ENTER
THROUGH THE
NARROW GATE."**

My Dear Parishioners:

Jesus was not a proud or arrogant man. He and his disciples simply spent their time walking from town to town proclaiming the good news to anyone who would listen.

As we heard in today’s Gospel, one day as he was walking into a village someone asked him: “Lord, will those who are saved be few?” Jesus didn’t answer the question, but rather he used the opportunity to talk to them about what people needed to do to grow in holiness and be saved.

You see, for most of its history Israel was a tiny country among giants. It was at the crossroads of many nations and because of this it was continually being taken over. In order to survive and maintain its identity Israel became very insular and isolated. The people of Israel rarely interacted with others. In fact they looked down on people from other countries and somehow convinced themselves that only they would enjoy eternal life.

It was the opinion of many during Jesus’ time that simply being an Israelite and following the letter of the law was enough. And so in today’s passage Jesus warned them not to take their salvation for granted. Being an Israelite or simply following the letter of the law was not enough. Jesus explained that in order to be saved a person had to strive or work at being holy. And when he said strive he used the word which describes the strenuous exercise of an athlete. I don’t know about you but for me strenuous exercise is not easy (even light exercise is not easy!).

His point was simple; being the men and women God wants us to be is not easy. It is strenuous because we have to change. We have to change our hearts. It is not easy to let go of our wills, it is not easy to let go of our desires and our plans. To be holy there has to be a continual surrender of our wills to God’s will - - Our plans to God’s plan.

One of my wise spiritual directors always told me: “The more we know him, the more we love him. The more we love him, the more we know him.” Religious practice, going to Mass, going to confession, are so important because they help us understand God’s will and fall in love with him - - to know him. But without love and a conversion of heart all the religious practice in the world is worth nothing. Being holy is indeed like trying to squeeze a big body through a tiny door. You have to pull in tummy and fold over your arms and bend your neck and tuck up your legs and then if you are like me you need someone to unfold you when you if and when you get through.

What does this have to do with all of us here? Brothers and sisters, if our presence here on Sunday is to bring us closer to God - - We have to strive. We have to really work at being the men and women of God. We have to work really hard at being holy. If we think it is easy then something is wrong. Coming here every Sunday and warming the bench is important but it is not enough. Something more is required.

In in this passage Jesus is reminding us - warning us if you will - that we cannot just sit back and take salvation for granted. We cannot permit ourselves thoughts like, “I go to Church every Sunday and there are a lot of people worse than me so that is enough.”

We have to be more loving, more merciful, more kind, less judgmental, less angry, more trusting, more concerned about the need of others, more forgiving, less proud and more faith filled. And it is not easy.

The Word of God which we hear at Mass will inspire us. The grace of the Eucharist will nourish us and sustain us, even cleanse us. The incredible grace of a good confession will make us more humble and merciful. If you wish to be a forgiving person - - then ask for forgiveness first.

Simply coming to Mass is not enough. And being baptized Catholic is not enough. Something more is required. We must never take our salvation for granted.

The message of the today’s Gospel is simple. We have to work at conforming ourselves to Christ - - every day of our lives - - so that someday we may pass through the narrow door of holiness to life eternal.

Blessings,

Fr. John

Holiness Runs in the Family

Raising faithful children is no easy task. For St. Monica, it seemed nearly impossible. Her husband wasn’t Christian and often mocked her faith. Their son, Augustine, fell quickly into wild ways. He and his friends drank, stole, and caroused throughout town. Monica never stopped praying for Augustine, no matter how far he strayed. Augustine became swept up in heresy, a false form of Christianity. He lived with a mistress and had a child out of wedlock. All the while, Monica kept praying. Conversion came slowly to Augustine, but at age 32, he was finally baptized. Augustine would go on to become a priest, then bishop, then world-renowned theologian whose works have stood the test of time. May St. Monica and St. Augustine inspire us to never stop praying for our loved ones.

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KROGER

Thanks to everyone who has designated Blessed Sacrament Chapel as you community reward partner. If you do not have a community partner at Kroger, please consider designating Blessed /Sacrament Chapel.. Blessed Sacrament’s number is WX 99. You can register at *krogercommunityrewards.com*.

Safe Environment

The safety of our children is the responsibility of every Christian. Anyone aware of the abuse of a person under the age of eighteen is required by law to report this to the proper state authorities (800-422-4453); local law enforcement (800-752-6200); or the Kentucky Child Abuse Hotline (toll-free: 1-877-597- 2331). To report abuse to the diocese, current or past, by anyone acting in the name of the Church (paid or volunteer), call Louanne Payne, Pastoral Assistance Coordinator (English) on the confidential phone line: 270-852-8380, or Susan Montalvo-Gesser/Miguel Quintanilla, Pastoral Assistance Coordinators (Spanish): 270-880-8360. The Diocese of Owensboro’s sexual abuse policy is available at this parish (in the bookshelf in back of the church), in the parish office and hall, and on the diocesan website (<https://owensborodiocese.org/safe>). To make a report of sexual abuse of a minor and related misconduct by bishops, go to ReportBishop-Abuse.org or call 1-800-276-1562

August Birthdays

24 -- Celena Hagan

25 -- Denise Richardson

September Birthdays

1—Norwetta Taylor

2—Emma Latta

3—Venice Higgs,

6—Shelby Webster,

7—Aubrey Ottofy

8—Mary Hagan, Mamie Farish
Watkins

9—Luke Bisel

18—Samuel Hollis, Lila Clark



**Blessed Sacrament Chapel has
a new email address:**

office@bscobo.org

Mass Intentions

August 24 -- Larry Allen

August 31-- Larry Allen

September 7--Sam Thruston

*Let us remember to pray for those who are
dying and those who have recently died.*

*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:

Rollie Pike, Larry Leachman, Dorothy Simmons,
Steve Coble, Pam Weafer, David Strawn, Teresa
Luebbert, Diane Selby, Kathi Skidd, Ray Higgs,
Pam Wilson, Emma Latta, Phil Armendarez, Cin-
dy Heckmann, Judy Stinett, Shaun Winchell,
China Dulin, Rachel Mattingly, Charlie Brown
Sr, Steven Moorman, Philip Moorman, Jr., Ron-
nie Hollis, Chandra Hagan, Larry Clark, Ruth
Coble, Carol Hatchett, Jordan Gertisen, Shelby
Webster, Gary Moorman. **If you know of
anyone who is in need of prayer or visita-
tion, please notify the office.**

Prayer for Holiness

Good Shepherd,

Guide me through the narrow gate.
Remove from me anything that distracts
me from You, Your love, Your invitation,
Your mission. Keep me close to You, fa-
miliar at every step.

Amen.

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Coming Events



Blessed Sacrament Happenings

August 28-- Finance Committee Meeting

September 14 -- Religious Ed Classes Begin



August 17--\$1,327.85

Budget--\$1,300.00

MTD Collection--\$4,196.35

MTD Budget--\$3,900.00

YTD Collection--\$9,141.34

YTD Budget--\$9,100.00

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 reg-
ularly and practices stewardship
(time, talent, treasure).*

GOSPEL MEDITATION

I've been hiking Camelback Mountain in Phoenix, Arizona most of my life. It is a vigorous forty-five minutes to the top. Near the peak, the end suddenly appears much further away, and steeper. At that moment, a descending hiker often offers encouragement: "Keep going! The peak is right there. It's not as far as it looks. You can do it!" It usually works. After another five minute push, you summit and enjoy a glorious panorama of the Sonoran Desert in the Valley of the Sun.

When Jesus is asked about how many people are saved, he says: **"Strive to enter through the narrow gate" (Luke 13:24).** How many? Strive! Focus on your journey. What does heavenly census taking have to do with you or me? How would it help a hiker on a mountain to ask the others coming down, "How many people are going to make it to the top?" A normal response would be something like: "How is that a relevant question? Carry on!"

Jesus links one virtue directly to salvation: perseverance (cf. Matt 24:13; *hypomone* in Greek). Strive! Endure! Keep going! The one absolutely necessary virtue is perseverance, to not give up on our journey. The mountain we struggle to climb is often our own weakness, failures, and sins. Persevere in prayer. Keep celebrating the sacraments. Embrace daily duties. With God's grace, you are strong enough to keep going. Perhaps the peak is not as far away as you might fear. Keep going!

— Father John Muir

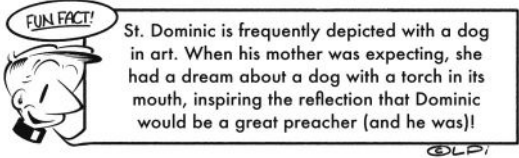
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MINISTRY SCHEDULE	
Lectors	
<u>August 24:</u>	Greg Gough, Wayne Stephens
<u>August 31:</u>	Jerry Fuchs, Misty Sanford
<u>September 7:</u>	Katie Goins, Jacques Williams
Eucharistic Ministers	
<u>August 24:</u>	Barbara Bisel, Janet Clark, Rita Moorman
<u>August 17:</u>	Cindy Clark, Michelle Jones, Kaie Goins
<u>September 7:</u>	Denise and Greg Richardson, Holly Hollis
Collection & Gifts	
<u>August 24:</u>	Dee and Brennah Brasher
<u>August 17:</u>	Jamie, Beau, Luke Bisel
<u>September 7:</u>	Barbara Hammond, Wonet Taylor

“How does St. Dominic travel?”



“He takes a Greyhound.”



Heaven and Regina George

There are certain phrases that serve as a kind of shibboleth for millennials, a dog whistle that only ears formed between 1981 and 1996 can discern. “You can’t sit with us!” is one of those phrases.

It’s from the movie *Mean Girls*, (which, I hear from my younger family members, has now become cool with the kids again, so maybe my point about it being niche is incorrect). The character Regina George, merciless ruler of the cool kids, is rejected from the ultra-exclusive lunch table she herself formed when her minions, tired of her cruelty, serve her the most devastating words a teenager can hear in public: “You can’t sit with us.”

So passes earthly glory, as they say.

At first blush, this Gospel gives “Mean Girls” vibes. We have an image of the unlucky masses clamoring for entry into the kingdom of heaven as God locks the door against them, saying, “I do not know where you are from.”

Very “you-can’t-sit-with-us.”

But we need to remember that the people pounding on the door of heaven in today’s Gospel aren’t people who wanted a seat at God’s lunch table — at least, not until it was the only lunch table left, because they had Regina George’d their way out of all the other ones.

Jesus’ whole thing was that you *can* sit with us, whoever you are, wherever you’re from and whatever you’ve done. But there are a lot of lunch tables in the world, and not everyone wants to be at one with rules like “repent” and “be good to that person you really don’t like.” It’s not always an easy table to sit at, especially when there are so many other options.

We have to choose heaven before heaven becomes our only choice.

Readings for the Week	
Monday:	1 Thes 1:1-5, 8b-10/Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9b/Mt 23:13-22
Tuesday:	1 Thes 2:1-8/Ps 139:1-3, 4-6/Mt 23:23-26
Wednesday:	1 Thes 2:9-13/Ps 139:7-8, 9-10, 11-12ab/Mt 23:27-32
Thursday:	1 Thes 3:7-13/Ps 128:1-2, 4-5/Mt 24:42-51
Friday:	1 Thes 4:1-8 (429)/Ps 97:1 and 2b, 5-6, 10, 11-12/Mk 6:17-29
Saturday:	1 Thes 4:9-11/Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9/Mt 25:14-30

Observances for the week of August 24

Monday:	St. Louis; St. Joseph Calasanz, Priest
Wednesday:	St. Monica
Thursday:	St. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
Friday:	The Passion of St. John the Baptist



Do You Know Him, or Just Know About Him?

Facebook, Twitter, and other forms of social media can be powerful tools of communication. They allow people to stay in touch. They provide an avenue for fresh ideas. People can be engaged in conversations and be exposed to issues of the day in ways few could have dreamed of just a few decades ago. But social media can also give the false sense of really knowing someone, when only the surface has been scratched about who a person is in reality.

You don't really know someone just because you know a lot about him or her and are linked to a profile online. Unfortunately, people develop emotional attachments to the idea of a person all the time. If they do find themselves fortunate enough to meet the person face-to-face one day, they can often find out they never really knew the person in the first place.

There are people who believe they know Jesus so very well. They can readily share their view of what Jesus would do or wouldn't do in a given situation. They own items like crosses and Bibles that seem to provide evidence of this person they know so well. Sometimes, they even strongly admonish others because their view of Jesus is certainly not in line with their own.

But in Luke 13, Jesus speaks about those who claim to know him, but they really do not belong to him at all. They make claims based upon what they have seen and heard, but they have never allowed Jesus to truly change them. They are like Facebook followers; seemingly close, but with no real relationship at all.

Do you know Jesus? Don't just be a fan. Invite Jesus into your life and let the real relationship begin.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS