



BLESSED SACRAMENT

602 Sycamore Street • Owensboro, KY 42301 • 270-926-4741
www.blessedsacramentchapel.org or email at office@bscobo.org

Sunday Mass: 10:00AM

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.

St. Stephen Cathedral Parish Office: 270-683-6525

Pastor: Father John Thomas
jthomas@sscobo.org

Parochial Vicar: Father Christopher Grief
grief@sscobo.org

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



Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy; they will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee. (Isa 35:10)

Psalm:

Lord, come and save us. (Ps 146)

Second Reading:

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. (Jas 5:7)

Gospel:

Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them." (Mt 11:4-5)

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



3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"Among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." - Mt 11:11

My Dear Parishioners:

I would rather be judged by Jesus Christ than praised by anyone else. No one loves me more than he or knows me better. He gave his life for me. If the life I live is one of trust and gratitude that strives to imitate his mercy, even though flawed, I have nothing to fear. This is one reason why I find the prospect of Purgatory as part of my personal judgment to be so appealing. I will finally and forever be sorted out and put right. If when all is said and done, I end up among the goats, then I will have deserved it and will have thrown away the most generous act of kindness of the one who loves me most. Respecting human freedom, Christ is doing all Divinely possible to have a field full of sheep on the great and terrible Day of Judgment. We fear that there will be an unfortunate number of goats.

Mother Theresa of Calcutta, in the years of her service as a Missionary of Charity, most felt the presence of Christ when she was directly caring for the poor, sick, and dying. Most of the time she felt nothing in her prayer. It was the prayer, however, which sustained her ministry. It is exceedingly rare for me to have immediate thoughts of Jesus in pastoral ministry. The personalities of those immediately present overshadow awareness of the Lord. Awareness of the Lord is often strong at liturgy (especially as I stand at the altar at Mass) and other times of prayer. May it be fruitful in kindness. In any case, I fully expect to be surprised at judgment, both by the kindnesses and the cold cruelty the Lord accepts as done to himself. Even for those who come up short in the kindness column, Christ offers his own compassion and sacrifice to their account, if they will at last accept unmerited mercy. In the end, I do firmly believe we will all be surprised!

Only God knows the burden of un-love under which people labor. It is so clear that we are designed to thrive by being loved. Children blossom when wisely loved. This counteracts the inborn tendency to self-centeredness which we call the effect of original sin. Neither is any human love so wise and good as to be perfect, nor does any one of us emerge from childhood undamaged. Just as we hope the children to forgive us our mistakes in their regard, so too must we forgive our parents their faults in our regard. If love consists in God having loved us first, last, and always, having sent his Son in expiation for our sins, then it is paramount that we know in our deepest heart that we are divinely loved, even to death.



December Birthdays

16—Yulanda Williams
18—Robert Johnson
23—Greg Richardson
24—Susan Mutter
29—Linda Wahl

Mass Intentions

December 14 - Danny and Cindy
Clark
December 21 - Dan Halbig
December 24 - Larry Allen
December 28 - Jean Murphy
December 31 - Dan Halbig

Our thoughts and prayers are with the sick: Joanne Kendall, Rollie Pike, Larry Leachman, Dorothy Simmons, Steve Coble, Teresa Luebbert, Diane Selby, Kathi Skidd, Ray Higgs, Pam Wilson, 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, Gary Moorman. **If you know of anyone who is in need of prayer or visitation, please notify the office.**

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.

Time, Talent and Treasure Pledge Form 2026

Thank you to all who have returned your forms. Please remember to complete the form and return to the office by mail or in the collection basket as soon as possible.

Thank you for the many ways you support and serve our Blessed Sacrament Chapel community.

GOSPEL MEDITATION



December 14 -- Religious Ed
December 24 -- Christmas Eve
Mass 7 pm
December 21 -- No Religious Ed
Christmas Break
December 28 -- No Religious Ed
Christmas Break



December 7--\$3,027.00
Budget--\$1,300.00
MTD Collection--\$3,027.00
MTD Budget--\$1,300.00
YTD Collection--\$45,642.09
YTD Budget--\$30,900.00

*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
regularly and practices
stewardship (time, talent,
treasure).*

When I was 11, I was riding my bike on a Friday night in Scottsdale, Arizona. I saw giant spotlights swirling in the sky. Something amazing had to be happening. I pedaled after them with excitement. Sweaty and tired, I arrived, only to find a used car lot. Bright lights, flapping banners, inflatable balloon men swaying wildly in the wind. I stood there, heart sinking. All that spectacle, and all my effort ... for this?

As life proceeds, we learn what it is like to pursue promising but fruitless searches. This week we hear Jesus ask the crowds regarding John the Baptist: "What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?" (Matthew 11:7). He's not just describing the crowd's mis-aimed pursuit. He's naming our tendency to chase after what's flashy but flimsy.

What are our swaying reeds? For me, it is endless video reels on my phone, worldly pleasures, entertainment in sports, and the good opinion of others. Inflated distractions that bend whichever way the wind blows. But they can't satisfy my soul. What are your flimsy reeds?

John the Baptist wasn't a swaying reed. He was rooted, grounded, unafraid to speak the solid truth. The people went to see him because, deep down, they were starving for something real.

This Advent, the Church asks us to reassess: What are we really looking for? Are we chasing the dazzling but hollow? Or are we seeking what is solid and lasting — that which points to Christ?

— Father John Muir

©LPi

Readings for the Week

Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a/Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9/Mt 21:23-27

Tuesday: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23/Mt 21:28-32

Wednesday: Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17/Mt 1:1-17

Thursday: Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19/Mt 1:18-25

Friday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17/Lk 1:5-25

Saturday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 1:26-38

John the Baptist is truly an intriguing figure of history. He was a cousin of Jesus and literally prepared all those who would listen for this new way of life ushered in by a Messiah. Besides the key role he plays in the Gospel story, his depiction in Scripture, and then in literature, movies, and other media, gives us an image of a pretty unique person. How about locusts and wild honey for dinner? Can you imagine camel's hair as a staple in your wardrobe? He lived differently, and he stood out among the status quo. Of course, his look and cuisine didn't stand out nearly as much as his message.

How do you stand out? What separates you from the crowd? God has created each of us completely unique and with a combination of gifts like no one else. How can you uncover and understand your unique gifts? First, reflect on what makes you happiest in life. We are happiest when we are using the talents God gave us. Next, think about what comes naturally to you, whether it is a skill, task, or emotion. Recurring patterns in our behavior and experiences provide clues to our giftedness. Finally, what do other people see in you? The communities we live in, whether it is our family, parish, school, or workplace are filled with people who can provide clues to us by their observations. After these steps, can you say what makes you special? Now, let's start to grow that, lean on it, and stand out in a way that brings glory to God.

Prayer for Advent – New Growth

Dear God,

Bring new life! Your love creates and cultivates.

Bring Your power into the places I think of as “deserts” and your grace to the prayers I fear may be “deserted.”

You can redeem and restore, bring a new song to my heart.
Amen.

Advent Communal Penance Services

Monday, December 15 - 6:00pm

Immaculate

Tuesday, December 16 - 6:00pm

St. Alphonsus

Wednesday, December 17 - 6:00pm

St. Sebastian, Calhoun

Thursday, December 18 - 6:00pm

Precious Blood

Sunday, December 21 - 2:00pm

Saint Stephen Cathedral

What We See in the Desert

I've always wanted to see a real desert.

I know all about frigid, snowy winters and warm, wet summers. I grew up on rich soil that yields lush vegetation and bountiful harvests. But I've never experienced a desert, not in my own country or abroad, and I'm curious.

I know there must be something magical about the desert for it to feature so heavily in Scripture, for to provide a backdrop to so many crucial moments of salvation history. The Israelites following the cloud, the temptation of Christ, the voice crying out: "Prepare the way for the Lord."

Why do these moments have to happen in a desert? Why do they make so much less sense in a tropical rainforest or a verdant forest?

I think it's because the desert doesn't have anything to offer us, at first glance. No one longs for the physical sensation of a dry heat and a beating sun. But the vast emptiness and the almost mystical harshness — even if we don't desire and delight in it, this is a setting that we understand, somehow, intrinsically. We know it deep within our soul. God is there.

We go to Mass. We go to Confession. We pray. We read Scripture. In doing all these things, again and again, we go out to the desert.

Why? What are we expecting to see?

If we expect to be entertained, we will be disappointed. If we expect reassurance, we will be disappointed. If we expect to feel pleasant and safe and sheltered, we will be disappointed.

The desert is there to challenge us. The desert is there to show us who we are, and who we can be.

So go.

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman ©LPI

Ministry Schedule

	Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers	Collection & Gifts
December 14	Barbara Bisel Greg Gough	Cindy Clark Misty Sanford Janet Clark	Burnell Hamilton Steve Coble
December 21	Jacques Williams Misty Sanford	Denise and Greg Richardson Michelle Jones	Jamie, Beau, and Luke Bisel
December 24	Volunteers Needed	Volunteers Needed	Volunteer Needed

Love is an act of hope. It may spark a flame of kindness in another. Like faith, hope does not see with physical eyes. There may be no humanly measurable evidence to ground our having hope in another apparently God forsaken person. Hope acts with love anyway. For it remembers that Christ bore our sins on his body on the Cross, so that freed from sin, we might live for God. By his wounds we are healed. If I know in the core of my being that I am loved, then I love others for the joy of already being loved by Christ, not for the love I will have to eke out of others (or resent if they fail to provide to my satisfaction). I worry that during this season of Advent, as we approach the sacred season of Christmas, our focus is not entire on the Peace, Love, and Joy the Christ Child offers to us and in turn, asks us to offer one another. Let us pray that the GIFT of this time not be lost!

There is un-diminishable joy in the voice of the King as he declares, “Come, all you blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” This is gladness, majesty, celebration, indeed, Divine Joy. The other sentence is not an equal opposite. The horror of the accursed who choose the hell fire prepared for the devil and its angels approaches the vanishing point of nothingness and insignificance. Being full of itself, it is full of emptiness and implodes towards nothing. For love’s sake God keeps it in some vestige of being, for evil will have no last word. Unlike earthly terrorists, it cannot diminish God’s joy and that of the Blessed in any way at all. Loving Joy is the Pity of Heaven and hell’s sulk cannot touch it. While this heaven and earth, along with us, will pass away, Blessed be the Day the New Creation. Let us hasten it with loving faith and hope for all the least of these brothers and sisters of ours. This must be our Advent cry: Come Lord Jesus, come. Come quickly so the darkness might be no more. Amen.

Blessings,

Fr. John



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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 ReportBishopAbuse.org or call 1-800-276-1562