



# 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:

Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel. (Isa 7:14)

### Psalm:

Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory. (Ps 24)

### Second Reading:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom 1:7)

### Gospel:

"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Mt 1:20-21)



**4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home." - Mt 1:20

## My Dear Parishioners:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Let us pray.

I abandon myself into your hands  
Do with me whatever you will.  
Whatever you do, I thank you:  
I am ready for all;  
I accept all.  
Let only your will be done in me.  
I wish no more than this.  
Without reserve  
Boundless confidence. Amen.

This is the Prayer of Abandonment. I keep it before me almost always. But I have to say there are many, many times in my life when I have not PRAYED this prayer, but only READ it. This prayer makes me know what a spiritual infant I really am.

I cannot think of prayer that is more “counter-cultural” than “The Prayer of Abandonment.” In our world, giving up control is for the weak and the lost. It certainly is not for people who know what they want in life.

I mean, really, what kind of a person gives up his/her own ambitions so that someone else, even God can call the shots? What if he wants me to live as a homeless person? What if he wants me to give all of my possessions away? - - What if he takes away my livelihood? - - What if he wants ME to live an unnoticed, boring and mundane life?

I am often ashamed to admit that I want to be popular and well-liked. So what if that gets in the way of my spiritual development. - - What if I pray this prayer and he takes away my health and I am called to suffer and die young - - and I've told him this was okay? What if he took away the people that I hold dear? My parents, my siblings, my friends? What if he asks me to stop watching television? - - What if he asked me to dig ditches or clean out pigpens or change diapers at a nursing home for the rest of my life, all and only for his glory? - - What if he asked me to be a rejected prophet? Do I really love him that much? - - What if, what if, what if? And to do it with boundless confidence, and without reserve and to THANK HIM?

I can't pray this prayer! It is too scary! Sometimes all I can do is to pray for a desire to accept abandonment.

When you really think about spiritual abandonment, the passive acceptance of trials and sufferings that are aimed at drawing us closer to God, it is not for the faint of heart. You have to be rock solid in your faith. You have to be gutsy. I have seen some pretty gutsy people of faith in my life that walked away from all kinds of worldly successes to do the will of God in a spirit of abandonment. They are amazing people and amazing things happen because of them.



## December Birthdays

23—Greg Richardson

24—Susan Mutter

29—Linda Wahl

**Our thoughts and prayers are with the sick: Rita Moorman, 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.*

## Mass Intentions

December 21 - Dan Halbig

December 24 - Larry Allen

December 28 - Jean Murphy

December 31 - Dan Halbig

**May the true spirit of Christmas fill your heart with joy today and every day throughout the new year.**

**Father John Thomas,  
Father Christopher Grief,  
Sister Monica Seaton, OSU**



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December 21--Change of Environment for Christmas After Mass

December 24 -- Christmas Eve Mass 7 pm

December 21 and 28-- No Religious Ed Christmas Break

December 31 – Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God Vigil Mass 6pm



December 14--\$1,328.00

Budget--\$1,300.00

MTD Collection--\$4,355.00

MTD Budget--\$2,600.00

YTD Collection--\$46,970.09

YTD Budget--\$32,200.00

*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).*

## GOSPEL MEDITATION

A priest friend recently told me a remarkable story. One of his cousins reported having a vivid dream in which an angel told him the family needed to exhume their grandmother's body from a cemetery in New York and return it to her birthplace in Romania. She had been dead nearly 10 years. As you might expect, the family thought it was, well, crazy. But astonishingly they exhumed her body. It was incorrupt, showing no signs of decomposition. That experience sparked healing, faith, and reconciliation throughout the family.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Joseph also receives a dream. He's confused, afraid. But in the quiet of sleep, God speaks: "Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home" (Matthew 1:20). When he wakes, Joseph acts. He doesn't overanalyze or dismiss the message. He trusts, and acts.

God still speaks – not necessarily through literal dreams but through those deeper intuitions of the heart. St. Ignatius of Loyola taught that God's voice draws us into peace, courage, and love. But we have to listen to it. Advent is a time for stillness. As we prepare for Christ's coming, we're invited to enter that quiet space where God's voice can be heard.

When and how do you become most receptive to God? Is it in silence? In prayer? In nature? At Mass? This week, go there. Be still. Listen. And like Joseph, have the courage to act on what God shows you.

– Father John Muir

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## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/Lk 1:46-56

**Tuesday:** *St. John of Kanty, Priest*  
Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14/Lk 1:57-66

**Wednesday:** *Christmas Eve*  
Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29/Lk 1:67-79

**Thursday:** *The Nativity of the Lord*  
Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 (2a)/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/  
Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25

Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 (3c)/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

**Friday:** *St. Stephen, First Martyr*  
Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17/Mt 10:17-22

**Saturday:** *St. John, Apostle and Evangelist*  
1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12/Jn 20:1a, 2-8

## St. Stephen | Feast Day December 26

The Acts of the Apostles tells the story of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr. A man filled with grace and power, he worked great wonders among the people. Some Jews debated with St. Stephen but could not match his wisdom and spirit. Eventually, a charge of blasphemy was brought up against him, and the local population demanded that he be tried and sentenced. He was seized and carried before the Sanhedrin. Despite the danger he faced, in front of the Sanhedrin and his accusers, St. Stephen gave a long speech about the history of Israel and the blessings that God had given upon His chosen people. He talked about how Israel had become disobedient despite God's abundant mercy. This enraged his accusers, and eventually the crowd dragged him out of the city and stoned him to death.

Even in his final moments, St. Stephen displayed great forgiveness and even asked God not to hold the sins of his attackers against them. Hundreds of years after his death, he is still a role model for us to follow.

### Prayer for Advent – Miracles

Dear God,

You are in the miracle business.  
I still believe that You can move mountains and separate seas.  
Break into every unknown and astound us with Your goodness and grace.

Amen.

## Advent Communal Penance Service

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**Sunday, December 21 - 2:00pm**  
*Saint Stephen Cathedral*

## The First Transfiguration

I imagine Joseph waking up the morning after the dream, blinking in the dim half-light of the dawn.

One day, decades from now, the baby his wife carries will stand on a mountaintop. His face will shine like the sun, and those who look upon him will fall down upon their own faces in fear.

We call this the transfiguration, and Joseph won't be there to see it. But that doesn't matter. What those men will learn on the mountaintop, Joseph already knows. He learned it last night.

Today, he shrugs off the remnants of slumber and stands up.

"Rise, and do not be afraid." This is what the baby – a baby no longer, but a man now, one in the last days of his life – will say to his companions on the mountain a few decades from now. They will look up to see him standing there the same as he always was, and they will realize that he did not change at all. They did.

"Do not be afraid." This is what the angel said last night as he revealed to Joseph the will of God: that Joseph take Mary and the Child as his own, despite having so many reasons not to do so. And today Joseph wakes up and the world is the same as it always was: Mary is pregnant, and the Child does not belong to him.

No, the world has not changed. Joseph has.

He rises, and goes to Mary.

Advent is drawing quickly to a close, and Christmas is coming soon. The change is upon us. Do we rise to accept it, or do we fall on our faces in fear?

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman ©LPi

## Ministry Schedule

	Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers	Collection & Gifts
<b>December 21</b>	Jacques Williams Misty Sanford	Denise and Greg Richardson Michelle Jones	Jamie, Beau, and Luke Bisel
<b>December 24</b>	Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteers
<b>December 28</b>	Greg Gough Layson Brooks	Holly Hollis, Janet Clark, Cindy Clark	Barbara Hammond, Wonet Taylor

The Blessed Virgin Mary was that kind of person. Let it be done Angel, as you say. I'll have this baby. Do we realize what kind of strength of spirit that had to be in her? Can you imagine the fears and questions that could have stopped the Blessed Mother from fulfilling her true destiny? What will people think? What will Joseph think? - - Will people believe me? Will they think I am crazy or demon possessed? - - Will they think that I am a "lose" woman trying to get out of a pinch and stone me? - - What will happen to my child? - - Will I live a normal life with the Son of God as my child? Will I be happy? Will he be happy? Will he be loved? - - Will people treat him fairly? - - What if, What if, What if?

But Mary said "yes." And of course, it was just a few months later that Simeon turned to her in the temple as Mary and Joseph presented the child Jesus to God and said, You realize, that because of him your heart will be broken - - your heart will be pierced through. She still didn't run. She didn't hide. She accepted, with 'gratitude, boundless confidence, and without reserve."

During the Sundays of Advent, we are called to consider the MESSAGE of the angel and the EXAMPLE of Mary. When we see her total commitment and abandonment to the will of God, we realize the crisis of our modern day - - the refusal to be open to the will of God because He just might ask us to step out of our comfort zone. He just might ask us to release control.

The question always has been and always will be - "What if?" - - What if the rug is pulled out from under us? Will we still be able to rejoice in God? What if God speaks to us - - and I believe he does - - and asks us to do radical things for Him? Have we spiritually prepared ourselves to accept not only the blessings but also the crosses for what He will teach us and others through our lives and our example?

As we draw ever closer to the great day of Christmas, let us pray for the desire to abandon ourselves to God, not searching out pain, suffering and misfortune, but being open to accepting anything to further the Kingdom as Mary did. Let us pray for the strength to give ourselves totally to Him, so that he can work through us in whatever way he chooses.

I abandon myself into your hands  
Do with me whatever you will.

Blessings, Fr. John



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**A blessed Christmas to each of you. May the peace, love, and joy of Christ fill your heart. Share these gifts to all you meet over the holidays. Think of you often. Much love!**

**Sister Jeannette, SSND**

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](http://ReportBishopAbuse.org) or call 1-800-276-1562