

14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JULY 5, 2026



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

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

See, your king shall come to you; a just savior is he, meek, and riding on an ass, on a colt, the foal of an ass. (Zec 9:9)

Psalm:

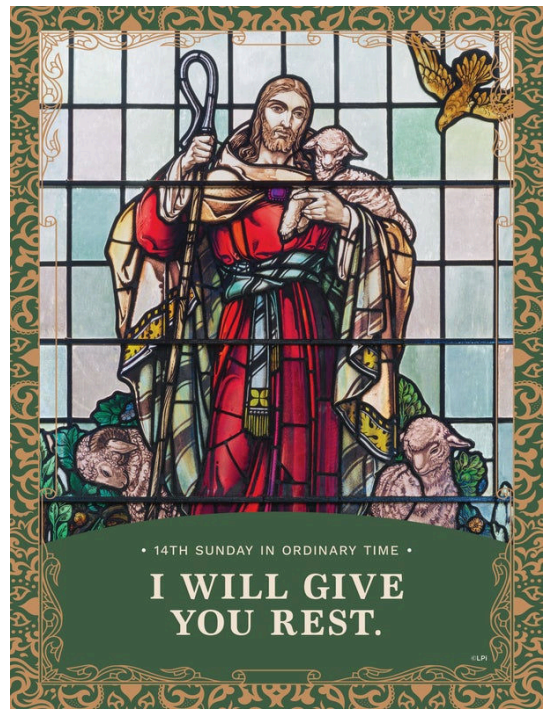
I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God. (Ps 145)

Second Reading:

For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (Rom 8:13)

Gospel:

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. (Mt 11:29)



My Dear Parishioners:

If we're honest, most of us would admit that we're far from "self-made." Wherever we have grown beyond our immaturity and our limitations, we have usually grown through another's personal influence: a parent, a coach, a teacher, a friend. In my experience, these key people almost always manage to combine two seemingly contrary attitudes: 1) fundamental acceptance and 2) ongoing challenge. I find myself most free to change in the presence of someone who loves me as I am, but who desires—by reason of that love—that I become more. The football coach who wins games is the one who loves his players like sons and drives them like mules. The teacher who gets the best results is the one who delights in her students as they are but pushes them toward a common goal.

We see then a basic law of human growth: acceptance and judgment, support and challenge, mercy and justice, must meet. Support without challenge is cheap love. Rigor without basic acceptance crushes the spirit and paralyzes with fear. Only when we encounter both sides of love do we really receive the strength to grow. And, deep down, we all long for someone who loves us in this challenging way.

Jesus presents himself in today's Gospel as the ultimate fulfillment of this longing. And he sharpens our hunger for it through the paradoxical image of the "easy yoke." How can a yoke ever be easy? The dual purpose of yokes gives us a clue. On the one hand, yokes serve to link a draught animal to a heavy burden, like a plow. In this sense, a yoke seems wholly negative; it only adds to our heaviness and toil. But yokes do not link animals only to their load; yokes also link animals to one another. That's how a pair of oxen came to be called a "yoke of oxen," because a yoke fixes the two oxen side by side. Yokes don't just serve to impose burdens; they also serve to distribute burdens.

This dual purpose suggests, in turn, two ways of understanding Jesus' command to take his yoke. We can imagine Jesus strapping the heavy cargo of moral and spiritual perfection to our necks and walking away. And it's true that it requires effort to be a Christian: Jesus doesn't hide this fact. But we know that Jesus cannot mean this alone, since he reproaches the Pharisees elsewhere for "tying heavy burdens on men's backs" without "lifting a finger to help them" (Mt 23:4).

No, there is a second way to imagine taking on Christ's yoke: namely, becoming Christ's yokefellow, stepping into the yoke that he already shoulders. Here we imagine Jesus in the yoke alongside us, distributing the weight onto his own shoulders. Both images capture a part of what it means to cooperate with grace in the Christian life.

But this second aspect is the one that, in my experience, we most easily forget. Our conscience rarely allows us to forget the first—that Christianity sets a high moral bar. We all know that Jesus didn't stop at commanding his followers not to commit adultery and not to kill. He went deeper. He insisted that they stop entertaining lustful thoughts, that they let go of grudges. This is all true. But sometimes when we go about tackling our sins of weakness, we forget that we do not face them alone. When temptations of lust, or anger, or laziness beset us, we may grit our teeth and violently mobilize our will against them. But this rarely works all of itself. And Jesus knows this. That's why he commands us in no uncertain terms: "Come to me all you who labor"

July Birthdays

6—Fr. Christopher Grief
10—Chelis Carmona
13—Francine Epison
15—Georgia Holland
17—Wayne Stephens,
21—Meredith Fain
22—Marcia Wilhite
24—Lori Robinson
27—Robert Hagan
29—Hugh Moorman
30—Yvonne Mundy

Mass Intentions

July 5 - Charlene Armendarez

July 12 - Larry Allen

July 19 - Carl Millay

Our thoughts and prayers are with the sick: Phaedra Fuchs, Mary Ann Terry, Nicole Melton, Mike Dunn, Renee Perkins, 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, 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.

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Coming Events



July 25&26 - Raffle sales at Saint Stephen Cathedral after Masses

July 31-Picnic Prep - Volunteer sign up coming soon

August 1-Picnic Drive-Thru 11am-1pm



August 9-Raffle Drawing after Mass



June 28--\$3,699.50

Budget--\$1,300.00

MTD Collection--\$8,211.59

MTD Budget--\$5,200.00

YTD Collection--\$100,721.06

YTD Budget--\$68,600.00

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

This weekend, our nation celebrates the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Unlike most nations, the United States was not founded primarily on a shared ethnicity, language, or culture. Instead, our founders built a political community out of diverse peoples united by a shared vision of liberty. That vision echoes something deep in the Christian mystery revealed in today's Gospel.

Jesus returns to his hometown. The people see only what is familiar: the carpenter, the son of Mary, one of their own. As Mark tells us, "They took offense at him. Jesus said, 'A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.'" Their narrow vision blinds them. Jesus has come to inaugurate a new communion that transcends geography, bloodlines, and culture. He has come to unite all people in himself.

At its best, America's national unity reflects this possibility, which fully subsists only in the Catholic Church. Our unity is not based on ancestry or tribe, but on a shared commitment to higher ideals. For this reason, we can love our country with gratitude while situating patriotism within the broader horizon of faith.

Rooted in Christ, we are less vulnerable to the unholy tribalism that threatens civic life and faith. This weekend, let us thank God for our nation and pray that we also live as citizens of Heaven in Jesus Christ.

— Father John Muir

Readings for the Week

Monday: Hos 2:16, 17c-18, 21-22/Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9/Mt 9:18-26

Tuesday: Hos 8:4-7, 11-13/Ps 115:3-4, 5-6, 7ab-8, 9-10/Mt 9:32-38

Wednesday: Hos 10:1-3, 7-8, 12/Ps 105:2-3, 4-5, 6-7/Mt 10:1-7

Thursday: Hos 11:1-4, 8e-9/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16/Mt 10:7-15

Friday: Hos 14:2-10/Ps 51:3-4, 8-9, 12-13, 14 and 17/Mt 10:16-23

Saturday: Is 6:1-8/Ps 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5/Mt 10:24-33

Observances for the Week

Monday: St. Maria Goretti, Virgin and Martyr

Thursday: St. Augustine Zhao Rong, Priest, and Companions, Martyrs

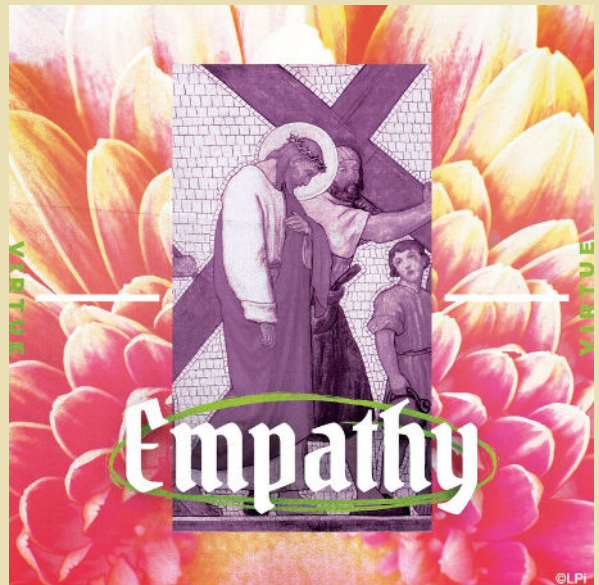
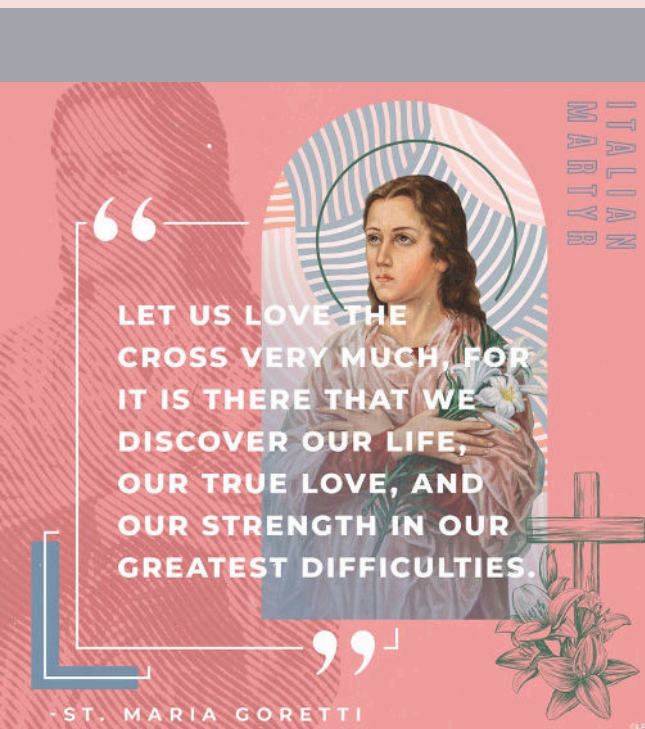
Saturday: St. Benedict, Abbot

Empathy, Explained!

The virtue of empathy describes our ability to connect emotionally with the suffering of others. It's our interior capacity to appreciate and experience other people's feelings — to the extent, even, that we allow those feelings to impact our own decisions and our own actions.

Christ had empathy for us and for our state of imprisonment in original sin. He had empathy for the suffering we endure because of our self-imposed exile from friendship with God. This empathy meant that he sacrificed himself willingly for our salvation — he wanted to do it, because he had allowed our feelings to intermingle with his own.

Since empathy flows directly from charity, the theological virtue that enables us to love God and to love others, we can use charity as a way to increase the empathy we feel. If we find ourselves struggling to muster empathy in a particular situation, engaging in charity will liberate us from our state of self-centeredness.



QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - REFLECT AND RESPOND TO SCRIPTURE

1st Reading Question

Zechariah speaks of a just and humble king who will lead all people to a future of peace and joy.
What are some things that make you genuinely happy?

2nd Reading Question

Paul teaches that the Spirit of God dwells in those who believe in Jesus.
Where do you see the Holy Spirit active in your life?

Gospel Question

Jesus speaks of himself as meek and humble of heart, and invites us to find “rest” in him.
What are some burdens Jesus could relieve for you?

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LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

These days, everyone’s an expert. We have a world of information at our fingertips. But some answers can’t be found in newspapers or even history books. What God hides from the wise, He reveals to the little ones. Are you looking in the right place?

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Ministry Schedule

	Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers	Collection & Gifts
July 5	Misty Sanford Barb Bisel	Vivian Higgs Sister Monica Seaton Janet Clark	Bernadette Thames
July 12	Jacques Williams Leland Herzog	Holly Hollis Michelle Jones Barb Bisel	Janet and Lila Clark

Pastor’s Corner Continued...

Often, when we struggle with a pattern of sin, it’s because there’s a deeper cause, some fear or insecurity that we have not yet brought to Christ for healing. I know of a woman who had a terrible problem with gossip. She worked as a parish secretary, knew a lot about the comings and goings of parishioners, and related these facts almost compulsively to whomever would listen. She heard the Gospel all the time; she knew it was wrong; but she couldn’t stop. One day she admitted her problem to a priest. The priest simply asked her what she feared would happen if she stopped gossiping. After reflecting for a moment, she finally replied, “I’m afraid that I’ll be boring, that people will lose interest in me.” Deep down, she was afraid that she was not lovable in her own right.

The priest then suggested that she bring this fear to Christ in prayer. When this woman did so, she sensed Christ telling her, “Fear not.” She felt Christ loving her, supporting her and giving her strength. She kept the practice up; she kept going to Christ with the root of her temptation; she kept receiving his assurance. Things didn’t change overnight, of course. But little by little she was transformed. Because she became convinced that she was loved quite apart from her gossip, she gradually let go of the habit.

This is what it means to take on Christ’s yoke: to strive to live the fullness of the law’s demands—yes—but never to do so alone. It means to allow Christ to stand in the yoke alongside us, to allow him to shoulder the greater part of the burden. Christ’s yoke is easy because, at heart of Christian discipleship, we find not a law, but a person, a person who is “meek and humble of heart” (Mt 11:29), a person who loves us and shoulders our load. Thanks be to God!

Blessings,

Fr. John

**BLESSED SACRAMENT
CHAPEL PICNIC**

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1

50/50 Raffle Tickets on sale now
Buy from a parishioner or message on
Facebook. 1 Ticket for \$5

BBQ ribs, chicken, and pulled pork
Whole Chickens- \$12
Pound of Pulled Pork- \$12
Ribs Full Rack- \$25 Half Rack \$13

Drive-thru Pick Up
11:00am-1:00pm

50/50 Raffle

Tickets to sell will be distributed
at church or mailed to
parishioners.

Last year the total half pot
sales were \$5,085. Let’s try to
make this year the biggest one
yet!

To turn in sold tickets or if you
need more tickets please
contact Cindy Clark, Michelle
Jones,
or Sister Monica



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IMP—Kroger

Thank you to everyone who has designated Blessed Sacrament as your community reward partner. If you do not have a community reward partner, please designate Blessed Sacrament. Blessed Sacrament's # is WX799.

Go to krogercommunityrewards.com to register. Thanks for your support.

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