

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

SEPTEMBER 20, 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
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Parochial Vicar: Father Christopher Grief
grief@sscobo.org

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



Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call him while he is near. (Is 55:6)

Psalm:

The Lord is near to all who call upon him. (Ps 145)

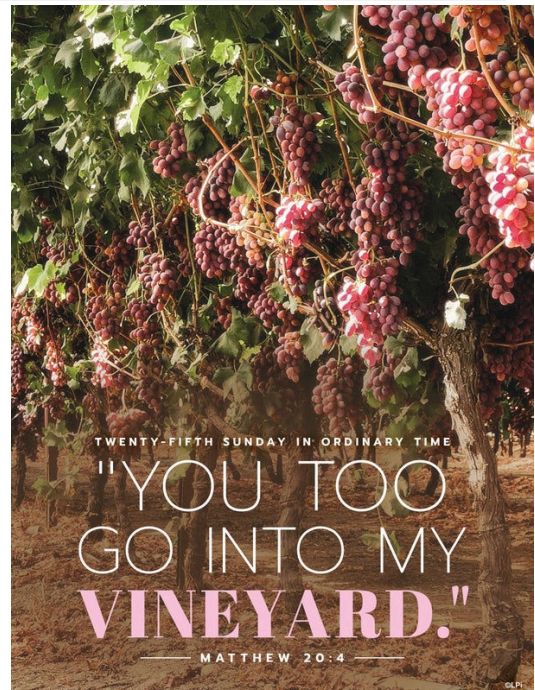
Second Reading:

I am caught between the two.

I long to depart this life and be with Christ,
for that is far better. (Phil 1:23)

Gospel:

"What if I wish to give this last one the same as you?
Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money?
Are you envious because I am generous?" (Mt 20:14-15)



My Dear Parishioners:

The parable we have just heard raises some critical questions both for believers as well as those who are questing faith and trying to find out who God really is. There are other parables along similar lines with this one that are equally as hard to fathom. Take for example the parable of the prodigal son. The critical question today is: What do we do with those who went out to work at dawn, the one's who worked so hard, who bore the heavy burdens of the day's work and then received the same wage as the last group who only had an hour's work? Or what do we do with the elder son who had to watch the prodigal son get the big feast even though he had stayed at home, remaining in His father's house while following all the rules?

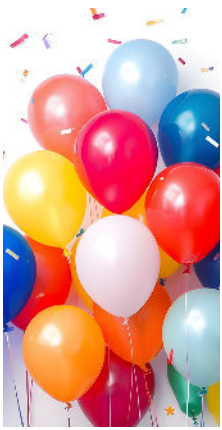
The questions raised are manifold. Doesn't this knock the pins out from under morality? Why should we observe all the rules of morality if God is going to forgive everybody anyway? Another question raised is about justice. Is there no justice in God's ways if everybody, saint and sinner alike, get the same reward at the end of their lives?

In attempting to answer the questions raised by these parables the first thing we must do is put behind us all feelings of jealousy, envy, and self-pity, along with sort of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" mentality. Also we must set aside all standards of human justice. The justice of God is not the justice of man. Our ways are not God's ways. Our God is the God who justifies sinners, people just like us. God is not like the blindfolded woman holding a sword in one hand and a set of scales in the other.

Once we have put jealousy and envy aside, once we stop judging God's mercy, and once we have set to rest our propensity to critically question God's intentions, then we can turn to the first part of the answer, the part that deals with justice. In many counseling situations I have had I've talked with people who are extremely upset with themselves and who judge themselves very harshly and critically because others around them seem to be more favored by God than they. "Why is it, Father, they ask, "that my friends have greater gifts than I do? Why are they always so close to the Lord and I am not? Why is God always doing things for them and I seem to be so distant from the Lord? Why are others more talented and gifted than I and have more friends than I do?" Mind you, these question are not always couched in jealousy or envy, rather many times they are couched in terms of self-condemnation. Self-condemnation is one of the most insidious works of the devil.

The proper responses in such situations is to bring them to where they drop the measuring scales of justice held by the blindfolded lady with the sword. They, and we with them, need to think in terms the God who, because of Jesus Christ, is justifying sinners. We need to pay attention to our own justification in God's mercy. Comparison with others is always odious. Who authenticates you? God and God alone! Who justifies you? God and God alone! Do not judge His love or measure His work within you by comparing yourself with others. Such comparisons can lead to spiritual pride or spiritual despair. Comparisons can likewise lead to gossiping, back-biting, envy, jealousy, and destruction of the peace and communion God has in mind for all of our relationships with all of those around us.

Having then put down the measuring scales of human justice, what do we then do in addressing the questions raised in the parables? Many resort to the economic approach and devise a system whereby we think we can earn God's favor. This approach counsels us to toil and labor in such a way that if we work hard enough God will be obliged to give us His love because we have earned it. He cannot



October Birthdays

6—Holly Hollis
 10—Jacques Williams III
 13—Vicki Leonard
 17—Kelly Hollis
 19—Sister Monica Seaton

Mass Intentions

September 20 - Carl Millay
 September 27 - Sam Thruston
 October 4 - Sandra Brown

Our thoughts and prayers are with the sick: Rayma Hollis, Judy Aronold, Ginny Singleton, 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, 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, especially **Charles Brown, Sr.** Remember to pray for the souls in purgatory, especially for those who have no one to pray for them.*

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



Coming Events



September 20 - Religious Ed begins

September 20 - Catechetical Sunday

September 20 - Disciples Response Fund Sunday

September 27 - Religious Ed

September 27 - Priesthood Sunday



September 13--INFO NOT AVAILABLE AT TIME OF PRINT*

Budget--\$1,541.00

MTD Collection--*

MTD Budget--\$3,082.00

YTD Collection--*

YTD Budget--\$16,951.00

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

Every December, the priests of my diocese gather for a Christmas dinner with our bishop. Nearly 200 of us in one room: newly ordained and long retired, pastors of large parishes and quiet confessors, men full of energy and others moving more slowly. Some carry visible success; others bear hidden wounds. It is a tapestry of vocations and lives. When the bishop thanks us, I am always moved. For a moment, none of our differences matter. What matters is that we belong to one another.

I usually leave that evening with a deep sense of peace, but also with a sober realization. Nothing drains joy from the vineyard of the Lord faster than comparison. The quiet habit of measuring, ranking, and resenting can creep in even among those who sincerely serve God.

That is what Jesus exposes in today's parable of the workers in the vineyard. The early laborers are not upset because they were treated unjustly; they are angry because others were treated generously. Their resentment blinds them to the gift already in their hands. When the landowner asks, "Are you envious because I am generous?" he names the real wound.

This tension echoes throughout salvation history: the elder brother resenting the prodigal, the faithful servant scorning the latecomer. Jesus does not deny the labor of those who have borne the heat of the day, but he refuses to let God's mercy become a zero-sum game.

In the end, the vineyard's reward is not about fairness but belonging. The joy offered is communion with a generous Father, who delights in gathering early and late, strong and weak, into one household of grace.

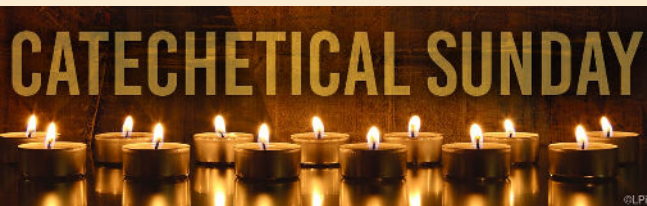
— Father John Muir

Readings for the Week

Monday: Eph 4:1-7, 11-13/Ps 19:2-3, 4-5/Mt 9:9-13
Tuesday: Prv 21:1-6, 10-13/Ps 119:1, 27, 30, 34, 35, 44/Lk 8:19-21
Wednesday: Prv 30:5-9/Ps 119:29, 72, 89, 101, 104, 163/Lk 9:1-6
Thursday: Eccl 1:2-11/Ps 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 and 17bc/Lk 9:7-9
Friday: Eccl 3:1-11/Ps 144:1b and 2abc, 3-4/Lk 9:18-22
Saturday: Eccl 11:9-12:8/Ps 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 and 17/Lk 9:43b-45

Observances for the Week

Monday: St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Wednesday: St. Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest
Saturday: Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs



Prayer for Catechists

Dear Lord,

Anoint those who serve as catechists,
those who tell your story of determined
love for your people.

Be with our catechists in their classrooms,
inspire the hearts of those in their care,
ignite a new generation of disciples for
you!

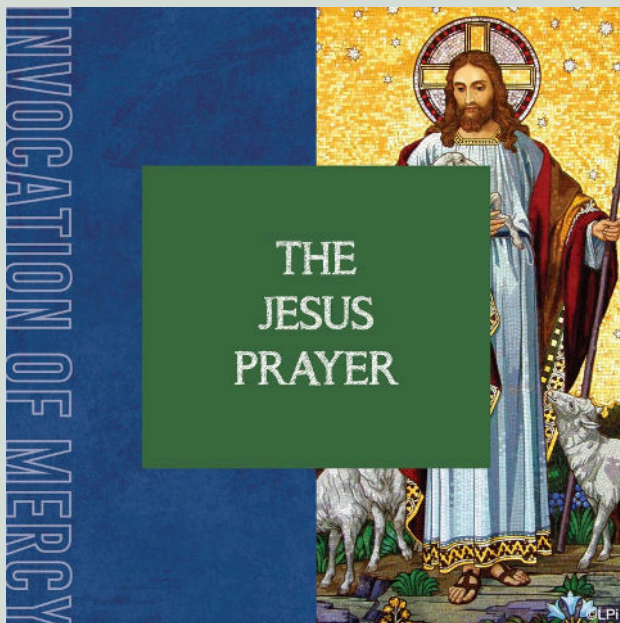
Amen.

The Jesus Prayer, Explained!

The Jesus Prayer is a short invocation of mercy in the name of Jesus: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

The exact origins of the prayer are unclear, though it is often attributed to the tradition of Eastern Christianity, possibly via the Desert Fathers (early Christian ascetics who dwelled in Egypt). The prayer has been important to the traditions of both the Eastern Orthodox and the Eastern Catholic faithful. The text echoes the words of the publican in the parable from Luke 18:9-14, whose humble manner of prayer was praised by Jesus. Its short form and simple wording make it ideal for meditative prayer.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in paragraph 2667, highlights the Jesus Prayer, saying that “by it the heart is opened to human wretchedness and the Savior's mercy.”



QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - REFLECT AND RESPOND TO SCRIPTURE

1st Reading Question

Isaiah teaches that while God’s thoughts and ways are far beyond our understanding, the Lord is nonetheless near to us.

When do you feel closest to God?

2nd Reading Question

As Paul writes to the Philippians from prison, he speaks of his spiritual dilemma of feeling caught between life and death.

Who do you turn to for spiritual guidance?

Gospel Question

In the parable of the workers in the vineyard, Jesus teaches that in the kingdom of Heaven, God’s generosity is not always easily understood.

Where do you see God’s generosity at work among your family or friends?

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LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

The master rewards the latecomers with the same wage as those who labored all day, upsetting the construct of who deserves what — and why. May we never seek to be the judge of what others deserve. May we labor in our vineyard with joy and gratitude.

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Ministry Schedule

	Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers	Collection & Gifts
September 20	Misty Sanford Barb Bisel	Greg & Denise Richardson Holly Hollis	Bernadette Thames Janet & Lila Clark
September 27	Jacques Williams Greg Gough	Janet Clark Cindy Clark Barb Bisel	Jamie, Beau, and Luke Bisel

Pastor's Corner Continued...

deny us, we think, because through a hard fought life we claim we have earned it and therefore deserve it. Again, however, God will thwart us and tell us that as high as the heavens are above the earth so to His ways are above our ways. No one of us can earn God's love just as no one of us can earn the love of another human being. Love is neither the subject of justice nor of economics. There is no price tag on it... it cannot be bought, just as it cannot be sold. When it comes to the earning theory we all get the same wage; the one who went to work in the first hour of the day receives the same wage as the one who went to work in the last hour of the day. The prodigal son and the elder son who stayed at home share equally in their father's love and their father's goods.

With what, then, are we left? We are left, my friends, with the glory the beauty of working not to save our own skins, not for our own justification, but of working hard to love others and working for their salvation. The owner's vineyard is the field of human relationships in which we labor and toil unselfishly for the good of others, not for our own rights or our favored relationship with God. What we are left with is a system of morality, of ethics, and of behavior that gives us glory and dignity insofar as we love our enemies, do good to those who hurt us, throw aside justice and economics while simply and humbly living as Christ did, for the sake of others that they might develop and grow. We live in a system wherein the strong stop by the wayside and share their strength with the weak. Just as the Samaritan stopped to share his strength with the battered and victimized man lying helpless in the ditch, so we live to do the same, whether it be the sharing of our surplus wealth or the overflowing excesses of God's graces within us... His mercy and forgiveness included.

The workers in God's vineyard ought to be working for the sake of others, not simply for their own gain. The toil described by St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians, which we read in today's second reading, is a labor of love for the sake of others. Paul frankly confesses that he would rather be dead, that dying would be for his own gain since he would be with Christ in heaven. But he goes on living in the flesh while toiling in the vineyard for the sake of those whom he loves rather than for the sake of his own comfort and gain. This is the true posture and the genuine attitude the Christian. Rejoice with me, says God our Father, because my Son who was dead has come back to life. All of your work and all of your devotion redounds to His risen life. Besides, you haven't lost a thing. Instead you've gained a brother or a sister. Or are you jealous and envious because you have to share all of these good things with them? Did you stay at home remaining faithful to me and do all of the work that you did just so you could keep it all to yourself?

This, my friends, is the ultimate foundation of morality and of any ethical system. We keep our behavior good, not for our own sake but for the sake of others, be they friend or enemy, be they Catholic or Protestant, be they Jew or Gentile, male or female. Isaiah tells us in the first reading: "Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; let him turn to the Lord for mercy, to our God, who is generous in forgiving." Well, my friends, how are they to know that God is generous and forgiving unless He is manifested to the wicked, manifested by we who are members of the Body of Christ? His temple built of living flesh offers God's presence and God's ways to men and women who need to see and receive His mercy, His generosity, and His forgiveness.

Far from being cheated, far from being denied justice, far from being defrauded of your wages, you, the sons and daughters of God, whether you yourselves are the prodigals, or whether you have been the faithful ones who stayed at home and worked hard in your Father's vineyard, you the little ones, the one's with little fame and no renown, you are the hidden power and glory of Christ. For you are the signs of contradiction, you are the hidden Christ tucked deep down within the guts of all that is human. You are God's salt, God's seed, and God's productive toil for the salvation of those who are lost but nevertheless destined, just as you are, to share in His limitless and measureless Love.

Blessings, Fr. John



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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