

Pastor's Letter

January 26, 2025—3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Church Family,

In September of 2019 Pope Francis designated that the Third Sunday of Ordinary time should be celebrated as the Sunday of the Word of God. He did this to highlight the importance of Sacred Scripture in the life of the church. Knowledge of the Bible is essential to a vibrant and growing faith. As St. Jerome said, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ." The Bible, the written Word of God, is our supreme witness to the living Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. In the Bible we discover where we come from, why we are here, where evil and suffering come from and what God has done about it, and how we can go from being part of the problem to part of the solution. In Scripture, God has revealed the answers to all the big questions of life.

In today's first reading from the book of Ezra we read about the Israelites reaction to hearing the Scriptures read to them for the first time in generations after the destruction of the temple by the Babylonians. We see how attentive and reverent they are as they listen for hours to God's revelation to their ancestors. It raises a question for us: do we really appreciate the importance of Scripture and what a great gift it is? When the people heard the Word, they wept, because it so challenged them. When we hear the words of the Bible, do we take them that seriously? Those words are addressed to us, just as much as they were to Israel. The call to conversion, to be transformed, is just as urgent now as it was then. Every Sunday at Mass, during the Liturgy of the Word, God himself speaks to us. Any time we want to we can pick up the Bible and have an encounter with our Creator. What a blessing! Jesus proclaimed liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind, freedom to the oppressed. Let's not take this for granted. On this Sunday of the Word of God, may we commit ourselves to grow in knowledge and love of Christ by growing in knowledge of Sacred Scripture.

Blessings,

Fr. Scott

Coordinator of Religious Education Needed

We are in search of a new Coordinator of Religious Education for St. Brigid and St. Joseph parishes. Duties include managing all aspects of our Parish School of Religion and sacramental preparations. This is a part time paid position. For more information contact Fr. Scott at 217-645-3444 or ssnider0528@gmail.com

Bulletin Deadline

All information must be submitted by noon on Tuesday. Submit to: church@stsbej.org

2024 Contribution Statements

**If you have received your statement you will probably notice Jan-Feb. contributions are missing.. That is due to our database switch this year. If you are needing the missing months please call the office.

It is time for us to send out your annual contribution statement for your tax purposes. If you have received them in the past, we will be sending them to you in January. If you have not requested in the past, please let the offices know you would like one.