

Pastor's Letter

September 1, 2024—22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Church Family,

There is a famous scene in Shakespeare's play Macbeth where Lady Macbeth is haunted by guilt for encouraging her husband to murder Duncan, the former king of Scotland and usurp his throne. She hallucinates that her hands are covered with blood and no amount of washing will ever get them clean. In our Gospel reading for today Jesus has a dispute with the Pharisees who challenge him for not observing the tradition of washing one's hands before meals. Jesus reminds them that it is the purity of one's heart and not the cleanliness of one's hands that marks a person as a child of God.

At their best, outward actions, like making the sign of the cross, are signs of an inward, heartfelt devotion to God. It's that inward attitude that is important. Without that, our outward actions are meaningless, even hypocritical. Eventually our true colors will show. If we don't have love for God and love for our neighbor in our hearts, that will soon become apparent in actions that are selfish, arrogant, indifferent to the needs of others, or hateful. It won't matter how many times we wash. A lack of love always leaves a mark.

On the other hand, love in the heart also leaves a mark that is readily visible in signs of concern for others, thoughtfulness, joy, peace, patience, generosity, and gentleness. May God help us to cultivate the interior life of love and true devotion so that its outward signs may attract others into the circle of love that is the kingdom of God.

Blessings,
Fr. Scott



Ministry to the Homebound

We are hoping to start a ministry of bringing Holy Communion to the homebound of our parishes. Ministers could bring Communion on Saturday or Sunday after Mass or any day during the week that is convenient. If you are interested, call the church office or email Fr. Scott at ssnider0528@gmail.com.

"Journey of Faith" Starting This Fall

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about the Catholic faith, we have just the thing for you. Journey of Faith is a class that meets from September to May at St. Brigid Church Hall on Monday nights at 7 p.m. Curious about Catholicism? Do you have loved ones who are Catholic and want to understand where they are coming from? Are you Catholic and want to know your faith better? Thinking about becoming Catholic? Journey of Faith is for you. This class is the place for you to bring your questions about the teachings, practices, and history of the Catholic church. Interested? call St. Brigid Church office at 217-645-3444 or email Fr. Scott at pastor@stsbej.org