



Saint Benedict the Moor Parish

Personal Parish for Black Catholics in Pittsburgh

"Without a Vision, the People Perish" (Proverbs 29:18)

OCTOBER 12, 2025

Mass Schedule

Sunday 11:00 am

Livestream:

facebook.com/SBTMPGH/live

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Sundays at 10:30am &
by appointment.

Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals

by appointment.



Our church is accessible.

Staff

Rev. C. Matthew Hawkins,
Pastor:
mhawkins@diopitt.org

Priscilla Davis, Office Manager:
office@sbtmparishpgh.com

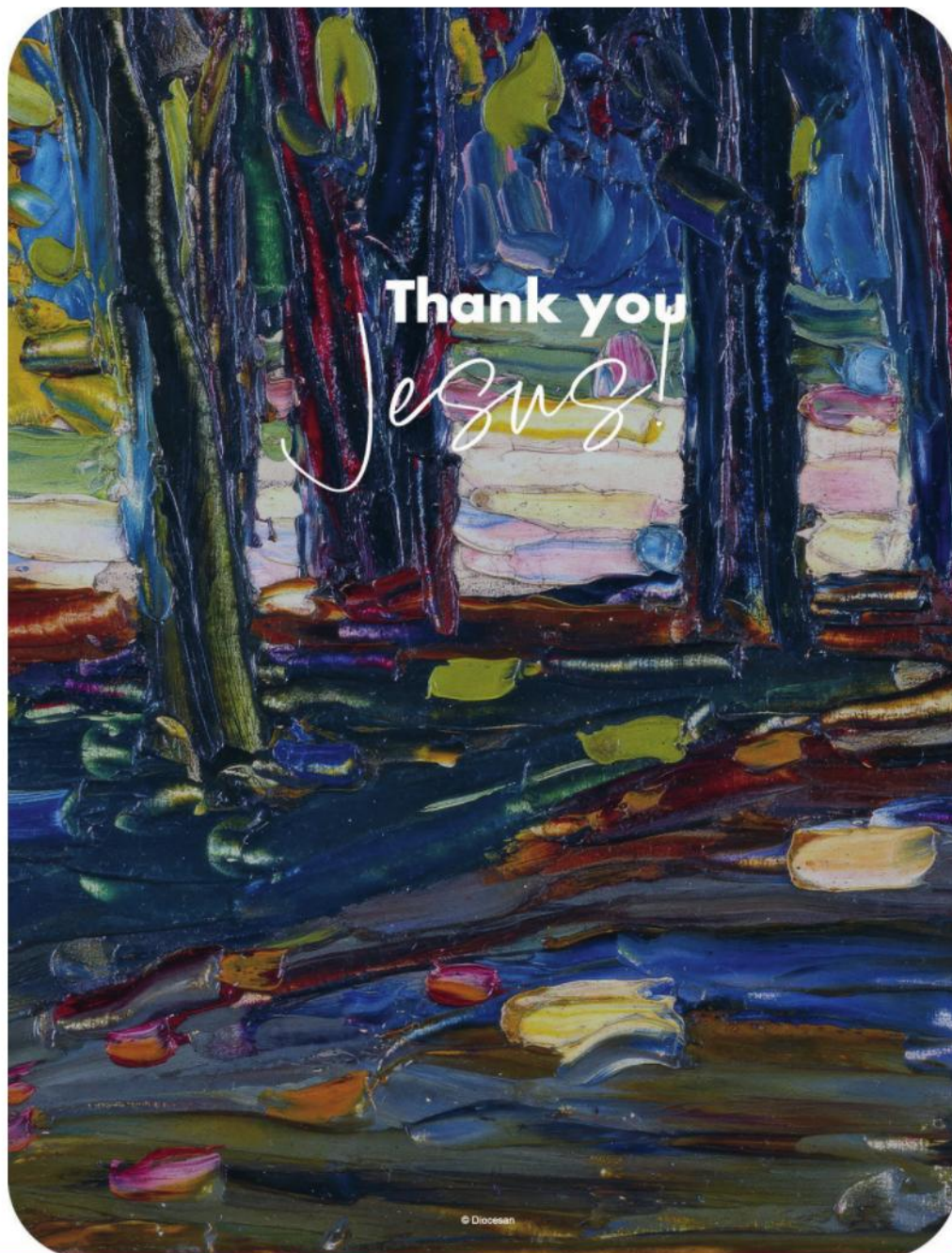
Jeannette Finch, Sacristan

Jennifer L. Whitley, Bulletin Editor:
bulletin@sbtmparishpgh.com

Lisa Joy Finch, Director of
Religious Education:
sbtm.faith.formation@gmail.com

Monte Reid, Director of Music

Henry Anyabuoke, Outreach
Minister:
henryanyabuoke@gmail.com



Saint Benedict the Moor Church • 91 Crawford Street • Pittsburgh PA 15219

office@sbtmparishpgh.com • 412.281.3141

Website:
sbtmparishpgh.com



St. Benedict the Moor Parish-PGH



[SBTMPARISHPGH](https://www.instagram.com/SBTMPARISHPGH)



[SBTmparishPGH](https://www.youtube.com/SBTmparishPGH)

Mass Intentions

October 12 11:00 am
28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fr. Matthew Hawkins
Martha "Doll" Mercer
(Len & Rita Costa)
&
Cheryl Akins
(Cecily Adkins)

October 19 11:00 am
29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fr. Matthew Hawkins
Donna Louise Finch-Robinson
(Finch, Carter, Sanford, Brown,
and Robinson Families)

Stewardship Oct. 5th

Offertory	Parish Appeal	Building Fund
\$4,584.00	\$645.00	\$150.00
Care for the Poor	Tech	Bishop's Ed Fund
\$120.00	\$175.00	\$25.00

Prayer Requests

Antoinette Peters
Bonita Dsouza
Claudia Harrison
Damitra Penny-Harris
Delores Denton
Frances Tarkett
Gail Jackson
Genevieve Sanford
Hall Family
Irene Chong
Janice Simmons
John Young
Karen McDill
Ken Smith (Pizza)
Marie Alian
Pat Ellis
Peggy Bullard
Reggie Jackson
Rita Costa

Protection of God's Children

Report suspected child abuse at
the 24-Hour Child Abuse
Hotline: **800.932.0313**

To report church-related abuse
to the Diocese of Pittsburgh
call: **888.808.1235**

Speaking With RESPECT: Christian Virtues in Conversation

Fr. Matthew Hawkins



As we continue our journey together as a parish family, we are called not only to gather in worship but also to accompany one another in faith. The quality of our relationships, whether in casual conversations at work, at home, or at school, or during parish committee meetings or ministry gatherings, directly reflects our witness to Christ's love.

During the synodal process, the U.S. bishops offered us a valuable gift: the RESPECT framework for Christian conversation. This simple acronym provides a roadmap for transforming how we communicate with one another, turning ordinary exchanges into opportunities for grace.

RESPECT stands for Responsibility, Empathy, Sensitivity, Pondering, Examining, Confidentiality, and Trust.

When we take **Responsibility** for our words and feelings without blaming others, we practice the humility Christ modeled for us. Instead of saying, "You always make me feel ignored," we might say, "I feel hurt when my ideas aren't acknowledged." This small shift honors both truth and charity.

Empathetic listening means truly hearing another person's heart, not just waiting for our turn to speak. When a friend or co-worker shares an opinion or concern, we listen to understand their perspective rather than immediately defending our position in opposition to theirs. This is how Jesus listened, with full attention and compassion.

Being **Sensitive** to different communication styles acknowledges that we are wonderfully diverse. Some of us process thoughts out loud; others need silence to reflect. Some speak directly; others communicate more subtly. Recognizing these differences prevents misunderstanding and builds bridges across generations and cultures.

To **Ponder** before speaking is to create sacred space between stimulus and response. Proverbs reminds us that "even fools are thought wise if they keep silent" (17:28). In our conversations with friends and family, taking a breath before responding can prevent hasty words we later regret and allow the Holy Spirit to guide our tongues.

When we **Examine** our assumptions and perceptions, we acknowledge our own limitations. Perhaps the coworker or casual acquaintance who opposed your idea isn't being difficult; they may have historical knowledge or concerns you haven't considered. Self-examination is the beginning of wisdom.

Confidentiality builds the trust necessary for an authentic community. What is shared in our small groups, pastoral councils, or one-on-one conversations should be held in a way that allows relationships to deepen.

Finally, **Trusting** ambiguity means accepting that we don't always need resolution or agreement. We can hold tension together, recognizing that our unity is found in Christ, not in uniformity of opinion. Life in our families, parish, and society in general should not be about winning arguments, but about walking together toward God.

These virtues aren't merely communication techniques; they're expressions of love. When we practice RESPECT in our family, friendships, and parish interactions, we create spaces where people feel valued, heard, and accompanied -- exactly what Christ calls us to do.

This week, choose one element of RESPECT to practice intentionally. You might be surprised how this simple framework can transform not only our family and community life, but the life in our parish into a more faithful reflection of the Body of Christ.



Fr. Matthew Hawkins



We Come Seeking Wholeness

When we come to worship, we come seeking wholeness. Some of us carry burdens visible only to ourselves, grief that has no name, wounds that refuse to close, anxieties that steal our sleep. We come hoping that God will meet us in our need, that somehow the ache within might find relief. Today's readings remind us that divine healing works in unexpected ways and that receiving God's mercy is only the beginning of the journey.

The Scandal of Simple Grace

In 2 Kings 5, we meet Naaman, a powerful military commander brought low by leprosy. He comes to the prophet Elisha seeking a cure, expecting grand gestures—perhaps dramatic prayers or mystical rituals befitting his status. Instead, Elisha doesn't even come out to meet him. The instruction arrives secondhand: "Go, wash in the Jordan seven times." Naaman is outraged. The muddy Jordan? Aren't there cleaner rivers back home? The remedy seems too simple, almost insulting.

But herein lies the scandal of grace: God's healing often comes through the most ordinary means. Water. Bread. Wine. A word of absolution. A neighbor's kindness. The very simplicity of God's methods strips away our illusions of control and forces us to acknowledge our need. Naaman

must choose: will he cling to his pride, or will he humble himself and obey?

When Naaman finally submits and washes in the Jordan, his flesh is restored "like the flesh of a young boy." But something deeper has been healed as well. His pride, his self-sufficiency, his belief that healing could be earned or managed on his own terms—all of this is washed away with his disease. He returns to Elisha a different man, no longer demanding but declaring: "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel." Physical healing has become the doorway to faith. What began as a quest for clean skin ends as an encounter with the living God.

A Public Sign of Mercy

This pattern echoes through Scripture. The Psalmist proclaims, "The Lord has revealed his salvation; all the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God." Healing is never meant to be a private transaction between God and an individual. When one person is made whole, it reverberates outward—an invitation to the entire community to lift their voices in praise. God's mercy becomes a public sign, meant to inspire wonder and draw others toward the source of all goodness. Gratitude naturally spills over into evangelization, as our joy becomes a testament others cannot ignore.

The One Who Returned

In Luke's Gospel, we see this dynamic brought to fulfillment. Ten lepers cry out to Jesus from a distance—separated by their condition from family, synagogue, and society itself. Jesus tells them simply, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." As they go, they are cleansed. All ten receive the gift they sought. All ten are physically healed.

But only one returns. Only one, a Samaritan—a double outcast—turns back, glorifying God with a loud voice, falling at Jesus' feet in thanksgiving. And Jesus notices the absence of the others. "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?" His question lingers in the air, a gentle rebuke and a profound teaching. The nine received healing but missed the

deeper gift: restored communion with God and community. They were cured but not made whole.

Healed, Grateful, and Sent

The Samaritan alone understands that gratitude is not an optional addition to healing but its very completion. His thanksgiving doesn't just acknowledge what he's received; it transforms him from recipient to witness, from patient to missionary. "Rise and go," Jesus tells him. "Your faith has made you well." He is sent forth, not to return to his old life unchanged, but to live as a sign of God's mercy—healed, grateful, and commissioned.

This is the pattern of discipleship: we are healed not for our sake alone, but so that we might bear witness to the One who heals. Gratitude turns us outward, propelling us back into the world with good news to share. When we truly recognize what God has done for us, we cannot help but tell others.

Healing humbles us. Gratitude transforms us. Mission completes us. When God restores us, He also sends us, not only to proclaim what we've received, but to reveal the generous heart of the Giver Himself.

This Week: Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

In all circumstances, give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

First Reading: 2 Kings 5:14-17
 Responsorial Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4
 Second Reading: 2 Timothy 2:8-13
 The Gospel: Luke 17:11-19

Next Week: Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The word of God is living and effective, discerning reflections and thoughts of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).

First Reading: Exodus 17:8-13
 Responsorial Psalm 121:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8
 Second Reading: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2
 The Gospel: Luke 18:1-8

Seeds of Peace and Hope



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This fall, Pope Leo invites us to live as **"seeds of peace and hope."** We are now in the final days of the *Season of Creation*, when the Church reflects on environmental justice.

In this Jubilee Year, we are reminded that the Lord calls us to be **"Pilgrims of Hope."** Jesus compared himself to a grain of wheat that dies to bear fruit (Jn 12:24). In him, we too are seeds—called to bring forth peace and hope, trusting that God's Spirit can turn deserts into gardens of justice and peace (Is 32:15-18).

In September, the Holy Father urged families and communities to pray the Rosary daily for peace. This ties beautifully to October, the month of the Holy Rosary. At the same time, the U.S. bishops call us to mark October as **Respect Life Month**, reminding us that every human life is a sign of hope, defying the culture of death, and must be protected in every stage and circumstance.

To join in this witness, the Christian Mothers of St. Benedict the Moor Parish will lead the Rosary an hour before every Sunday Mass in October. Please come early to participate, and let us also pray the Rosary daily at home for peace and respect for life.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Matthew

Discover the Spiritual Roots of Our Parish



Have you ever wondered about the remarkable story behind St. Benedict the Moor Parish? How did we become the vibrant faith community standing at Freedom Corner? What lessons can our 150-year journey teach us about perseverance, identity, and God's faithfulness?

Fr. Matthew Hawkins has crafted a powerful new study guide, "Faith on Freedom Corner," that unveils the extraordinary history of our parish—from humble beginnings in 1844 through our pivotal role in Pittsburgh's civil rights movement to our restoration as a personal parish in 2020. But this isn't just a history book. It's a spiritual journey that connects our past to our present calling as disciples of Christ.

Discover how early missionaries planted seeds of faith that grew into our thriving community. Learn about St. Benedict the Moor himself—born into slavery in 16th-century Sicily, yet rising to become a beacon of humility and love. Explore how our parish has consistently demonstrated that the Catholic Church is strongest when it honors both its universal mission and the unique gifts of each community.

This engaging guide includes reflection questions, Scripture connections, and practical applications perfect for personal devotion, family discussions, or small group sharing. Whether you're a longtime parishioner or new to our community, these stories will deepen your understanding of how God works through ordinary people to create something extraordinary.

Visit our parish website today to download your free copy. Let our shared heritage strengthen your faith journey and inspire your witness in the world. Your story is part of this continuing legacy.

Website: <https://Sbthmparishpgh.com>

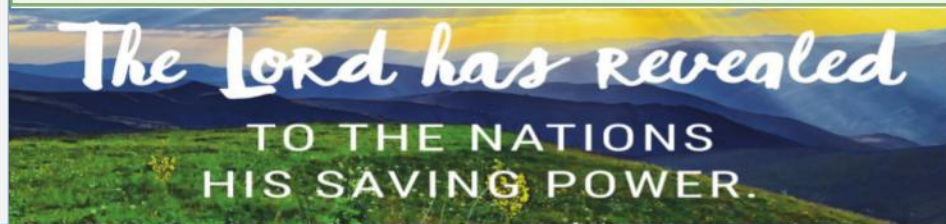


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