

***St. John the Baptist Catholic Church***

1312 Dallas Street  
Waco, Texas 76704

Website: [www.stjohnswaco.org](http://www.stjohnswaco.org)  
E-mail: [saintjohn1312@yahoo.com](mailto:saintjohn1312@yahoo.com)  
Phone (254) 753-6742

Pastor/Administrator: Father Cyril Ejaidu

Confession: Sunday 10:00-10:25 am

Mass: Sunday 10:30 am

Mass: Wednesday 6:00 pm

**24<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

***September 17, 2023***

**September 24, 2023**

***Lectors***

KOPC

***Eucharistic Ministers***

KOPC

***Ministry for the  
Sick and Homebound***

Mrs. Gwendolyn Stewart and  
Mrs. Carolyn Brown

***Photographer***

David Haliburton

***Bulletin***

Celeste Sheehy

***Live-Stream and Music***

Greg Guerra



**Parish Council Members**

**Chairman:** Father Cyril Ejaidu

**President:** Ms. Faye Stewart

**Vice President:** Mr. Darren Sliva

**Recording Secretary:** TBA

**Other members**

Mr. Joseph Brown, Mr. Freddy  
Duron, Mr. Stanley Glynn, Mrs.  
Sylvia Glynn, Mr. David Gradel,  
Ms. Roseanne Reyes

**Finance Committee:**

Mrs. Bobbie Sharkey

Mrs. Carolyn Brown

Ms. Jessica Breda

Mrs. Joyce Fonteneaux

Mr. Matthew Sheehy

**Knights of Peter Claver Council  
and Court Council #385**

**Grand Knight**

Mr. Joseph Quinones

**Court #385 Grand Lady**

Mrs. Teaberta Black

**“You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you? Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives you brother from your heart.” Matthew 18:32–35**

Love, kindness, gentleness, mercy...these and many like qualities are easy to think about. They inspire us to be holy by growing in virtue. But sometimes we need more. Sometimes pondering the beauty of the virtues and fruits of the Spirit do not suffice to help us embrace a life of holiness. This is one of the reasons for our parable today. The *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius of Loyola present us with a structure by which a spiritual director may lead a retreatant through a thirty day private retreat. Ignatius outlines thirty days worth of meditations. Interestingly, Ignatius does not begin by inviting a person to ponder the beautiful virtues to which they are called. Instead, for the first week, he has the retreatant ponder the horror of sin and the devastating effects that sin has upon a soul. By doing this, the person's eyes are more fully opened to their own sin so that, in the subsequent three weeks, they will be more properly disposed to reflect upon the inspiring life of Christ and His many virtues. In a sense, our Gospel today is an ideal Gospel to ponder during that first week of an Ignatian retreat. And for that reason, it is an ideal Gospel to ponder anytime we want to get our spiritual lives in order. It is very easy to become complacent in our Christian walk. It is easy to become lukewarm in our prayer and even in our moral life. If that is you to any degree, then this Gospel is worth your careful and thorough attention. The sin that Jesus addresses in this passage is the sin of unforgiveness. It clearly depicts the wrath of God that will be inflicted upon those who refuse to forgive others. The “wicked servant” to whom this is addressed was a man who was forgiven a “huge amount” by God. This is all of us. Every one of us has been forgiven by God an amount that cost Jesus His very life. The consequence of our sins was the death of the Son of God. Each of us deserves the penalty of death. But death has now been transformed into the very means of new life through the forgiveness of sins. And if we want to receive the forgiveness of sins and the new life that awaits us, we must fully share in God's forgiveness. Not only must we receive His forgiveness, we must also forgive those who have sinned against us. Completely. Totally. Without reserve. In this parable, the wicked servant failed to forgive his servant's small debt. In fact, every sin committed against us, no matter how grave in the eyes of God, is a small debt compared to the debt we owe God. For that reason, we must never hesitate to forgive. Never. If this is difficult, and if reflecting upon God's mercy, kindness, compassion and love do not compel you to completely forgive everyone to the fullest extent, then spend time with this parable. “You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?” These are words directed at us when we fail to forgive completely from the depths of our hearts. They are merciful words from Jesus to help us wake up to what we need to do. In a commentary on this

passage from St. Thomas Aquinas, the “torturers” spoken of, to whom we will be handed over if we do not forgive, are the demons. They will torment us when we lack forgiveness toward others. The torture, for now, will come in the form of obsessing over our wounds, dwelling upon thoughts of revenge, holding grudges, and lacking interior peace. This is the work of the demons, and they will torment us this way until we forgive. Reflect, today, upon the absolute requirement of the Christian life to forgive. Mercy can seem unfair. From the perspective of strict justice, it is. But from the perspective of freedom and the virtues of Heaven, mercy makes perfect sense. Do not hesitate to forgive, for if you can do so from the bottom of your heart, God will lavish upon you the riches of the Kingdom of Heaven.

*Most merciful Lord, You have forgiven me a huge debt. The cost of my sin was Your death on the Cross. Please fill my heart with such gratitude for this gift that I, in turn, offer the same depth of mercy to others. May I never waver in this depth of mercy so that I am freed from the torments that come from unforgiveness. Jesus, I trust in You.*

### ***St. John's Offering***

**September 10, 2023**

Regular Offering: **\$755.12** Building Fund: **\$40** Breakfast: **\$315**

**Special Collection/Sisters of Christ in the Light: \$153**

*Please add names of church members and their family members to the sick list in the foyer of the church so that we may pray for you. We will update the list weekly and remove names from the list monthly. If a name should remain on the list indefinitely, please notify Celeste Sheehy.*

### **Sick List**

Father God, we pray for all those who are facing sickness in their bodies.

We ask that you restore their health, soothe their pain, and ease their worries. Give them your peace and comfort.

In Jesus name, Amen!

Don McKelvain

Sonja Hemstreet Gaines

Hilde Ouellette

Jessie Hithe

Julie Hemstreet

Stanley Marek

Lesa Kidd

Lori Kidd

Gloria Guerra

### ***Diocesan News***

**September 28, 2023 9:00 am – 2:30 pm** As part of the U.S. Bishop's Eucharist Revival, Cedarbrake is offering a day retreat on **“The Gift of the Holy Eucharist”** at St. Thomas More in Austin. Fr. Harry Dean will share insights from some saints on the Eucharist and Brian Egan will speak about

scripture passages that teach us about Our Lord who is truly present in the Holy Eucharist. The retreat, which includes mass and lunch, cost \$45.

### *Announcements*

We will have **pastries and coffee available in Sophie Hall after Mass** every Sunday except the fourth Sunday of the month. Please stop by and visit for a few minutes.

In conjunction with Shepherd's Pantry, we provide a **food pantry for the community in Sophie Hall on the second Saturday of every month**. Contact Sylvia Glynn if you would like to volunteer to help.

**September 17, 2023, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm – Annual Bazaar at Holy Trinity Catholic Church of Corn Hill.** Mass at 10:30 am will be followed by a meal and festivities at the Parish Activity Center. Please see the flyers on the doors for more information.

**September 21, 2023, 6:00 pm - Active Shooter Class** in Sophie Hall. The training will be led by Sofie Martinez from the Waco PD.

**September 24, 2023 – Annual Picnic at St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church –** A fried chicken and sausage dinner with all the trimmings will be served for \$14 each starting at 11:00 am. See the flyers on the doors for more information.

**October 14, 2023 – Annual Parish Festival and OKTOBERFEST Picnic at St. Philip Catholic Mission in China Spring, TX –** Our parish is invited to attend the event; planning is underway now. Two of the most popular attractions are the Silent and Live Auctions. The Auction Committee is soliciting donations of items, services, and gift certificates that they can offer for auction. Contact Cathy Dominguez at 254-640-1060 if you or your business would like to make a donation.

**October 28, 2023, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm - St. John's will hold its first Fall Festival!** Activities will include silent auction, games, food booths, photo area, music and fun, fun, fun! If you would like to be a part of planning this event, please see Faye Stewart.

If you are interested in **becoming a member of St. John's**, please fill out the membership card located in the foyer of the church. St. John's would like to welcome our new members and our guests. We are so very glad to have you with us.

If you have **items for the bulletin**, please submit them to Celeste Sheehy at [saintjohn1312@yahoo.com](mailto:saintjohn1312@yahoo.com). Please submit all items **by 5:00 pm on Thursday** to allow time to prepare the bulletin for Sunday Mass.