

For The Bulletin Of  
April 22, 2018



## THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### *From Father Robert*

In the early church, before Jesus was depicted as suffering and dying on the cross, he was depicted as “The Good Shepherd.” This image was central to early Christian identity. We see paintings, statues, and icons of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. The cross seems to have been too painful or too inappropriate to be an effective way to portray Jesus. The Good Shepherd conveyed the Christian message much more clearly.

Today we celebrate “Good Shepherd Sunday” as we read this famous gospel story from John. We are no longer in the realm of resurrection appearance stories, but now we have entered the world of Jesus “I AM” parabolic discourse. In John, Jesus doesn’t preach in parables, “The Kingdom of God is like...a shepherd, a gate, a vineyard, etc.” Instead, we hear Jesus say, “I AM the good shepherd,” or in another passage, “I AM the gate,” or “I AM the vine,” etc. Some scripture scholars call this an “I AM” Christology of the Fourth Gospel

because it is used so frequently here, as opposed to the Synoptic Gospels. It is true that the Gospel of John has an intense emphasis on the person of Jesus, reflected in a high Christology: the joke is that if you ask Jesus in the Gospel of John how He’s doing, He’ll take two chapters to say He and the Father are just fine!

The image of a shepherd is certainly one rooted in antiquity. There are not as many shepherds today as there were then. And the sight of a shepherd was much more common in that culture than it is today.

Yet, even though most of us probably do not know any shepherds, or even seen any recently, we are all familiar with the image. Even Pope Francis spoke about shepherds shortly after he became Bishop of Rome. He spoke about how he wanted priests to have the “smell of the sheep” on them. This kind of graphic, even smelly, analogy offended some people. One person responded, “that sounds gross! Did he actually say that?” But it is precisely the image Francis meant to convey about whom he wanted as priests, and the language stems from this gospel story about Jesus Himself being the Good Shepherd.

Interestingly, Jesus makes a distinction in this discourse about Himself as the “good shepherd” and a “hired man” who works for money. The latter has no real concern for the sheep. He is in it only for the pay. Jesus, on the other hand, loves the sheep and has concern for them. He lays down His life for the sheep. The hired hand will run away at the first sign of danger. The result of his running away is that the sheep are scattered. As we consider this in our

own time, we can see the many Christians, many of us, who have been scattered. As we listen for the voice of the Good Shepherd and come to Him, we will be reunited.



### ***Living The Paschal Mystery***

Though the imagery in today's gospel may be foreign to our everyday experience, it rings true nonetheless. In some ways the story's setting sounds similar to a fairy tale with the shepherd, the hired hand, a wolf, and scattered sheep. But of course, the lessons from this gospel are much more profound than a fairy tale. This gospel tells us that the kingdom of God is not merely like a shepherd and his sheep, but rather, Jesus Himself is the Good Shepherd Who lays down His life for the sheep. The sheep know His voice. The Good Shepherd smells like the sheep. We can ask ourselves how we attune ourselves to the voice of the Good Shepherd. Where do we hear Him calling? Have we been scattered, or are we attentive to the voice and near the Shepherd?

Jesus lays down His life for His sheep but takes it up again. The process does not conclude with the laying down, but culminates in the taking up. And thus we have the paschal mystery.

- Who have you known in your life who exemplifies the model of the Good Shepherd?
- Who are those who daily “lay down” their lives for others?
- What does the image of the Good Shepherd reveal about the role of leadership and authority in the faith community?
- Who are the “wolves” who force us to run away from our responsibilities and authority?
- Why are certain “Sanhedrins” in our time and place so threatened by the idea of the resurrection of Jesus?



### ***About Liturgy: United Under One Shepherd***

We continue our Easter mystagogical reflection by breaking open the Eucharistic Prayer, specifically the section in which we pray for the Bishop of Rome and the local bishop, who are our shepherds under Christ, the Good Shepherd.

We call this part of the Eucharistic Prayer the intercessions. Here we pray for church members, both living and deceased. We ask God to remember His church, “Spread throughout the world.” Then we recall by name the pope and the bishop of the local diocese in which the celebration of Eucharist takes place.

WE do this not simply as a courtesy of prayer but as an expression and sign of our unity as a church that is called to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. We do not make this prayer alone on our own initiative. We pray it in union with all God's people throughout history who have been called by the voice of the Shepherd.

Our unity is not some abstract connection or idea but is marked by specific persons recognized as shepherds for the people of God. This is why we remember by name the current pope and the local bishop, then in general all the clergy. Every pastor of a parish promises obedience to the local bishop, and every bishop promises to be of one mind with the bishops of the world, including the pope, the Bishop of Rome, preserving communion within the Catholic Church. Then having remembered those who are living, we recall those who have gone before us: our beloved deceased and all the saints, with whom we are united in the communion of saints.

Communion is the sign of our unity of mind and action, in obedience to the one Shepherd. This unity is a reality that is present when the church gathers to pray under the leadership of its ministers. Yet it is also a truth we must strive to live daily with the help of the Holy Spirit Who binds us together in love. The next time you pray the Eucharistic Prayer and name the pope and our local bishop, pray for true and lasting unity among all Christians and for charity and respect for all who shepherd us.



The Floral Arrangements at the Altar and Ambo this weekend are placed to the Glory of God and **in honor of the 28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Marriage of Joe and Theresa Nelms and the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Marriage of Dave and Stacia De Buhr.** Congratulations and may God bless you with many more years of happiness, the deepening of your love, the best of health, and the support of family, friends, loved ones, and our faith community.



Congratulations to **Eliza Mendoza** who is receiving the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist during our 10:00 a.m. Liturgy this morning. Eliza is a member of our SPRED Community. Our thanks to **Vicki McCoy, Yolanda Garcia, and her Confirmation Sponsor, Alicia Maldonado.** A special part of this morning's liturgy will be the presence of three friends and three catechists who will gesture during the Responsorial Psalm. A reception, to which all are invited, takes place immediately following the Liturgy in the parish hall.



### ***Relay For Life Fundraiser***

Our parish Relay for Life Team is having a Bunco Fundraiser today, Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, beginning at 4:30 p.m. in the parish hall. This event supports our team's efforts to raise funds for research for the American Cancer Society. All gifts are tax deductible. This is a great event for a great cause! Please see the bulletin for all the details.



### ***YLI Annual Pasta Dinner***

Our YLI is sponsoring their Annual Pasta Dinner next Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, in our parish hall, patio, and garden, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. A special part of the day is celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of our beloved **Dorothy Lamendola!** The menu consists of Garden Salad, Garlic Bread, and the most delicious Pasta and Sauce you will ever will have! There is also beer, wine, and dessert. Come out join your fellow parishioners and guests as we support our YLI and their many charitable projects which benefit both our parish and our sister parish of Holy Rosary. Tickets are available from the table in the Gathering Plaza after each liturgy or from the parish office during regular office hours.

### ***Finance Report***

Next weekend, the First Quarter Financial Report will be included as an insert in the bulletin. There is also an update on the Expansion Project which is included in this report.



### ***Thank You***

...to all those who volunteer in so many ways to help with the ministries of our parish:

...to those who come early each Saturday morning to clean and prepare the church and parish hall: **Jun Bajet, Al Cosce, Mency Osborne, Rose Salamanca, Carole Miller, and Steve Rojek.**

...to those who clean and maintain the bathrooms in the church and parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Sofie Zimmerman, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, Virginia Noack, and Harlan Young.**

...to **Mary Anne Douville** and **Faultless Cleaners** for all the dry cleaning, sewing and miscellaneous other tasks that are completed by her for the parish.

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

**Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.**

...to **our counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week:

**Jeannine Ford, Melodye Costanza, Yvette Young, Alicia Perez, Sharon Cissell, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.**

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Frank Zamora and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Carole Miller, Dave Costanza, Vangie Parrilla and Dilcia Aparicio.**

...to our wonderful Parking Lot Security who keep watch over our vehicles during the weekend liturgies: **Don Benson, Dave Simpson and Bob Goncalves.**

