

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
May 3, 2020 ~ Bulletin No. 19~ Vol. XXXVI

CALENDAR ~ May 2-10 , 2020

Sat 2	5:00pm	Mass for Brian Hill, Happy Birthday! Chuck & Janet Hill
Sun 3	9:00am 11:30am 3:00pm 7:30pm	Mass for ROS Estelle & Max Dorow by Jim & Joan King Mass for ROS Ed Jacunski by the Knights of Columbus Mass for the Parish AA Meeting, call 289-6336 for information
Mon 4	9:00am 7:00am	Mass for ROS Deceased Members of the Lupinetti Family by Andy & JoAnn Cilone
Wed 6	7:00pm	Mass for ROS Kristin Diane Adcock by Jim & Sheryl Adcock
Thurs 7	12:10pm 1:00pm 7:00pm	Mass for ROS Lena Chiesa by Floyd & Ginny Kunkle Eucharistic Adoration, Chapel Rosary and Benediction, Chapel
Fri 8	12:10pm 7:00am	Mass for ROS William Young by Claudia Young Men's Prayer Group
Sat 9	5:00pm	Mass for Mothers, Happy Mothers Day
Sun 10	9:00am 11:30am 3:00pm 7:30pm	Mass for Mothers, Happy Mothers Day Mass for Mothers, Happy Mothers Day Mass for Mothers, Happy Mothers Day AA Meeting, call 289-6336 for information

Our Role as Sheep

From a homily on the Gospels by Saint Pope Gregory the Great

I am the good shepherd. I know my own- by which I mean, I love them—and *my own know me*. In plain words: those who love me are willing to follow me, for anyone who does not love the truth has not yet come to know it. Turn now to consider how these words of our Lord imply a test for yourselves also. Ask yourselves whether you belong to his flock, whether you know him, whether the light of his truth shines in your minds. I assure you that it is not by faith that you will come to know him, but by love; not by mere conviction, but by action. John the evangelist is my authority for this statement. He tells us that *anyone who claims to know God without keeping his commandments is a liar*.

Consequently, the Lord immediately adds: *As the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep*. Clearly he means that laying down his life for his sheep gives evidence of his knowledge of the Father and the Father's knowledge of him. In other words, by the love with which he dies for his sheep he shows how greatly he loves his Father. Again he says: *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them; they follow me, and I give them eternal life*. Shortly before this he had declared: *If anyone enters the sheepfold through me he shall be saved; he shall go freely in and out and shall find good pasture*. He will enter into a life of faith; from faith he will go out to vision, from belief to contemplation, and will graze in the good pastures of everlasting life.

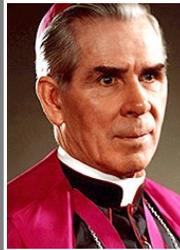
So our Lord's sheep will finally reach their grazing ground where all who follow him in simplicity of heart will feed on the green pastures of eternity. These pastures are the spiritual joys of heaven. There the elect look upon the face of God with unclouded vision and feast at the banquet of life for ever more. Beloved brothers, let us set out for these pastures where we shall keep joyful festival with so many of our fellow citizens. May the thought of their happiness urge us on! Let us stir up our hearts, rekindle our faith, and long eagerly for what heaven has in store for us. To love thus is to be already on our way.

No matter what obstacles we encounter, we must not allow them to turn us aside from the joy of that heavenly feast. Anyone who is determined to reach his destination is not deterred by the roughness of the road that leads to it.



From the Holy Fathers

"Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He seeks us out and he stays near us even though we are sinners, indeed because we are sinners."



Wisdom of the Saints

"How about those who lost their faith? Here I refer to the fallen-away Catholic. His fall is serious because of the height from which he fell. Is God thirsting for him? Obviously, for the Good Shepherd never gives up seeking His lost sheep."

~ Venerable Fulton Sheen ~

For Annulment Information Contact:

Rachel Harrill 1-828-447-1908 or
Email: Rachel_harrill@yahoo.com



COLLECTION CONTRIBUTIONS

We encourage parishioners to make their contributions by mailing them in to:

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION RC CHURCH
1024 W. Main Street
Forest City, NC 28043

You can make online donations through the following link:

<https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/immaculateconceforestcity>

COLLECTION INFORMATION for 4/26/2020:

Regular Collection: \$6,632.00
Building Fund: \$30.00

On May 17th, there is a second collection for the International/National Combined Collection.

If you would like to receive the bulletin electronically, contact Penny Watkins, at pjwlmg@gmail.com

ON THE GOOD SHEPHERD

By Saint Thomas Aquinas

I am the Good Shepherd. Surely it is fitting that Christ should be shepherd, for just as a flock is guided and fed by a shepherd so the faithful are fed by Christ with spiritual food and with his own body and blood. The Apostle said: *You were once like sheep without a shepherd, but now you have returned to the guardian and ruler of your souls.* The prophet said: *As a shepherd he pastures his flock.*

Christ said that the shepherd enters through the gate and that he is himself the gate as well as the shepherd. Then it is necessary that he enter through himself. By so doing, he reveals himself, and through himself he knows the Father. But we enter through him because through him we find happiness.

Take heed: no one else is the gate but Christ. Others reflect his light, but no one else is the true light. John the Baptist *was not the light, but he bore witness to the light.* It is said of Christ, however: *He was the true light and enlightens every man.* For this reason, no one says that he is the gate; this title is Christ's own. However, he has made others shepherds and given that office to his members; for Peter was a shepherd, and so were the other apostles and all good bishops after them. Scripture says: *I shall give you shepherds according to my own heart.* Although the bishops of the Church, who are her sons, are all shepherds, nevertheless Christ refers only to one person in saying: *I am the Good Shepherd,* because he wants to emphasize the virtue of charity. Thus no one can be a good shepherd unless he is one with Christ in charity. Through this we become members of the true shepherd.

The duty of a good shepherd is charity; therefore Christ said: The good shepherd gives his life for his sheep. Know the difference between a good and a bad shepherd: the good shepherd cares for the welfare of his flock, but the bad shepherd cares only for his own welfare.

The Good Shepherd does not demand that shepherds lay down their lives for a real flock of sheep. But every spiritual shepherd must endure the loss of his bodily life for the salvation of the flock, since the spiritual good of the flock is more important than the bodily life of the shepherd, when danger threatens the salvation of the flock. This is why the Lord says: *The good shepherd lays down his life,* that is, his physical life, *for his sheep;* that he does because of authority and love. Both, in fact, are required: that they should be ruled by him, and that he should love them. The first without the second is not enough.

Christ stands out for us as the example of this teaching: *If Christ laid down his life for us, so we also ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.*



The Mass: The Sign of Peace

The Sign of Peace, or Kiss of Peace as it was originally called, is a rite that goes back to the earliest days of the Church. The sign of peace was given to those standing next to each other. We read about the kiss of peace several places in Scripture: "Greet one another with a holy kiss." (Rom 16:16; 1Cor 16:20; 2Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26; 1 Pet: 5:14) The holy kiss expressed the charity shared among the early Christians.

Over the centuries, the kiss, or sign of peace was given during different parts of the liturgy. For example, in the mid 2nd century, it was given after the Liturgy of the Word, and before bringing up the gifts. St. Justin Martyr wrote: *"Having ended the prayer, (after the readings) we salute one another with a kiss."*

In the mid 3rd century, Tertullian wrote about what he saw as the purpose of the kiss (or sign) of peace: *"What prayer is complete without the holy kiss?"* He saw the kiss as a seal of the prayer that preceded it.

In the mid 5th century, St. Augustine of Hippo explains the sign of peace as an enactment of the petition, "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive" It thus became an expression of reconciliation immediately prior to Communion. And through the centuries, the location of the kiss of peace changed, as did the purpose for which it served—some thought reconciliation; some thought love.

Today, most parishioners see the kiss of peace either as a blessing they bestow on each other or simply as a chance to say hello to their neighbors, but if that is your thought about it, you have minimized the intent. In the GIRM (General Instruction for the Roman Missal) we read: ¶82. *The Rite of Peace follows, by which the Church asks for peace and unity for herself and for the whole human family, and the faithful express to each other their ecclesial communion and mutual charity before communicating in the Sacrament. As for the sign of peace to be given, the manner is to be established by Conferences of Bishops in accordance with the culture and customs of the peoples. It is, however, appropriate that each person offer the sign of peace only to those who are nearest, and in a sober manner.*

Reinforcing that, the Congregation for Divine Worship in Rome makes it clear that the faithful are not to move from their places to exchange the sign of peace.