

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



The Good Shepherd

Today's gospel is for anyone who has ever felt unloved or insignificant. Today's gospel is for anyone who feels his or her life doesn't count for much. At some time or another that probably means most of us.

In biblical days shepherding was a highly dangerous business. Herds might consist of thousands of sheep, and shepherds had to be highly skilled in tending for the sheep and protecting them from wolves and robbers. The shepherd's care and courage were legendary. A good shepherd would not think twice about his own life in protecting his sheep. This is the image that Jesus chose for himself in today's gospel. He is the good shepherd. His leadership is a mixture of tenderness, strength and self sacrifice. Jesus loves us so much that he would lay down his life. That's a powerful belief to take out into the world!

But what if we don't quite believe it? Surely there are too many of us to love and look after individually. People fall by the wayside all the time. We hear tragic stories of elderly people who die alone and are not discovered for days because no one cares enough to visit. We see down and outs sleeping in subways because their family and friends have given up on them. Can God really be looking out for each and every one of us? Surely there are too many of us to look after – to love individually. Not so! Jesus we're told would not let even one of his sheep stray without coming to the rescue. He knows each and every one of us by name. If we are one of his, then he will recognise us and take care of us. That's another powerful belief to wake up with. The next time you are feeling lost and forgotten, try looking for the Good Shepherd's love in your life. God's help is always there when we look to him.

PARISH PRAYER - Father, pour out your Spirit upon our parish. Grant us a new vision of your glory, a new faithfulness to your Word, and a new consecration to your service; that your love might grow among us and your Kingdom come. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART AND ST MARGARET MARY

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26TH APRIL 2015 – 4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Weekend Masses – Page 261 of Parish Mass Book

Saturday	6.00 pm	Holy Souls	<i>(Regina Coeli)</i>
Sunday	9.00 am	Holy Souls	
	11.00 am	People of the Parish	<i>(Regina Coeli)</i>

Confession/Reconciliation - Saturday at 5.30 - 5.55 pm

Weekday Services

[Morning Prayer – Psalter Week 4]

Mon.	10.00 am	Tim Salter - Easter Feria
Tues.	No Mass Today	Easter Feria
	7.30 pm	Queen of Peace Prayer Group – in Emmaus Room
Weds.	10.00 am	Rose Bere - St. Catherine of Siena
	7.30 pm	SVP meeting in Emmaus Room
Thurs.	10.00 am	Private Intention - Easter Feria
Fri.	10.00 am	Private Intention - Easter Feria
	10.45 am	SVP 'First Friday' Coffee Morning
Sat.	10.30 am	Holy Souls - St. Athanasius
	6.00 pm	Holy Souls - 5 th Sunday of Easter

Anniversaries this week: Fr. Guy (Vincent) Wace, OSB, Timothy Salter, Eddie Wilde, Roger Gerald Clancy, Sarah Courtney, James Tinney, Mary Gatt, Irene Barnes, and David Horsburgh. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.*

Money Matters (*O yes, it does!*) – The collection last weekend was £431.78. Thank you all very much. There is a retiring collection this weekend for the Priests' Training Fund. If you would like to 'Gift Aid' your donation, envelopes are available at the back of the church.

Hospital Visits – If you or family members are admitted to the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital and would like a visit from the Roman Catholic Chaplain, please call St John's Cathedral, Norwich (01603 624615). If you would like to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick before going to hospital, please contact Fr. Brendan on 01362 694066.

World Day of Prayer for Vocations - "*For each one of us the Lord has a vocation, that place God wants us to live our lives, but we must seek it.*" This Sunday is 'World Day of Prayer for Vocations', made all the more special because 2015 is the 'Year for Consecrated Life'. On this day we are asked to pray for those who are considering a religious vocation. If you yourself are considering a religious vocation visit www.ukvocation.org which is a very useful starting point.

Holiday - I am taking a short break to visit my family (mother's birthday) between the 19th and the 27th of May. Fr. Peter Brown has very kindly agreed to supply Mass in the parish on the weekend of 23rd and 24th May.

Children's Pilgrimage to Walsingham on Tuesday, 26th May - This will be the 30th Anniversary of this Pilgrimage. The procession will start in the village at 10.45 am. Mass in the Chapel of Reconciliation at 12.00 noon; picnic in the meadow afterwards and finishing the day at the beach at Wells-next-the-Sea.

SVP - Fit and Well - The SVP (St Vincent de Paul Society) would like to extend a grateful thanks to Elaine for the sterling work she has done in the past eight years as President and Secretary of the Dereham Conference. Following the uncertainty of the SVP's future in Dereham, Deacon Martin has taken over the reins as Chair of the Conference, and new people have expressed a desire to become members of the SVP. It is hoped in the not too distant future to have a recruitment evening, whereby any further new members can see the varied activities of the SVP, through current members and a short DVD. Details will be announced soon. In the meantime, the Annual Report of the Conference for the year ended 31 March 2015 is now available on the parish notice board and website.

The Catenian Rosary Group are collecting old rosaries to send to Aboriginals in Australia and Third World countries. Bishop Alan supports the appeal and rosaries can be sent to John Riley, 112 Lonsdale Road, Bolton, Lancs. BL1 4PN. Contact (01204) 845094, email dor.jonriley@yahoo.co.uk.

Support for Christians in the Middle East: A parishioner writes: The Coptic (Egyptian) Church, which can trace its foundation back to St Mark in Alexandria, is one the churches in peril from attacks by radical Islamic groups and other forces sympathetic to them. Aid to the Church in Need offers information and ways of supporting our brothers and sisters in the Middle East, but additionally parishioners may be interested in the work of the charity, Release International, which is seeking to petition the Egyptian government about its failure to enforce constitutional provisions guaranteeing freedom of worship for all faiths. For anyone interested in signing the petition it can be found by following link: <http://www.change.org/p/release-s-petition-to-support-persecuted-christians-in-egypt> . Further information about Release's Egypt Campaign "*Every Right*" can be found on: <http://www.releaseinternational.org/campaigns/egypt-campaign-2015-every-right/>

Bite Size

"Sometimes it seems like God is difficult to find and impossibly far away. We get so caught up in our small daily duties and irritations that they become the only things that we can focus on. What we forget is that God's love and beauty are all around us, every day, if only we would take the time to look up and see them."

Matthias

In Eastertide, we sing REGINA COELI in place of ANGELUS :

Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia

For he whom you did merit to bear. Alleluia.

Has risen as he said. Alleluia.

Pray for us to God. Alleluia.

Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary. Alleluia.

For the Lord has truly risen. Alleluia.

Let us pray: O God, who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech you, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, his mother, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen