

The Barra

Weekly Newsletter of St Finbar's Catholic Parish, Glenbrook
4th Sunday of Easter - Year A

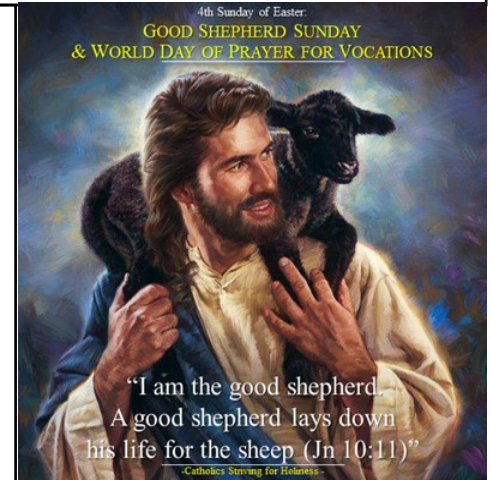
2nd & 3rd May 2020

Acts 2:14,36-41; Ps 22; 1 Peter 2:20-25; John 10:1-10

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

*O God, You have chosen the Apostles
to make disciples of all nations
and by Baptism and Confirmation
have called all of us to build up Your Holy Church.*

*We earnestly implore You to choose from among us,
Your children, many priests, brothers, and sisters
who will love you with their whole heart
and will gladly spend their entire lives
to make you known and loved by all. Amen*



FATHER JOLLY'S WEEKLY REFLECTION

We read in the Acts of the Apostles wherein Peter says to the crowds, "You crucified Jesus", and that awakened in them a sense of guilt and movement towards conversion which urged them to ask. "What must we do?" (Acts 2:37). They were right, because true belief in Jesus always demands a radical conversion and new way of living. It means letting God into our lives that we live for the values proclaimed by our Lord. Jesus becomes our door. He is our gate to safe and full life. Jesus is the one who has come into this world to give us access to a new place, to a new "vital place". He has come to invite us to come out of our own little world's limited horizons, to an infinite and eternal world of peace, freedom and vitality. In him we find God inviting man and woman into his own 'space'. He says he is the gate to life on earth and to eternal life in the next. If we enter through Christ our door, we are safe because of the security of his love. We are used to the door and gates which create territorial barriers between people due to the fear of being robbed or some getting involved with our privacy, but when we walk through Christ our door, we will have the freedom to be our best self. Here we gain the freedom to go freely in and out; if we go through him, we are sure to find pastures, the nourishment and the satisfaction that give purpose to life. Jesus is not only the gate to the sheepfold; he is the shepherd himself. As our Good Shepherd, he is our guide. A good career guide can help us to find the right career, a wise marriage counsellor may be able to save a marriage, a good doctor may treat the patient well, and a good spiritual director can help you to pray better. But Jesus is the Guide of guides, he is the Good Shepherd. Now is the time we really need to go to the Good Shepherd more than going to any other councillors. Yes, in our sickness we need a saviour, in our fear an encourager, in our pain a painkiller, in our anxieties and worries a comforter, and in our blindness someone to show us the light. We need the light now more than any other times in the history of our life span. We can have all these helps in Jesus. We sheep need a Good Shephard. He wants us to follow him because he is the Good Shepherd. We are all going through great sufferings and He is our model especially in the acceptance of suffering. May we imitate him and follow by being a good shepherd, a guide and a good friend to all those who suffer a bit more than you and me. Let us follow the Good Shephard in providing the Security of care and love. Let us find comfort in the Good Shephard not only in the painful experiences and struggles of life but all other experiences of our life, good or bad. Thus, let us be deeply conscious that Jesus the Good Shepherd knows us through and through, calls us by our names, cares for us most minutely, and loves us most intimately. Let our response to the Good Shephard be: "Jesus, My Good Shephard, lead me into the heart of the Father, there to experience the length and the breadth and the depth of your Divine Love for me. In this Divine Love may I find comfort and consolation. Amen".

ST. FINBAR'S PARISH NEWS

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

The current situation of forced abstinence from the Eucharist can become a time of growing in faith, of desire for the gift of sacramental Communion, of solidarity with those who for various reasons cannot benefit from it.

To understand once again that the Eucharist is a freely given and unexpected gift of the Lord Jesus, which should be desired with one's whole heart all the time, could be one outcome of this disconcerting time.

The Church has a long-standing, but, until recently, more neglected practice of "spiritual Communion" — inviting Jesus into one's heart and soul when receiving the actual sacrament isn't possible.

Physically receiving the Holy Eucharist is extremely important, but it is not the only and indispensable way to unite oneself with Jesus and his body that is the church.

St. Alphonsus Liguori offers us this prayer that you might like to say:

Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus,
I believe that you are present in the most
Blessed Sacrament.
I love you above all things,
and I desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive you
sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace you as if you were already there
and unite myself wholly to you.
Never permit me to be separated from you.

Amen.

— St. Alphonsus Liguori



FOSTER FAMILIES NEEDED.

We are currently searching for a placement for the following three children who are biological siblings.
14 year old girl – Springwood High School
12 year old boy -St Columbus High School
10 year old boy Hazelbrook Public School

I have kept it very simple so as not to identify the children. Our hope is to ensure they stay together and in the same schools as these are one of the few things that have been consistent in their lives.

Please get in touch with Fatima on 0417 911 579 for more information and please feel free to share the information with anyone who might be interested.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED:

Yvonne Holt (Judy Burrett's Sister), Betty Burge-Lopez (Julie-Ann McLoughlin's Grandmother),
Elise Doyle (Jacqui Visser's Sister), Patrick Hanson, Patricia De Mattia, Ken Moore, Maureen Purcell,
Merle Catlin (Margaret Richard's Mother), Jim Barrett, Anthony Campbell (Alison Howard's Brother).

PLEASE PRAY FOR SICK PARISHIONERS, RELATIVES & FRIENDS:

Adam Carlyon (Theresa Luczak's Son in Law), Kathleen Schneiders, Maria Macri, Eugene Daley (Margaret Rivas' Friend),
Ryder Lopez, Rev. Max Barrett (CSSR) (Jim Barrett's Brother), Joan Paine, Mark Bates, Lyn Downes,
Reg Moore, Pam Clyne, Ellen Moffitt, Terry Stevens, Jacqui Visser, Joan Lohrey, Joanne Macrae,
Maddison Farrugia, Catherine Kirk (Cameron), Sophie Hollies, Colleen Nolan, Michelle Anthony and Harrison
Aggar (Margaret & Ian Dickson's Grandson).

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME:

Ray Smith & Greg Masters (Janice Smith's Husband and Nephew), Cheryl Kirton, James Gormly,
Letitia Osborne, Katie Jones, Alicia Snaith, Raymond Roberts, John Tregillgas, Dennis Lohan, Marjorie Aussel
and Angela Pereira.

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Thanksgiving Offertory

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Your gift supports our parish to share Christ's message of love and salvation with all

GIVE TO YOUR PARISH

Any gift, whatever you can give, will nurture the spiritual vitality of our parishes and will ensure that we can continue to provide Christian pastoral care that brings hope and joy to our community.

Lockdown

Yes there is fear.
 Yes there is isolation.
 Yes there is panic buying.
 Yes there is sickness.
 Yes there is even death.
 But,
 They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise
 You can hear the birds again.
 They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
 The sky is no longer thick with fumes
 But blue and grey and clear.
 They say that in the streets of Assisi
 People are singing to each other
 across the empty squares,
 keeping their windows open
 so that those who are alone
 may hear the sounds of family around them.
 They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
 Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.
 Today a young woman I know
 is busy spreading fliers with her number
 through the neighbourhood
 So that the elders may have someone to call on.
 All over the world people are slowing down and
 reflecting
 All over the world people are looking at their
 neighbours in a new way
 All over the world people are waking up to a new

reality
 To how big we really are.
 To how little control we really have.
 To what really matters.
 To Love.
 So we pray and we remember that
 Yes there is fear.
 But there does not have to be hate.
 Yes there is isolation.
 But there does not have to be loneliness.
 Yes there is panic buying.
 But there does not have to be meanness.
 Yes there is sickness.
 But there does not have to be disease of the soul
 Yes there is even death.
 But there can always be a rebirth of love.
 Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.
 Today, breathe.
 Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
 The birds are singing again
 The sky is clearing,
 Spring is coming,
 And we are always encompassed by Love.
 Open the windows of your soul
 And though you may not be able
 to touch across the empty square,
 Sing.

Fr. Richard Hendrick, OFM



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Reflection on the Gospel

The fourth Sunday of Easter is sometimes known as Good Shepherd Sunday. In the three different cycles of the liturgical year, the gospel on this Sunday comes from John, chapter 10 – an extended discourse by Jesus on the image of himself as the good shepherd. This year the reading is the beginning of the chapter and stops just immediately before the words, ‘I am the good shepherd’.

Our understanding of this whole image and the scene that is set in today’s passage is very dependent upon a contextual understanding of the times. Whilst shepherds were generally regarded as being little better than criminals, they often put their lives in danger to tend to their flocks. Of a night time, several flocks of sheep would be penned in a communal sheepfold, usually made of stone walls. There was only one entrance to the sheepfold and one of the shepherds would effectively become the gate by sleeping across the entranceway. This was to keep the sheep in but also to guard against thieves. Thieves might climb over the wall into the sheepfold but the sheep were trained to respond to their shepherd’s voice alone so thieves could only steal what sheep they could carry off or those that were not sufficiently trained to their shepherd’s commands.

When Jesus described himself as the gate of the sheepfold, his audience would have immediately understood the analogy. For a shepherd to become the gate to the sheepfold of a night was to risk his life for not only his own sheep but all the sheep in the fold overnight. It took courage and demonstrated utter commitment.



Reflection by Greg Sunter

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