

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 3, 2020



“THE GOOD SHEPHERD”

Dear Friends:

Before I begin on my reflection here, I must mention the passing of Father John Bida, who died on April 27th. The people of our Parish were always very proud of Father Bida who grew up in Amenia and faithfully served the Church. Fr. Bida studied in Rome and was ordained in 1973. He served at several parishes, including St. Lawrence O’Toole in Brewster and Regina Coeli in Hyde Park as well as serving as a canonical consultant to the Metropolitan Tribunal in Manhattan and Poughkeepsie. Many of us remember him serving at Immaculate Conception in Bangall and St. Anthony’s in Pine Plains. For the last few years he was at the priest’s retirement residence in the Bronx. May his soul rest in peace.

For our reflection today we look at the Gospel of the Fourth Sunday of Easter, John 10:1-10. In this Gospel, Jesus speaks of the “Good Shepherd”. He tells His listeners that He is the Good Shepherd.

Jesus points out the occupational priorities of any effective shepherd. I see it coming down to two factors: Protection and Salvation.

A good shepherd will strive to protect his sheep which is the main purpose of his job. If he fails to protect his sheep, he will lose his job. In our modern society, there is perhaps many fewer dangers for sheep than there was in the time of Jesus. The shepherd in those days experienced many dangers: robbers and thieves, animal predators, and severe weather conditions. There was quite a bit to concern a shepherd in those days. That’s why the illustration of Jesus as a shepherd is so meaningful. Jesus serves as a real protector against the real dangers of the modern world. Jesus Christ is with us to keep us safe.

But Jesus is also someone who loves His sheep. Thus, as the gospel tells us, Jesus will help His people to be saved. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, came so that His flock “might have life and have it more abundantly”. In this time of increased anxiety and fear, we need to be reminded that Jesus Christ is with us and wants to give us life. It is so difficult to keep positive in this environment. That’s why it is so important now to rely on our faith. Now is the time to really let Christ into our daily life to bring us His power and His love.

Fr. Wilson

UPDATE ON THE CORONA VIRUS OUTBREAK - Our Weekday and Sunday Masses as well as our Religious Ed Program will remain cancelled until further notice. Immaculate Conception Church will be open for private prayer and confession is available on Saturdays from 3:45 to 4:15 pm in the Chapel of Immaculate Conception.

With respect to the Sunday weekly offering envelopes, I understand that these troubling times make financial commitments difficult. However, if you are able to continue your weekly donations, you can drop it off at the Rectory (4 Lavelle Rd.) in the mail slot located on the lower right side of the door, at the parish office or place it in the mail. As always, I am thankful for your support. During these difficult times, we especially need to keep one another in our prayers

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISH : Gerhard Herron, Evan Ciovacco, Lydia Casey, Mark Hamm, Grover Williams, Stephanie Merenda, Carol Wilson, Dawn Hazel Burrows, Jordana Bell, Lori DeLucca, Amanda Carneski, Linda Sartori, Winifred Capowski, Arthur Nadeau, LuAnn Ballantine, Frank D'Agostino, Sonja Kelly, Mike Butts, Erin D'Elia, Richard Piccoli, Dominic Nannetti, Santino Delfino, Ricky McGhee, John Daubman, Joseph Licurse, Joanne Balek, Michael Engel, Theresa Thompson, Linda Mary Dick, Leela Niranjana, Ralph Locantore, Fred Arni, Brandon Rojas, Leah Rost, Susan Consentino, Pat Boice, Arietta Carroll, Cecilia Cummings, Mary Wilkinson, Evelyn Tompkins, Mary Simmons, Marjorie Arni, Teal Burns, Jane Bly, Jennifer Boice, Nora Miller, Allen McPeck, Diana LaCurto, Genevieve Minischetti, Anita Nichols, Kathleen McGuire, Loretta Heller, Douglas Wilson, Donna Whalen, Stephen Bida, Leah Eurvard, Meghan King, Christine Darby, Peter Hill, Patricia Macura, Jerard Kain, Margaret and Roger Gregoire, Kyleigh Cummings, Caroline McEnroe, Kristin Paraszti, Patty Cassidy, Stephen Bida, John McKee, Kathleen Herron, Roseann Roux, Catherine DiRe, Michael Gaddis and Baby Gemma Dadone.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE RECENTLY DEPARTED IN OUR PARISH: George Hazel, Harrison Hardisty, Laura Jean Porter and Maureen Tyree.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REGISTRATION for 2020-2021 - As our Religious Education Program has been cancelled since Sunday, March 15th, due to the coronavirus, our Registration for 2020-2021 could not be handled as usual. Due to these unforeseen circumstances, this year the Registration for our Religious Ed Students will have to be done primarily by mail. Letters were sent out to each of our families on April 15th. We ask that you register your child/children by **June 15th**, as books and supplies need to be ordered. If you know of anyone who has a child entering first grade, please ask them to call the office at 373-8193 and we will mail them a registration form. Our program helps parents pass on the Catholic faith to their children which is so very important.

TURN TO MARY – This month, we honor Mary, the Mother of God (and ours, too). Trust her for guidance and protection: “Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided.”

DON'T GIVE UP ON GOD'S MERCY - Throughout our lives, we all have choices we wish we hadn't made or missed opportunities to do good. They add up as we get older. We may even fear our transgressions are so many or so serious that we are beyond forgiveness but nothing could be farther from the truth. Learn a lesson from Judas.

Judas' fatal mistake. There's no doubt that Judas' act of betrayal was horrible. It is inconceivable that he could know Jesus' friendship for three years, be among His closest and most beloved friends and then deliver Him for judgment and probable death. Yet, that wasn't Judas' worst sin. Doubting God's mercy was worse. God will always forgive us if we ask. It's we who don't ask.

Jesus waits, Jesus never abandoned Judas. It was Judas who abandoned hope in Jesus when he killed himself in remorse for his part in Jesus' death. Peter betrayed Jesus, too, by denying Him. But Jesus forgave him just as He will always forgive us if we give Him the chance. (*Growing in Faith*)

SUNDAY MASS - Please see your Television Guide for the Easter Sunday Masses being offered on EWTN, Catholic Faith Network, Heart of the Nation (Channel 82) at 8 am and WPIX (Channel 11) from St. Patrick's Cathed

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION - The Pine Plains Council of Churches annually offers a scholarship to a graduating High School senior who is actively affiliated with one of the four Churches in Pine Plains. Applications are available from Fr. Wilson and must be returned no later than May 18, 2020.

2020 CARDINAL'S ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP APPEAL - As of April 24th, our parish has received **\$21,670.00** in pledges/gifts from **59** families. Our parish goal is **\$42,000**. I sincerely ask that you prayerfully consider making a pledge or a one-time donation in an amount you can afford. Not all offerings are equal, but all sacrifices are..

SUNDAY COLLECTION - This past week, we received \$3,026.00 in donations. I am so very thankful for your generosity and steadfast commitment to our Church especially during these difficult times. I pray that God will continue to bless you and your families with good health.

PRAY FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES: . Timothy Walsh, Joshua O'Hara, Connor Washburn, Sam Kent, Jordan Paraszti, Gavin Carroll, Richard C. Belliveau, Jimmy Darnell, Mike Mazza, Nathan Tong, Mark Hall and Tyler Jasmin. Please keep our servicemen and their families in your prayers

WHY DO CATHOLICS DO THAT? WHY DO WE GENUFLECT IN CHURCH? Most Catholic Churches have a tabernacle in the sanctuary. The tabernacle contains consecrated hosts for people in the hospital or nursing homes, and those in danger of death. Therefore, Jesus is present in the sanctuary: body and blood, soul and divinity. When we cross in front of the tabernacle or enter a pew, we honor Christ by genuflecting on the right knee or making a deep bow. We use the right knee because that is considered the side of honor.