

Homily for the 4th Sunday of Easter
May 12, 2019
By Deacon Nick Thompson

Humor me, let's take a moment on this Mother's Day to give thanks. Everyone, turn to your mother, look deep into her eyes. For many of you it may mean looking up into heaven but on this day I can assure you she's looking back, for others it may mean staring off out a window simply remembering her face wherever she may be but I can assure you that on this day thoughts of you are on her mind. Now with a loving heart call out loud to her in your best little lamb voice baaaa-baaaa. Roughly translated from lamb into English this means "Thank you mom for choosing life, for choosing me."

So why not just say it in English? If you prefer English say "mama" but today is also Good Shepherd Sunday so I thought speaking lamb would be more appropriate. You see, it is the creation of a mother, the creation of Eve, that makes a Good Shepherd necessary. God's first commandment at the creation of Eve was, "Be fruitful and multiply," that is have lambs and build up a flock. Adam and Eve are God's greatest creation but without Eve to complete Adam no lambs, no sheep, no flock for Jesus to shepherd, no us; Just a lonely Adam.

Today's gospel occurs in the winter on the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple at Jerusalem. The Father in heaven has given to Jesus all

humanity and Jesus claims, for we who follow him, for we who hear his voice, for we the sons and daughters of Adam, eternal life in His Kingdom. Each of us were conceived in the temple of our mother's womb, the temple of life. Likewise; God's plan for salvation and redemption becomes possible first because of Mary's fiat her yes to life. Mary's fiat is the dedication of her temple, her womb to the fulfillment of God's plan for all mankind. Just as Jesus and the Father are one so Mary in her acceptance of conception by the power of the Holy Spirit shares her humanity, her flesh, her womb with the Son of Man. Mary is the Ark of the Covenant, the queen mother of the church, through her all graces flow, through her the lamb of God and the Good Shepherd become one in the person of Jesus.

Our mothers, like Mary, gave consent at the moment of our conception to becoming a temple dedicated to life. It is this consent that gives birth to Jesus' lambs, gives birth to His flock, gives birth to us, the people of God. There are men and women of prominence today who do not choose life, but this day is not for them, today we shake the dust of their ideas from our feet in protest against them. Today is about our mother who despite early morning sickness, despite the loss of her girlish figure, despite the pangs of childbirth, despite the lifelong commitment, despite spit up and diapers chose life. Our mother who chose to make a

nine month down payment based solely on the hope of us, who chose to love us unconditionally even before we were born.

When we emerge from our mother's womb we are washed by her tears of joy, washed clean of the amniotic fluid through which she provided our' nourishment and finally washed clean of the blood shed by our' mother in our' birthing. We hear our mother's loving consoling voice and are bound to her forever. Because our mother chose life we are destined for eternal life, given the opportunity to hear and to believe the Word of the Lord and to spread that word throughout the whole world, to wash the minds of the world with the Word of God so that all may "know the Lord is God; he made us, his we are; his people, the flock he tends." Because of her decision: It is possible for us to be presented to Mother church, to be washed clean of original sin in the baptismal font, the womb of the church, washed in the blood of the lamb through our day to day sacrificial offerings, our prayers, our love of God and neighbor so that we can be counted among the great multitude standing before the throne and before the lamb wearing white robes and holding palm branches singing joyfully to the Lord. The greatest gift God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit has given each of us is to be born of the woman we call mother.

So, let's try this again take a moment on this Mother's Day, this Good Shepherd Sunday to give thanks. Everyone, turn to your mother,

look deep into her eyes. For many of you it may mean looking up into heaven but on this day I can assure you she's looking back, for others it may mean staring off out a window simply remembering her face wherever she may be but I can assure you that on this day thoughts of you are on her mind. Now with a loving heart call out loud to her in your best little lamb voice baaaa-baaaa. Roughly translated from lamb into English this means "Thank you mama for choosing life, for choosing me."