



parish newsletter

Fourth Sunday of Easter (Year B) | 25 April 2021

Reflecting on the Gospel



Just because a person chooses to do no harm and love others does not mean that they are living in truth and properly anchored to the real cornerstone.

Jesus is the true and authentic cornerstone and shepherd. It is only in following the Risen One as the way, the truth, and the life that we can move from being well grounded ethical people to properly focused moral ones. Proper conduct, a true sense of justice, wisdom, virtue, moral principles, faith, hope, and love will be difficult to find unless we listen to the right Voice. It is when we learn to listen to the voice of God that we begin our journey on the road to salvation. It is only the Good Shepherd, the authentic and solid cornerstone, who can guide us through life's questions and challenges and bring us to the safe and proper pasture.

A person's life only has meaning when the cornerstone is properly selected and set. Understanding themselves only as random acts of creation, exist-

ing without intent or purpose, will color their choices and influence their decisions. The foundation of their lives will be simply a matter of preference and choice, leaving benchmarks of growth and higher ideals optional to pursue. Whereas people who believe that they are fashioned and loved into existence by a God who purposely made them, have this incredible unconditional relationship at their source which has tremendous significance. Their allegiance is not to themselves but to their Creator. Life, then, is an adventure in search of this Creator God and a journey of self-discovery that seeks to unite their will to His. There is a cost. We have to give up our life in order to gain our life. As ironic as that sounds, it is true. It is only when we finally figure this out that the true cornerstone of our lives will be properly laid and we can, with God's help, get about the business of properly constructing a temple that endures.

Any builder worth his or her salt knows the value and importance of a cornerstone. Properly laying and securing this primary unit determines how the rest of the project

unfolds and its success. Cornerstones are necessary elements not only of buildings but of lives as well. Many human beings conduct the business of their lives paying little at-

tention to a grounding reference or starting point. Hence, what unfolds is a tapestry of relativism, with few anchors or guideposts and many impulsive choices. Some consider

love to be their cornerstone. While this may sound attractive and useful, the pursuit of love without a simultaneous pursuit of its source can be shallow and self-focused.

Everyday Stewardship



Tracey Earl Welliver, MTS

Have you ever confided your problems to a friend, only to get the answer, "have you prayed about it as much as you've talked about it?"

Like all good advice, it can really irritate the recipient at first. Here I am, vulnerable and wounded, unloading my problems, and this joker tries to load them right back up and ship them off to Someone with a higher pay grade.

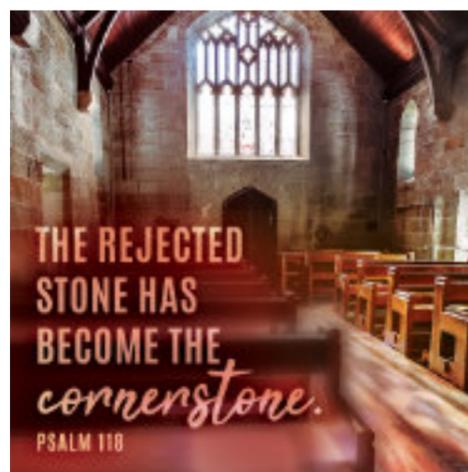
But again, like all good and irritating advice, it rings true if you sit and think about it.

Sure, venting is helpful. We all need that friend or family member who can listen to our problems. But if we ever start to think that person can solve them, it's a good sign that we're losing perspective.

Are you looking to the world for an answer? Are you looking in the mirror, expecting to find a solution to your problems? Are you expecting happiness, peace, contentment or justice to come from any place other than God?

"It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to put confidence in princes," the Psalms tell us. Well, I've never put much confidence in princes. But when it comes to problems, I often find myself telling God to take a step back — "I've got this."

It's tough to pray about any problem as much as you talk about it. We want so badly to tackle the issue ourselves. But I'll let you in on a secret: it doesn't matter what the question is, we don't have the answer. Take it to the One who does.



I am the Good Shepherd. My sheep know my voice.

Live the Liturgy

The cornerstone is the first stone that is laid and the stone that not only determines how the other stones are placed but the position of the entire structure. As human beings, we need a cornerstone or reference point so that our lives can be properly placed and positioned. Our cornerstone determines not only how we see ourselves but who we will become. Without a cornerstone or reference point, we will be disconnected, disoriented, and poorly positioned for effective action in our world. In order to be the children of God we are, Jesus Christ needs to be our cornerstone and the reference point for all that we do. He alone is the Good Shepherd who can guide through life's questions and challenges, bringing us to proper pasture. Without this proper base, we can easily fall into the trap of self-aggrandizement and quickly lose our way. If that happens, then moral principles, proper conduct, justice, wisdom, and virtue will be difficult to find. We need to listen to the right voices and allow God to show us how to build our house well. Salvation only comes from God and only God will protect us, no matter the cost.



First Reading

"There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved." (Acts 4:12)

Psalm

The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone. (Ps 117)

Second Reading

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. (1 Jn 3:2)

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my own sheep and my own know me.
Alleluia!

Gospel

"I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep." (Jn 10:14-15)

Masses this Week

25	FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Prayer for Vocations	Acts 4:8-12/Ps 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29 [22]/1 Jn 3:1-2/Jn 10:11-18 10.30 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish 17.00 Mass St Mary's Sheila Burnikell (RIP)
26	Monday	Acts 11:1-18/Ps 42:2-3; 43:3, 4 [cf. 3a]/Jn 10:1-10 12.05 Mass St Mary's Janice Connaughton (RIP)
27	Tuesday	Acts 11:19-26/Ps 87:1b-3, 4-5, 6-7 [117:1a]/Jn 10:22-30 12.05 Mass St Mary's Doud Mass Fund
28	Wednesday St Peter Chanel	Acts 12:24—13:5a/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6 and 8 [4]/Jn 12:44-50 12.05 Mass St Mary's Intentions of Terry & Ann Adams
29	St Catherine of Sienna	Acts 13:13-25/Ps 89:2-3, 21-22, 25 and 27 [2]/Jn 13:16-20 12.05 Mass St Mary's Elizabeth Smith Mass Fund
30	Friday St Pius V	Acts 13:26-33/Ps 2:6-7, 8-9, 10-11ab [7bc]/Jn 14:1-6 12.05 Mass St Mary's Ellen Noble (RIP)
1	Saturday St Joseph the Worker	Gn 1:26—2:3 Ps 90:2, 3-4, 12-13, 14 and 16 [cf. 17b]/Mt 13:54-58 11.00 Mass St Mary's Veronica Bell (RIP) 18:00 Vigil Mass St Cecilia's Adrian Finn (RIP)
2	FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER	Acts 9:26-31/Ps 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32 [26a]/1 Jn 3:18-24/Jn 15:1-8 10.30 Mass St Mary's Intentions of Philip 17.00 Mass St Mary's People of the Parish

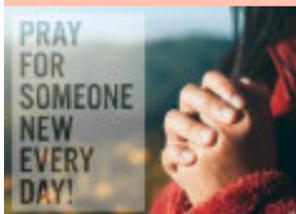


Christopher, Paula, Liz, Peter, Emilia, Jean, Teresa and Cath.



Jean Gallagher

If you would like a name added to our prayer list, please email or call the parish office.



Questions for the Week

First Reading: We hear how Peter courageously testified before the Sanhedrin that in Jesus' name the crippled man was healed and in Jesus' name all believers are saved. How strong is the conviction of your faith when someone challenges you?

Second Reading: John speaks to his community of believers as "children of God." What do you see as some of the implications of such a designation?

Gospel: In speaking of himself as "the good shepherd" who cares deeply for his sheep, Jesus contrasts himself to "a hired man" (the Pharisees) who has no concern for his sheep. How should have the Pharisees reacted to this criticism?



News & Announcements

Gift Aid Envelopes

The envelopes for the new financial year are available at the back of the church for collection. Please take yours if you haven't already.

Weekly Reflections

We're posting a weekly reflection on the Sunday readings on our Facebook and YouTube pages. The reflections give us the change to keep the message of the Sunday readings alive throughout the week. Take a look.

Welcome and the Next Steps

If you're visiting us today you are especially welcome. If you've been away from the practice of your Catholic faith for a while, welcome home! We missed you!

You might also be joining us from another Christian denomination, faith background, or none at all—we hope you feel welcome too.

If you would like to learn more about the Catholic faith or are interested in becoming Catholic please speak to one of the priests or to Deacon Eddy. We'll be starting a course in September, but before then we'd love to help you get to know us a little better and perhaps answer any questions you might have. Jesus is calling you home to his Catholic Church!

St Mary's Primary School

The governors and diocese have proposed to convert St

Mary's Primary School to an academy as a member of Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust in October 2021. This is an important step in the life of the school and opinions are being sought from parents, parishioners and interested parties.

Copies of a letter explaining the proposal are available in the parish office, or by contacting the school directly.

Diocesan Celebration of Marriage

This year's celebration will take place at 12pm on Saturday, 22 May at the Cathedral. It will be an open Mass and a live streamed event.

The invitation will focus on couples celebrating significant anniversaries in 2021 but is open to engaged couples preparing for marriage, those who were married in the months prior to lockdown and since our last Mass in 2019 and all married couples. We include too those widowed and bereaved who were unable to visit wives and husbands in hospital and homes prior to their deaths. In these unprecedented times we remember couples in crisis and individual adults and children experiencing difficulties and abuse in their family relationships. We wish all to know that none is forgotten and that the Sacramental life, despite Covid, is very much alive and prayed for.

If you would like to book a place you can email the Cathedral at office@stmaryscathedral.org.uk. If you are celebrating a significant anniversary please give you details as special certificates are being issued.

and made to feel stupid.

The most powerful tool for evangelisation we have is our personal experience. No one, no matter how clever they argue and whatever scripture passages they throw at us, can deny our personal experience of faith in Jesus Christ in his Catholic Church and that's where we start.

Witnessing to the faith is as simple—and powerful—as having the courage to finish the sentence: 'The difference to my life that my faith makes is...' If people are going to be won over (or won back) to Christ then it will be by the power of our witness, the power of the example of our lives.

If people can see the difference Christian hope makes to us, they will want it themselves. If they can see the comfort and peace we get from trusting in Jesus they will want it themselves. But they won't see or hear that unless we are will to share it with them. Evangelisation starts not with clever arguments but by showing the difference Jesus makes to our lives. People are attracted to beauty. Let them see the beauty of Christ in you and the Holy Spirit will do the rest.



Why do we do that?



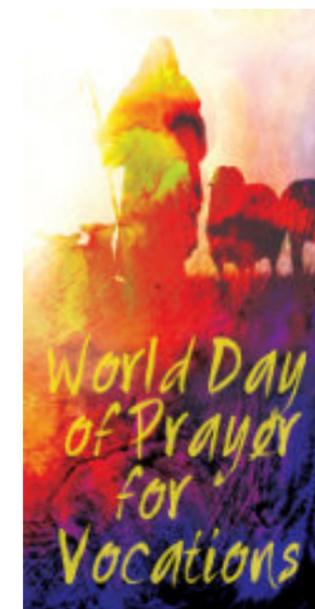
Question: What are the requirements for being a confirmation sponsor?

Answer: Although many dioceses have specific requirements for who can be a sponsor for the Sacrament of Confirmation, the

Code of Canon Law identifies certain requirements that are true for all dioceses and parishes. First, the sponsor should be chosen by the one to be confirmed (or, in some cases, by the parents or even the pastor). Second, a sponsor must be at least sixteen years old (unless the local bishop has chosen another age, or a special exception has been made). Third, the sponsor must be a Catholic who has been confirmed and who has already received the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Beyond this, they must lead "a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on." Fourth, they can have no sort of canonical penalty or impediment. Finally, they cannot be either the father or mother of the one to be confirmed (See Canons 893, §1 and 874, §1).

In some cultures, it is customary for one of the confirmand's godparents to act as sponsor, although this is not required by Church law.

To learn about the requirements for your parish or diocese, you can consult your pastor or your parish or diocesan director of religious education or the diocese's office liturgy and worship.



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