

The Work of the People

Fourth Sunday of Easter (Good Shepherd Sunday)

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is traditionally referred to as Good Shepherd Sunday. Hearing the Shepherd's voice, followers recognize and know it is their God. Safe in the knowledge that they cannot be taken from the hand of the Shepherd, those who hear his voice follow as faithful believers willing to go where God calls and sends them.

In today's reading from the Acts of the Apostles, Peter's good deed of healing a man who was crippled from birth is under examination by the Sanhedrin. Would that our testimony to the person and power of Jesus Christ be as forthright as his. Peter identifies Jesus as the cornerstone through whom salvation comes.

The reading from the First Letter of John expresses how much love God has for us. We are God's children – not later, but now! Our future, God is yet to reveal. But we have confidence that because of the gift of God's Son, who became like us in all ways but sin, we too, will be like God.

In today's Gospel, we hear that Jesus knows those who follow him. He would do anything, including laying down his life for his sheep. We know he did suffer and lay down his life. We also know he rose to be the one shepherd of the one flock. Jesus' leadership contrasts starkly with that of a hired man who shepherds sheep he does not know and love. Today's Gospel reminds us of how blessed we are to have Jesus as our Good Shepherd guiding us through our lives.

The reflection for this Sunday is from *Living Love* by Sr. Ruth Burrows who is a Carmelite nun at Quidenham Monastery in Norfolk, England.

Jesus is saying that the Father is seized with love, admiration, gratitude to him because he lays down his life fully. Why should the Father be so enamoured of this act of Jesus laying down his life, accepting to die?

In the first place because the Father can only find an outlet for his love when a human creature consents to die to his own limited, merely natural life.

The condition for being transformed into God's likeness, for entering into his own dimension is—being ready to go beyond ourselves, allowing ourselves to be taken away from self, consenting to leave the limitations of our merely natural being.

This acceptance of dying has to be done in the dark, in blind trust in the promise of the Father.

The dimension into which we are called is "God": so "other," so mysterious as to be beyond thought or imagination; and therefore, in a sense, meaningless to us.

We live a caterpillar existence and are completely incapable of conceiving of a butterfly existence. It is an awful thing to be told—or rather asked—to be willing to die to our caterpillarness in order to be something we have no notion of and no desire for.

We like being caterpillars—we have cabbage leaves to feed on, our world is circumscribed and manageable, it's solid. "What's all this about a new way of being . . . ? Flitting about in the air . . . ? No thanks—I'd rather be as I am!"

God's agonizing struggle is to get his human creatures to love and trust him enough to make the decision, to accept to die to their caterpillar life . . .

But Jesus accepted. This is the great triumph. He accepted, with all the adoring love of his heart, to lay down his life. This act was his supreme expression of the greatness of his love for his Father—that he, the Father, mattered alone, and that all Jesus wanted was to do his will, and to allow the Father to do in him and through him whatever he pleased.

And it is then God's good pleasure to fill his creature with blessings.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Acts 11:1-18/Jn. 10:1-10
 Tuesday: Acts 11:19-26/Jn. 10:22-30
 Wednesday: Acts 12:24; 13:5a/Jn. 12:44-50
 Thursday: 1 Pt. 5:5b-14/Mk. 16:15-20
 Friday: Acts 13:26-33/Jn. 14:1-6
 Saturday: Acts 13:44-52/Jn. 14:7-14
 Sunday: Acts 9:26-31/1 Jn. 3:18-24/Jn. 15:1-8

CATHOLICS RETURNING HOME AN INVITATION FOR CATHOLICS WHO HAVE BEEN AWAY 2024 SPRING SCHEDULE

April 24 - Walk through of the Mass
 (along with explanation and historical overview)
 May 1 - Tips on Sinning -
 Explanation of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
 May 8 - The Creed: What Catholics Believe

The sessions will be held at 6:30 pm at St. Brigid's, Meadville. Please check the bulletin boards at both entrances of the church for further information.

CALENDAR LOTTERY FUNDRAISER

Tickets have been mailed to all parishioners for St. Anthony of Padua Calendar Lottery Fundraiser for June, 2024. On the back of Fr. Mark's letter are the monetary prizes listed for each day. Please return all unsold tickets to the parish office or in the collection basket by May 13. Additional tickets will be available after all week-end masses.

WORSHIP

Monday, April 22
 8:00 am + Liv. & Dec. Members of
 David & Christine Ochs Families
 Tuesday, April 23
 8:00 am + Virginia Lindsay (Diane Polensky)
 Wednesday, April 24
 8:00 am + NO MASS
 Thursday, April 25
 8:00 am + Mike Mackanos (Wife & Family)
 Friday, April 26
 8:00 am + Emily Mott (Family)
 Saturday, April 27
 4:30 pm + Liv. & Dec. of St. Anthony of Padua
 and St. Bernadette Mission
 Sunday, April 28
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 John Weagraff (Kay & Family)
 9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 Gene & Eleanor Szymkiewicz
 (Szymkiewicz Family)

PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Tuesday, April 23
 After Mass - St. Anthony Novena
 Saturday, April 27
 3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession
 Sunday, April 28
 AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Before Mass - Confession
 AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 After Mass - Confession
 Monday, April 29
 5:00 pm - Doors open for BINGO
 Tuesday, April 30
 St. Anthony & St. Bernadette Finance Council and
 Parish Council mtg.
 6:30 pm - at St. Anthony Parish Center

*“Lord,
 open my eyes to see and share
 your goodness and truth
 in every season of my life.”*

SPORTS RAFFLE

Seton School will be holding a Sports Raffle on Saturday, April 27, 2024. Tickets can be purchased at Seton School, The Epiphany of the Lord Parish office and Tamarack Armory. For further information check the poster at both entrances of the church.

MAY CROWNING

On Sunday May 5th we will have May Crowning directly after the 9:30 am Mass. We will then have a Celebration in the Parish Center for all our children that received Sacraments. Please come and support our children.

Thank you!
 —The Faith Formation Team —

BINGO DINNER SPECIAL

On Monday, April 29th a Dinner special will be held in the Parish Center. Dinner includes: Baked Chicken Quarter, Rice Pilaf, Green Beans, Roll. Cost will be \$7.00.

MY PARISH APP

At St. Anthony of Padua we are pursuing new opportunities to foster a stronger parish life and better engage the New Evangelization. As a part of these efforts we are happy to announce that St. Anthony of Padua now has it’s own app for Apple and Android phones as well as tablets. Be sure to download the app today by visiting myparishapp.com or searching for myparish on your phone’s app store, and stay connected with us all week long.

*“Lord, purify my heart and my words
 to build up your people!”*

**ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 STEWARDSHIP**

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|---------------|-------------------|
| Offertory | \$1,038.00 |
| Maintenance | 10.00 |
| Good Shepherd | 30.00 |
| TOTAL | \$1,078.00 |

**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 STEWARDSHIP**

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|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Offertory | \$437.00 |
| Maintenance | 249.00 |
| Candles | 25.00 |
| CSA | 755.00 |
| TOTAL | \$1,466.00 |
| Catholic Services Appeal | |
| Pledged: \$32,625.00 | Paid: \$19,871.00 |

CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

CHURCH NO.:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
