

BEING A GOOD SHEPHERD

Acts 4: 8-12; Ps. 118: 1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28-29; 1 John 3:1-2; John 10:11-18

In Psalm 23, we read: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters, He restores my soul... Goodness and kindness will follow me all the days of my life, I shall dwell in the house of Lord as long as I live." In today's gospel, Jesus tells you and me: "I am the Good Shepherd."

Have you ever wondered why Jesus calls Himself the "Good Shepherd?" Have you ever wondered why Jesus addresses us and identifies us as "sheep" instead of "cows, bulls, goats, et cetera?" If you have ever noticed a herd of cows, the men guiding them always lead from behind, and the cows never follow their leaders, never recognize the voice of the men who guide them. On the contrary, a shepherd always leads the sheep from the front. He goes in front and the sheep follow behind.

In the Scriptures, we see that men who were called to lead God's people were men who previously were shepherds. Biblical figures like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and David were all shepherds before God called them to lead His people to "greener pastures." As shepherds they had the primary responsibility of feeding the sheep – caring for their health and injuries – protecting them from danger. Thus, when the Lord called them to shepherd His people, He was indirectly tasking them to feed His people with His word – heal their souls from the effects of sin – protect them from the danger of falling into Satan's traps. A famous theologian, Karl Rahner, rightly recalled, "It was usual in ancient times to call princes or kings (leaders of nations), the shepherds of their people. The image was perfectly intelligible to the people of that time. They pictured a person going before his flock, feeding... guiding... leading to pasture... defending... looking after them."

Going by this ancient tradition, it was, therefore, appropriate for Jesus to call himself, "The Good Shepherd" Who lays down His life for His sheep (John 10:14-15). As Christians, you and I are baptized into Christ, and are called to be imitators of the "Good Shepherd" Who lays down His life for His sheep. Priests and other religious leaders are specially called by God to be good shepherds to the flocks God has entrusted into their pastoral care. Thus, like Christ, they should be always willing to sacrifice their pleasure and self for the good of the people they serve. We must forfeit our interests for that of God's people! As a parent in the family, you are called to be a good shepherd to your spouse, your kids and other members of your household. As a mother or a father; grandma or grandpa, you have a responsibility to feed them with God's word – keep them healthy in body and mind – keep them safe from the deceit of the Evil One in the form of modernization and materialism. As a principal or a teacher in the school, you have the duty to be a good shepherd to the children entrusted into your care and to the faculty and staff. As one in a leadership role, you have the duty to be a good shepherd to the people you serve.

As we reflect on the call to be "good shepherds," we must remember that today is also Vocation Sunday, thus we pray that young people of our parish may answer the call to offer themselves to serve God as priests and religious. We also pray for 29 of our children who are receiving Christ, the Good and Eternal Shepherd, as they make their First Holy Communion this Sunday. May the examples of their parents and this Faith Community always inspire these young ones and draw them closer to **Christ, the Good Shepherd.**

Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP

PARISH NEWS

SHARING COMMUNITY MEAL: This Thursday, May 3rd, we will be providing our Sharing Community Meal. Please bring your ziti or dessert to the Rectory. Doors will open at 6:45 a.m. The Sharing Community truly appreciates our efforts. Please keep up the good work! For information, please call the Rectory Office.



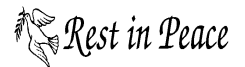
HOLY HOUR: This Friday, May 4th, is First Friday. We will have our monthly Holy Hour at 1 p.m. in honor of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. On Saturday, May 5th, the Divine Mercy Holy Hour will begin at 3 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to participate in these wonderful devotions.

The members of the Rosary Altar Society will attend the 8:30 a.m. Mass next Sunday, May 6th.



OUR FAMILY MASS: Next Sunday, May 6th, we will celebrate our Family Mass at 10 a.m. All children and their families are encouraged to attend. However, because of Confirmation there will not be Family Breakfast this month.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of all the faithful departed, especially Grace Raguso and Francis X. Farrell.



The **ALTAR FLOWERS** are donated by the First Communion Class in memory of their living and deceased family members and friends who cannot be with them as they receive the sacrament.

MAY PROCESSION & CROWNING: On Monday, May 7th, at 6:45 p.m. St. Bartholomew's Parish will celebrate the Queenship of Mary, our Mother. Our newly confirmed and this year's First Communicants will process to the Church and crown the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary in this beautiful May devotion.



The short program is filled with devotional songs to Mary that are sure to bring back youthful memories. Please help us fill the Church to honor Our Blessed Mother.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



YOU ARE INVITED to come and share the joy with our children who will be confirmed at the 11:30 a.m. Mass next Sunday, May 6th. Please keep them in your prayers.

WEDDING JUBILEE MASS & CELEBRATION

St. Bartholomew's couples who are celebrating their 25th or 50th Wedding Anniversary anytime this year (2012) are invited to attend the 11:30 a.m. Mass on May 20th. They will be blessed and honored during the Mass which will be followed by a Reception in the McManus Parish Center. Please call the Rectory to register and tell us how many guests you might be expecting at the Reception.



2012 ARCHDIOCESAN STEWARDSHIP APPEAL

To date our Parish has received \$42,965.10 in pledges/gifts toward the 2012 Archdiocesan Stewardship Appeal, from 168 families. For this Appeal to be truly successful, we must have the support of all of our families. The Appeal is a vital source of funding for the programs and ministries that sustain the parishes across the Archdiocese. It is not too late to make your gift. Please be as generous as you can. Thank you for your kind support.

On **Friday, May 4th**, at 7 p.m., **Anthony Rispo** will perform a concert of virtuosic music for the pipe organ. The program includes works by Bach, Joseph Jongen, and American composers: Leo Sowerby, David Conte, and a new piece composed by Anthony for the occasion. The event, titled Pedal to the Medal, Artistic Expressions, will be held at St. James Church at 71st Street & Madison Avenue, New York City. Tickets are available at the door (\$20 for adults, \$10 for children & seniors). Please email ar@anthonyrispo.com, if you have questions.

St. Bartholomew's Church and Hudson Valley Blood Services express sincere appreciation to the 101 donors and 15 dedicated volunteers, including 8 children, who participated in our April 12th Blood Drive, providing 111 units of blood. St. Bart's has now collected 5292 units in 71 drives since 1981. This was our second best drive ever! You can still participate by calling (800) 933-2566. Please credit your donation to St. Bart's Group # 7747.



YOUTH GROUP: The first Sunday evening of each month immediately following the 5 p.m. Mass, our Youth Group meets in the McManus Parish Center. All youths age 13 and up are invited.

MIRACULOUS MEDAL NOVENA: Held after the 9 a.m. Mass on Mondays.

RECITATION OF THE ROSARY: Join your fellow parishioners in praying the Rosary after the 9 a.m. Mass on weekdays and Saturdays.

STEWARDSHIP

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits to me?

TITHING - GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING

April 24, 2011

Adults' Contribution	\$4204.25
Children's Contribution	\$313.50
Last Year's Total	\$4517.75

April 22, 2012

Adults' Contribution	\$6162.85
Children's Contribution	\$109.70
This Year's Total	\$6272.55

"The true purpose of tithing is to secure not the tithe, but the tither; not the gift, but the giver; not your money, but you... for God."

REMEMBER YOUR BELOVED PARISH

Remember, "We make a living by what we earn. We make a life by what we share." Please remember our Parish in your Will as a lasting and loving gift to your parish family. Thank you!



Please pray for all the sick & the homebound members of our Parish, especially Ethel Thomas, Aldina Pereira, Rebecca Conroy, Alejandra Santander, Andy DeFabritis, Maryann Tolli, Maria Marte, Ed Carpenter, Barbara Rup, Jule Yaskovic, Rosalie Heit, Dolores Santamarena, Florence B. Swetz, Clare Yaskovic, Neil Caruso, Raymond Fitzpatrick, Sr., Deacon James Byrnes, Andrea Objay, Carmen Torres, John Esposito, Mark Baum, Frank Marra, Deacon Patrick Troy, Josephine Apuzzo, Edith Dugan, Gary Roth, Joyann Allan, Anna Rita Morgante, Lois Burton, Mary DeStefano, Dan Seratto, Mark Cianfaglione, Shawn Colon, Margaret Maccia, Nicole Ryan Betancourt, Anthony Spinner, Audrey & Alfred Falcone, Kathleen Hayes, Marge Muraik, Stan Buoninfante, Donna Vasconez, Mary Ann Berengur, Gene DelBene, Angelina Brusco, Mary Romanchik, Nicole Pisani-Frame, Louis Petrulo, Cynthia Swiatkiewicz, Rose Botcheller, Silvia Georgi, Jimmy Maimone, Robert Mirsky, Steve Oddo, Roseann Mercandetti, Frances Swetz, Paul Bolduc, and Amelia Gagliardi.

MOTHER'S DAY NOVENA MASSES

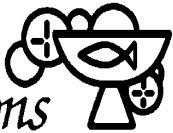
Sunday, May 13th, is Mother's Day. Our Parish will have a Novena of Masses for all our mothers – living and deceased. The Novena of Masses will begin on Mother's Day and finish on Monday, May 21st.

There are cards and/or envelopes at the back of the church or at the Rectory Office, Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you want your mother, mother-in-law or any mother remembered in the Novena of Masses, please write out the envelope with your donation and drop it in the collection basket or bring it to the Rectory Office during the week.

MARRIAGE BANNES: This is the third & last publication of marriage banns between Richard Buoninfante and Carla Ceriale. If you are aware of any reason they should not marry, according to the Catholic rite, please contact the Pastor, Father Anthony Bassey, MSP.



APRIL 29, 2012

Mass  for the
Intentions Week

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Saturday, April 28 (Anticipated Mass)

Saturday within the Octave of Easter

5:00 PM Ann Marie Selvaraj +

Sunday, April 29

8:30 AM Rose & Gaetano Legio and Family

10:00 AM For All the People of Our Parish

11:30 AM Julieann Campisi Moroch +

5:00 PM Kathleen Gmitter +

Monday, April 30

Easter Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Living & Deceased Members of Chimenti & Casey Families

Tuesday, May 1

Easter Weekday

7:00 AM Amadeu Amorim +

9:00 AM Anthony DiPaolo +

Wednesday, May 2

Saint Athanasius, Bishop & Doctor of the Church

7:00 AM Father Donald's Intention

9:00 AM William, Lorraine, & James Casey +

Thursday, May 3

Saints Philip & James, Apostles

7:00 AM Luigi Lucchetti +

9:00 AM John O'Donnell +

Friday, May 4

Easter Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Mary Krakowiak +

Saturday, May 5

Easter Weekday

9:00 AM Giacomo Bilancia +

Saturday, May 5 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Lucille & Victor Serricchio +

Sunday, May 6

Fifth Sunday of Easter

8:30 AM Constance Steffans +

10:00 AM Fiore Brusco +

11:30 AM For All the People of Our Parish

5:00 PM Maria & Carmelo Terrusa & Family

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

This is the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The world needs leaders with courage and integrity. The Church needs good leaders as well; leaders who will unselfishly care for the needs of God's people and minister to them. Please remember in your prayers those who have answered and those who contemplate answering God's call to His service.



For more information, visit the website www.nyreligiouslife.org.

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PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Gracious God,
You have blessed me with many gifts and talents.
Grant me the wisdom to know how best to use them
For the glory of Your name.
Jesus calls, "Come follow Me."
I want to follow Him and be faithful to my call.
Help me to see in myself what You see,
And give me the courage
To follow wherever You may lead.
Bless the Church with generous hearts,
Eager to serve Your people and to spread Your Word.
Amen.

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A FIRST COMMUNION BLESSING



Good and loving God,
Source of all that is good,
At the Last Supper Your Son, Jesus,
Gave the sacrament of His body & blood
To His disciples & to the whole Church.
May the Eucharist our children have
received for the first time today,
Keep them close to Jesus,
And unite us in love for all God's children.
May the presence of Christ fill the hearts
Of all who receive Him on this first Communion day.
May the sacrifice of Christ teach our children
How to love others with all their heart
And may the sacrament they received
Help them live as worthy children of God.
Amen.

