

52 SUNDAYS

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2024

EXPLORE THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

4th Sunday of Easter and World Day of Prayer for Vocations

ACTS 4:8-12

PS 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29

1 JN 3:1-2

The Good Shepherd

JN 10:11-18

Jesus said:

"I am the good shepherd.

A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

A hired man, who is not a shepherd

and whose sheep are not his own,

sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away,

and the wolf catches and scatters them.

This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.

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.

I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold.

These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice,

and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

This is why the Father loves me,

because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own.

I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again.

This command I have received from my Father."

MEET OUR EXTENDED FAMILY

St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen (Feast Day April 24)

January 5, 1577 – April 24, 1622

Mark Rey was born in 1577 in Sigmaringen, Germany. As a practicing lawyer, he traveled across Europe as a tutor to aristocrats but then started defending the poor. Nicknamed “the poor man’s lawyer,” Rey upheld the causes of the poor and oppressed people. If a poor man needed some clothing, Rey would often give the man the clothes right off his back. His life was characterized by complete generosity to others. In 1612, he became a Franciscan Capuchin monk, taking the name of Fidelis. Before entering the order, he divided his wealth between needy seminarians and the poor. During a severe epidemic in a city where he was guardian of a friary, Fidelis cared for and cured many sick soldiers. When he was sent to Switzerland as a missionary to preach against the Calvinists and Zwinglians (Christians who belonged to congregations that broke away from the Catholic Church), he was accused of opposing the peasants’ national aspirations for independence from Austria. Fidelis was stabbed to death in a church in Seewis. He was canonized by Pope Benedict XIV in 1746. Fifteen years later, he was recognized as a martyr.

TAKE TIME TO CHAT

- Compare and contrast the behaviors of the good shepherd and the hired man in today’s Gospel story.
- Jesus says, “I know mine and they know me.” Do you think Jesus knows you personally? Why or why not?
- What is it like to hear the voice of Jesus?
- St Fidelis of Sigmaringen helped the poor and oppressed. Why is it important for us to help the poor?

FAMILY FUN

Sheep Talk and Yarn Crafts

On this Good Shepherd Sunday challenge your family to learn more about sheep and try your hand at knitting.

There are many words to learn when talking about sheep:

- The female sheep is called a ewe.
- A male sheep is called a ram. Rams, which are larger than ewes, and sometimes fight with each other to prove who is the strongest.
- The young sheep are called lambs.
- Sheep eat facing the same direction, always keeping the wind blowing toward them. Each sheep usually keeps two other sheep in sight when feeding.
- Sheep move around in large groups called flocks.
- Sheep farms may have little flocks of 50 to 200 sheep.
- Larger operations may have 1,000 to 5,000 sheep.

- Little flocks of 10 or fewer sheep may belong to people who like to dye and knit yarn that is made from the sheep's wool.
- Sheep provide meat called lamb or mutton. Lamb comes from a sheep less than a year old. Older sheep provide meat called mutton which has a much stronger flavor and is tougher meat.
- Sheep have a thick coat of wool on their body which is called a fleece.
 - This fleece can be made into a fiber called yarn.
 - In spring, the fleece is removed by a shearer. Skilled shearers can remove the fleece all in one piece in about 5 minutes. A talented shearer can shear over 100 sheep in one day.
 - The wool that comes from sheep is cleaned and turned into yarn which is made into wool fabric. Sweaters, coats, mittens and suits can be made from wool.
 - Other parts of the sheep are used to make things such as insulation, baseballs, upholstery, crochet needles, and tennis balls.
 - Oil from the wool of sheep is called lanolin and is used to make beauty products such as lotions and creams.

Yarn Craft

Option 1: Learn how to knit by exploring an online tutorial or asking a friend or relative to help. Check out Walmart or the Dollar Store for inexpensive knitting supplies. Pick a simple project for each family member to try.

Option 2: Yarn Sheep

For each sheep craft, you will need

- two wooden clothes pins
- an oval shaped piece of cardboard about 4 inches long
- enough yarn to wrap around the cardboard
- glue
- felt or construction paper

Paint or color one end of the sheep black for its head. Use a black marker or paint to color the clothes pins black. Clip your painted clothes pins onto the appropriate spots on the sheep. Make sure that it can stand up. When you have them where you want, put a dab of glue between the cardboard and the clothes pin to hold it tight. While the glue is still wet, slip the end of the yarn in so it holds in place. Keep wrapping making sure to cover the springs of the clothes pins and any cardboard. Add enough layers until the sheep is as fat as you would like him. Tuck the end of the yarn into the sheep and put a dab of glue on it to hold it. Next cut little ears out of felt or construction paper, and a tail too if you like and glue them on.

From <http://www.maefonline.com/pdfs/Sheep.pdf> and

https://sweetgrace.typepad.com/the_inadvertent_farmer/2010/01/baa-baa-black-pink-and-blue-sheep-an-easy-yarn-craft.html

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Easy Shepherd's Pie with Roasted Potatoes

8 red new potatoes
2 Tbsp. butter, melted
salt and pepper
1 lb. extra lean ground turkey (or lean ground beef)
1.5 cups diced onion
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
2 cups low-sodium beef broth
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 cup frozen peas
1 cup frozen carrots

Rinse and dice potatoes into bite-sized chunks and toss with melted butter, 1 tsp. kosher salt, and 1/2 tsp. black pepper. Cover and microwave for 7 minutes or until tender. Meanwhile, cook the meat and onion in an oven safe skillet over medium-high heat until meat is no longer pink. Drain if necessary and return to skillet. Stir in the flour until incorporated, about 1 minute. Add the broth and Worcestershire and cook until thickened, about 5-7 minutes. Stir in peas and carrots and simmer until heated through, about 1-2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, about 1/2 tsp. each. Scatter the cooked potatoes over the meat and broil until golden brown, about 5 minutes.

From <https://www.kevinandamanda.com/easier-shepherds-pie-with-roasted-potatoes/print-recipe/35342/>

FAMILY PRAYER

Psalm 139

Reflect on what it means to be known by God as you listen and meditate on this passage from Psalm 139:1-16.

LORD, you have probed me, you know me:
you know when I sit and stand;
you understand my thoughts from afar.
You sift through my travels and my rest;
with all my ways you are familiar.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
LORD, you know it all.
Behind and before you encircle me
and rest your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
far too lofty for me to reach.
Where can I go from your spirit?
From your presence, where can I flee?
If I ascend to the heavens, you are there;
if I lie down in Sheol, there you are.

If I take the wings of dawn
and dwell beyond the sea,
Even there your hand guides me,
your right hand holds me fast.
If I say, “Surely darkness shall hide me,
and night shall be my light”—
Darkness is not dark for you,
and night shines as the day.
Darkness and light are but one.
You formed my inmost being;
you knit me in my mother’s womb.
I praise you, because I am wonderfully made;
wonderful are your works!
My very self you know.
My bones are not hidden from you,
When I was being made in secret,
fashioned in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw me unformed;
in your book all are written down;
my days were shaped, before one came to be.

LITURGY LINK

The priest prays a prayer right after Communion. What descriptions of God do you hear in this prayer today?

FAMILY CHALLENGE

Write a letter to Jesus, telling him those things that are most important to you. Younger children can draw a picture instead of writing a letter. Afterward, find a quiet space and allow Jesus to answer your letter. Bring a blank piece of paper to write down what you hear.

FUN FACTS

Shepherding is among the oldest occupations, beginning some 5,000 years ago in Asia Minor.

<https://staging.52sundays.com/sundays/sunday-april-21-2024>