



# NEWSLETTER 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL. FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER.

A PARISH OF THE MULLINGAR DEANERY

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The Community of St. Camillus 044 9374115.

## ST. JOSEPH'S, RATHWIRE.

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup>, 6pm. Jim, Annie & Tom O'Callaghan.

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>, 11.30am. Edward & Mary Gaffney.

## ST. BRIGID'S, RAHARNEY.

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>, 6pm. Tommy McDermott. Michael & Eileen Kangley & family.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>, 10am. Una Weir MM. Joe & Kate McKeogh.

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>, 10am. Vincent Smyth MM. Peter & Mary Mulkearins.

**Weekday Masses;** Tuesday & Thursday, Raharney 9am. Wednesday & Friday Rathwire 9am.

**MASS OFFERTORY COLLECTION: €545**  
**PARISH DEVELOPMENT FUND €531**

RIP: Owen Gilsenan, Knocksheban.

Adoration  
of the  
Blessed Sacrament



In St. Joseph's Tuesday 1pm-9pm.  
& St. Brigid's Wed. 5pm-10pm:  
*Special Diocesan intention of prayer  
for vocations and the family.*  
**Take one Hour with the Lord**

**Cemetery Sunday;** on June 18<sup>th</sup> at 3pm.

**Defibrillator demonstration:** in the Third place, Raharney for the unit in the building on this Thursday at 6pm.

**Mullingar Choral Society** will present their Summer concert on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.30pm in St. Paul's Church Mullingar. The centre piece of the concert is the Misa Criolla by Ariel Ramirez, an Argentinian Folk Mass and a musical celebration of Summer.

**Accord Mullingar** are currently recruiting Marriage Education Facilitators who will deliver a one day course to those preparing for marriage. This is an interesting and fulfilling role which may suit someone who has an interest in this area. Full training will be provided later this year, and no previous experience is necessary. If you are interested in the dynamics of relationships and marriage and think that you would enjoy this role, please contact the Accord Office on 044-9348707. Recruitment will take place in June 2022.

**The True Shepherd.** The risen Jesus is the true shepherd, "the one who enters through the gate, who walks in front of them, and the sheep follow him because they recognize his voice."

True Christians follow the true shepherd: they recognize his voice and they obey his commands. They hear his message about loving enemies, about seeking first the kingdom of God, about forgiving seventy times a day.

They hear him talk of concern for the poor, of selling all that one has, of being perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect. They listen to him say that they should not worry about tomorrow, that they should turn the other cheek, that they should lose their lives.

They hear and obey, following their shepherd through the gate.

There are false shepherds who speak other words, who talk of defending one's rights, of accumulating wealth, of achieving social prominence. Some Christians listen to them rather than to the true shepherd.

Both the true and the false shepherds lead one to death. The difference is that the true shepherd leads beyond death to resurrection.

In Christ and through Christ God has revealed himself fully to mankind and has definitively drawn close to it; at the same time, in Christ and through Christ man has acquired full awareness of his dignity, of the heights to which he is raised, of the surpassing worth of his own humanity, and of the meaning of his existence.

Pope John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis*,



# Sunday Message

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE WORD

Year A • 30 April 2023 • Colour: White • Psalter Week 4

## OUR COMMON VOCATION JOHN 10:1-10

One of the most enduring Christian images is that of the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep.

The image of God as shepherd is very strong in the Old Testament. Yahweh is Israel's shepherd leading his people like a flock. When the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, the Lord led them from exile, "guiding them like a flock in the desert, leading them safe and unafraid, while the sea engulfed their enemies" (Ps 78:52-53).

The Good Shepherd is a beautiful, reassuring image of Jesus. A good shepherd is someone who knows his sheep, looks after them, protects them, and seeks out any lost. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, knows us individually, loves us, and cares for us. We are called to stay close to him, to listen to his voice, and follow him as he shows us the way to fullness of life. ■

### REFLECT

**O**n 12 September 1979, an innocent, 17-year-old Limerick youth joined the Redemptorists. For some time during my last year in school, I had been thinking of priesthood, and then the Redemptorists came to my parish to preach a mission. Impressed with what they did, I wrote to the Redemptorist vocations director and ended up in the seminary.

Today, Good Shepherd Sunday, is Vocations Sunday, a day the Church prays for vocations. As in my case, it's impossible to say where exactly vocations come from or how the Holy Spirit works. Who can say what divine chemistry causes a spark to catch flame?

But if you think you don't have a vocation, you are wrong.

Everyone in the church has a vocation. We may live out our vocation in specific ways – as priest or religious, as single or married, pursuing particular careers – but every one of us has a vocation rooted in our common baptism.

And no matter what direction our life takes or what specific vocation we live, some common characteristics underline our Christian vocation.

First, to be people of love. This is the most basic vocation we have as Christians. Jesus said: You must love God and your neighbour as yourself. Love was at the centre of all Jesus did. If I do not reach out every day in love to others, then all my church-going and prayers are hollow. We Christians are nothing if we are not people of love.

This is difficult, and we fall short all the time, but many people have shown me

how to live the vocation to love. Like Maximillim Kolbe, who in Auschwitz sacrificed his life for a man he did not know. Would I be able to love like that? Would you?

The second characteristic of the Christian vocation is compassion. Remember how Jesus healed the ten lepers, how he spoke to the woman at the well.

Being compassionate is difficult, and we fall short all the time, but many people have shown me how to be compassionate. I think of a religious sister who works with young women caught up in the sex industry. She is there for them, very often as their only advocate. She shows me what compassion is all about.

The third characteristic of the Christian vocation is prophecy. We must be prophetic people. Jesus witnessed to the Kingdom values of justice, peace and love, no matter the risk to himself. He preached the truth even though it upset many people and led to his execution.

In today's secular society, it takes courage to witness to the Gospel. It can take courage to proclaim publicly what we believe. To say you are a Christian is to risk being sneered at or dismissed as a religious nut. This is why, now more than ever, we need to be prophetic, happy to witness to the Gospel, notwithstanding the cost to ourselves.

Many people who stand with the poor and witness to the Gospel with extraordinary courage and commitment show me what it means to be prophetic.

On his Vocations Sunday, think of your vocation to be more loving, compassionate, and prophetic and ask the Lord to help you. ■



### LEARN

It is through Jesus that we enter into the life of God

Jesus is our good shepherd

We all have a common vocation rooted in our baptism

### PRAY

Say this prayer for vocations:

God our Father, hear our prayer for all your children's needs. Grant that each of us may hear your gentle invitation to do your will in whatever way you wish. Help us to trust you. Give us the strength to follow the guidance of your Holy Spirit. Enable us to walk with your beloved Son Jesus Christ, so that, in all things, we may give you glory and help build up your kingdom of truth, peace and justice. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### SAY

**"Lord, you are my good shepherd. Help me to follow you always. Amen."**

### DO

Examine your life. Where do you look for happiness and meaning? Do you really believe that Jesus offers you fullness of life?