



ST. ROMUALD CATHOLIC CHURCH

394 N HWY 259 · HARDINSBURG KY 40143

May 7, 2017 - Fourth Sunday of Easter

dear Padre

Parish Office:

Phone: 756-2356

Fax: 756-2099

Hours: Monday - Friday

8:00am - Noon, 1:00 - 3:00pm

Email: stromuald@bbtel.com

www.stromuald.org

Pastoral Staff:

Pastor, Father Brian Johnson

Email: Brian.Johnson@pastoral.org

Deacon, Tony Anthony

Deacon, Mike Wiedemer

Administrative Asst, Jane Haynes

CRE: Adult, Rosa Hockenberry

CRE: RCIA, Lyvenia Anthony

CRE: 7-12, Gayle Poole

CRE: K-6, Kim Brumfield

Pastoral Council:

Dana Bland, Harry Mattingly,

Janet Bland, David Morton

Christi Brooks, Kevin Oelze

Chris Brumfield, Don Payne,

Jerry Dowell, Gail Pollock

Betty Heavrin, Pam Pollock

St. Romuald

Interparochial School:

Phone: 756-5504

www.stromualdschool.org

Principal, Rob Cox

School Board

Representatives:

Jamie Barr, Amy Flood,

Jennifer Payne

If I still attend Mass, may I work or shop on Sundays?

When I lived in Brazil, everything was closed on Sunday except a few restaurants. As a result, it was a day families could spend together. Even in our own country, some places have shortened hours on Sundays or are closed altogether, like banks and car dealerships.

For many of us, shopping is a way of resting. We go to the store and browse, stop at the mall, or see a movie. The Catechism doesn't go so far as to say we can't shop on Sundays. It tells us, "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are to refrain from engaging in work or activities that hinder the worship owed to God, the joy proper to the Lord's Day, the performance of the works of mercy, and the appropriate relaxation of mind and body" (CCC 2185).

However, many people have to work on Sundays. Even if we are resting by shopping or going out on Sundays, we are forcing other people to work. If we all made the choice to not shop or go out on Sundays, with the exception of emergency needs, Sundays could truly become a day of rest for all people, as it is intended to be.

So yes, you may shop on a Sunday, but I would encourage you to spend the day doing things that keep the whole day holy, not just the hour you're at Mass.

Fr. Patrick Keyes, CSsR sundaybulletin@liguori.org



Masses for the Week

May 8th - 14th

Tues	1:00 pm	Martha Matthews (Extended Care)
Wed	5:00 pm	Sherman & Mary Oelze (DH)
Thurs	9:30 am	Jeanne Rhodes (LM) (Medco)
Fri	9:00 am	Walter Bland Family (LB)
Sat	5:00 pm	Joe Paul Flood (PF)
Sun	7:00 am	Geneva Glasscock
	10:00 am	Mary Catherine Payne (DP)

Stewardship of Finance

April 29th & 30th Collection

Sunday Collection	\$8,586.00
Building Fund	\$65.00
Children	\$0
Loose change for the Poor	\$40.43
St. Vincent de Paul	\$1,448.00
Home Mission.....	\$106.00

Parish Financial Summary

July-March, 2017

Total Income	\$397,400
Total Expenses	\$363,800
	\$ 33,800

Thank you for your financial stewardship!

Worship and Sacrament

Anointing of the Sick: Anointing of the Sick is celebrated with the parish community every first Wednesday at 5:00 pm Mass. Yet, anytime, anointing is available for illness, preparation for surgery or for recovery, by calling Fr Brian.

Baptism: Congratulations on the birth of your child! Your Church Family is excited about your family growing and our family growing! We look forward to celebrating your child's baptism! Preparation for new parents or those new to the parish is held by appointment. Call Fr Brian.

Marriage: Congratulations on your engagement! Your Church Family wishes to help you fully prepare spiritually and walk with you into this lifetime commitment to each other. In order to allow sufficient time, couples must contact the parish office at least 6 months before the anticipated wedding date.

Confession/Reconciliation: Every Wednesday 4:00-5:00 pm; every Saturday 4:00-5:00 pm, every first Saturday after 8:00 am Mass, or anytime by simply asking or calling Fr Brian for appointment.

Visitation of the Sick: Please notify Father or the office upon admission of a family member into nursing homes or hospital. Often we rely upon word from the family about illnesses of a member. Please call.

RCIA: Interested in the Catholic Faith? The RCIA process is a "spiritual journey" that fully initiates those who are not baptized or who have baptism from another tradition and wish to join fully the Catholic Church. Classes are offered through the year culminating at Easter! Please call the office for details!

Membership in the Parish: Welcome to all new families or persons moving into our parish. We are glad that you are joining the parish community. We want to visit with you and help you settle into the church. Please register in the parish office as soon as possible.

Ministers of the Liturgy - May 13th & 14th

	Eucharistic Ministers	Lectors	Ushers	Servers	Rosary Leaders	Music Ministers
5:00 pm	Amy Flood Kathy Flood	Alex Bertschman Dale Board	C-Jamie Barr* C-Evan Barr S-David Basham S-Harry Mattingly	Benjamin Barr Eric Barr Claire Flood	Angie Bertschman	Shannon
7:00 am	Anne O'Reilly Jean Oelze	Buddy Payne	C-Greg Wethington* C-Leo Wheatley S-Scott Wilson S-Tom Winchell	Brianna Laslie Trey Laslie	Margie Wethington	
10:00 am	Lori Carwile Rosa Hockenberry Sandy Horsley Aulton Richards	Mariah Critchelow Kathy Kiper	C-Raymond Critchelow* C-Noah Matthews S-Jim Sills S-Allen Wheatley	Will Lewis Alyssa Shaw	Laura Frank	PJ/Choir Cantor: George
Radio Minister: Chuck Robbins Children's Liturgy: Andrea Masterson & Jennifer Payne						



Happy Good Shepherd Sunday! The image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd may be the most popular and most comforting picture of Jesus for Christians. There are a great many Old Testament quotes leading us to imagine God caring for us as a 'shepherd'. For example, we could look at the personal example of King David who himself was a lowly shepherd before being anointed a king. Or we could refer to the direct words of great OT songs like Psalm 23, Psalm 80 or Psalm 100. I personally find Ezekiel 34:8-

16 a splendid introduction for what God has in mind as a model of 'good shepherding'. God says in Ezekiel 34:15 "***I myself will pasture my sheep.***" God shepherds by "giving the sheep rest, searching out the lost ones, binding up the injured ones and healing the sick" (Ezekiel 34:16). This sounds like Jesus even before Jesus comes along! So while these Old Testament quotes suggest God's Providence and Care is like a 'shepherding of us', Jesus will come right out and say it to us! He is our true Good Shepherd, gathering us, feeding us, knowing/calling us by name, finding rest for us, healing us and protecting us. But, still not just yet! In our actual gospel reading today for what we call 'Good Shepherd Sunday', ***did you notice we did not hear Him say yet, "I am the Good Shepherd"? He does not say that until verse 11*** of John chapter 10. ***Our reading today begins with verse 1 and ends with 10, before Jesus actually says 'He is IT!*** Before saying He is the Good Shepherd, Jesus identifies himself as the ***1) gate*** and then the ***2) gatekeeper*** for the sheep. What is He up to, talking first about being the gate and gatekeeper for the sheep, before calling himself the ***3) Good Shepherd?*** Well, he is dealing with the reality of 'bad shepherds'. Similar to when Jesus warns his followers to beware of the 'automatic trust' of authoritative titles such as 'rabbi', 'master' and 'father' (Matthew 23:8-10), here Jesus is pointing out the sad reality of 'abusive shepherds'. God had pointed this out in the Old Testament with examples like in Ezekiel 34 when God called out bad shepherds who were self-centered, cowardly gluttons, and again in the case of corrupt, greedy priests like Hophni and Phineas (1 Sam 2:16-17). Jesus admits that such poor examples exist in every time, even his own. He calls these bad shepherds, 'thieves and robbers' that sneak in among the sheep (verses 1,8,10), the cold/distant 'strangers' (vs 5) and the 'hired hands' who are only out for themselves (vs 12). The 'bad shepherds' do not know the sheep, do not feed them, do not tend their wounds, and do not guide or protect them. They climb over the fence, they confuse, scare and mislead the sheep. They are quick to run off, never standing up for the sheep. They even steal what belongs to the sheep ('fleecing them'-killing them'). ***So Jesus begins his 'good shepherd' teaching with the basics. It all starts at the door, being good at the gate!*** The Shepherd creates a ***familiar space, a safe zone*** for the sheep, welcoming, calling sheep by name, talking with them, noticing them coaxing them along safely together. The bad shepherds come and go sneakily from the pasture, jumping fences, always spooking the sheep. But the good gatekeeper truly shepherds by gathering and herding the sheep comfortably. By Jesus saying he is the gate, he knows that the sheep will follow and readily enter the fold when their shepherd is at the door, safely welcoming them, and walking ahead of them. Always at the gate, the shepherd is familiar, his voice known and a comfort for them, and he knows them each, calling them by name. And most of all, the sheep 'smell' their shepherd. His scent is familiar, part of them. They trust

his 'smell'. The thieving shepherds don't have the smell, as they 'cut in and out' the fence, always coming and going. They up and run off so much, not being around enough to be known (the smell test) by the sheep. So Jesus says the 'good shepherd' stays with His sheep; he can always be found at the gate with them!

My dog Simonetta, over the years has taught me to appreciate this 'good shepherd' reading so much more. *As a dog, the sense of smell means a lot, but as she lost her eyesight (and diminished hearing) in her older years, it began to mean everything.* She is 18 years old now, and completely blind. When I come home, and let her out to roam a little around the rectory she usually walks her path ***circling a lot*** to get exercise, and then she will stop and settle by me, ***nudging up against my leg and just standing there.*** I know it is smell that brings her to me. Knowing how important that familiarity/comfort of smell is for her, I leave a recently worn casual shirt in her bed for *her to know she is at home in the right place.* I first noticed her *clinging to familiar scents a while ago*, when I realized that if we are sitting in our favorite chair and I move to the kitchen to refill a cup of coffee, every time I return, she will have moved, slipping over under the blanket I had on before getting up. I used to accuse her of taking my seat, but I realized she wanted to stay close to a 'homey' scent in my absence. She had done that on top of my pillow before, too! But, I have heard of parents leaving something of their clothes or even a covered ticking clock in or near a nursery bed to re-assure a sleeping child of his/her protecting parent close by them. This recognizable scent comes to play in Jesus' talk of being a gate and gate keeper. ***The sheep would enter because they smell their shepherd, and the shepherd-smell would be known because he spent so much time with the sheep!*** And even more, when Jesus says that the Good Shepherd will 'lay down his life for his sheep', in addition to meaning that he will die for his sheep, it also means ***he will 'lay down' on the path*** into the sheepfold as the 'gate' to block predators, but also to signal for the sheep the direction to take (like a homing device for their noses). ***His laying down on the path imprints his scent on the passage as a safe channel for them*** to travel or stop and rest there with Him. He is stamping the ground with its body-scent as 'safe' and he stays watching-guarding them. They will come to him and remain, laying down with Him. In his presence they are safe. He literally is the entry & exit, passage for the sheep, they know they are in the right yard or right pasture when they smell him, hear him, lay with him. Even if he has to rise and seek out a straying sheep, the others will remain in area of his scent. The Good Shepherd is faithful: he stays with His sheep.

Here are some daily questions to consider in our prayer time!

Sunday: Did anything of Mass challenge me today? What do I remember of it? What do I need to do to respond to the grace God offered me at Mass?

Monday: Jesus shepherds me. Who do I serve as a Shepherd? How am I doing?

Tuesday: If Jesus is my good shepherd, how am I a 'good sheep' to Him? What can I do to be a better sheep of Christ's flock?

Wednesday: Have I ever been a hired hand as a Christian? Only serving Christ when I am paid for it? How can I serve more faithfully without reward or recognition?

Thursday: Easter continues! Do I still feel the excitement of Easter morning, its joy and new life?

Friday: Perform an act of sacrifice or penance for someone you do not know.

Saturday: For what am I thankful and will I offer special praise to God for at Mass tonight?

Peace and Prayers, Fr Brian Johnson

Picnic News

Picnic Time is here again. We need donations for the beautiful Green "Nothing Runs Like A Deere" Booth, The New Sporting Goods Booth, Stuffed Animal Booth and The Memory Wagon. This year we will be debuting our new booths thanks to T.G.H.

Drop off items at the parish office.
Thanks and God Bless.

BBQ Chickens: The Knights of Columbus will be selling barbeque chickens on the 7th of May at St Romuald's, St Mary's and St. Anthony's after Sunday Mass. For Knight of Columbus Members: If you can help cook chickens please text or email me @ 270-617-0754 or jpat_oreilly@yahoo.com respectively. Cooking starts at 3:30 am at St Romuald's Pit. Thank You, GK Pat O'Reilly

Nuts, Nuts, Nuts: On the weekends of May 6th & 7th and May 20th & 21st the Altar Society will be selling nuts after each mass. Black and Light Walnuts, along with almonds and cashews will be sold at the discount price of \$8.00 per bag. Pecan halves and pieces will be \$10.00 per bag. Stop by after mass and stock up for your summer baking needs.



Special Fatima Prayer Time: A group will be gathering this Saturday May 13 at 10:00 am in the Back of Church (Children's Room) to offer some prayers and rosary to consecrate this year honoring the anniversary day of the First Apparition to Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco, back on May 13, 1917 in Fatima, Portugal.

Pray to end abortion: Join other Catholics and those from other faiths that gather each Saturday at 2nd and Market in Louisville from 7:00-8:00 am (EST) to pray for families entering the abortion clinic. Many children have been saved and mothers spared future grief by this prayer action and support. With God, all things are possible! Archbishop Kurtz is known to show up and pray with everyone too!

Abortion Update: Last week 48 women went into EMW Clinic for abortions at 2nd and Market Street in Louisville. **Please pray to end abortion.**

Senior Day, May 18th at 10:00 am: Come join in the fun as we share our day with Jean Aull and Jade Meador from the Breckinridge Extension Master Gardeners. They will be joining us and will present a talk on straw bale gardening and container gardening. Invite your friends and neighbors for a day of gardening tips and good fellowship! We will be serving fried chicken and ask that you bring a dish to pass. Oh yeah, don't forget to bring those green thumbs along with you!

Family Movie Night: "A Strange Brand of Happy" is the story of David who is pushed into hiring a life coach named Joyce. Joyce invites David to join a volunteer group only to find to his dismay that his ex-boss is a part of the group. Watch as David's life turns into a hilarious and zany mishap, one after the other. So, come join us on Saturday, May 20th, at 6:15 pm for a laugh out loud good time. Enjoy a drink and some popcorn on us and a little family time together.

Flags over the Veterans' Memorial will need to be changed soon. If you would like to donate a new set in memory of a loved one please contact the church office.

Ministry Schedules: New Ministry Schedule for June, July & August will be available soon. Please contact the church office by May 15th if you would like to volunteer for any ministry or any changes to your schedule that need to be made. If you have a new email address please contact the office.

This Week at St. Romuald

Mon	1:00 pm	Blue Army Rosary
	7:00 pm	Al-Anon Meeting
Tues	10:00 am	Scripture Study
	1:00 pm	Mass (Extended Care)
	4:00 pm	Rosary
	6:00 pm	Knights of Columbus
Wed	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Mass
Thur	9:30 am	Mass (Medco)
	6:00 pm	Family Holy Hour
Fri	9:00 am	School Mass
Sat	3:00 pm	Tyler Hinton/Sydney Heckman Wedding
Sun	10:00 am	Graduating Senior Mass

UPCOMING:

May 18	6:00 pm	SRIS 8th Grade Graduation
		Last Day of School
May 20/21		Blessing of Expectant Mothers

PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY

A Word from Pope Francis:

"True faith is one that makes us more charitable, more merciful, more honest and more humane. It moves our hearts to love everyone without counting the cost or adding conditions and without privilege. It makes us see the other not as an enemy to be overcome, but a brother or sister to be loved, served and helped. It spurs us on to spread, defend and live out the culture of encounter, dialogue, respect and fraternity. It gives us the courage to forgive those who have wronged us, to extend a hand to the fallen, to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to visit the imprisoned, to help orphans, to give drink to those who thirst, and to come to the aid of the elderly and those in need (Mt 25). True faith leads us to protect the rights of others with the same zeal and enthusiasm with which we defend our own. Indeed, the more we grow in faith and knowledge, the more we grow in humility. This faith pleases God, for the only fanaticism believers can have is that of charity! Any other fanaticism does not come from God and is not pleasing to him! (Homily 4-29-2017)

World Day of Prayer for Vocations Called by Name

Sunday May 7th, the Fourth Sunday of Easter is known as Good Shepherd Sunday. It has also been designated a World Day of Prayer for Vocations. This year marks its 54th year. As we celebrate the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, each parish in the Diocese of Owensboro has been invited to participate in **CALLED BY NAME**, a program of vocations awareness that offers an opportunity for us to pray for priestly vocations; to recognize gifts and potential for leadership and service in members of our parish; and finally, to call forth and encourage these members to share their gifts in priesthood. Perhaps you know a man (high school or older) who would, in your opinion, have the qualities to become a priest. We will follow up with them and offer resources for discernment and personally invite them to participate in our discernment programs such as, Come and See weekends, discernment retreats, and Made for More Camp. Please recommend this person by submitting their name online at <https://owensborodiocese.org/called-by-name/> or by contacting the vocations office: 270-683-1545 or jason.mcclure@pastoral.org

Celebration

ANNIVERSARY: Matthew & Heather Kennedy will be celebrating 10 years of marriage on May 12th

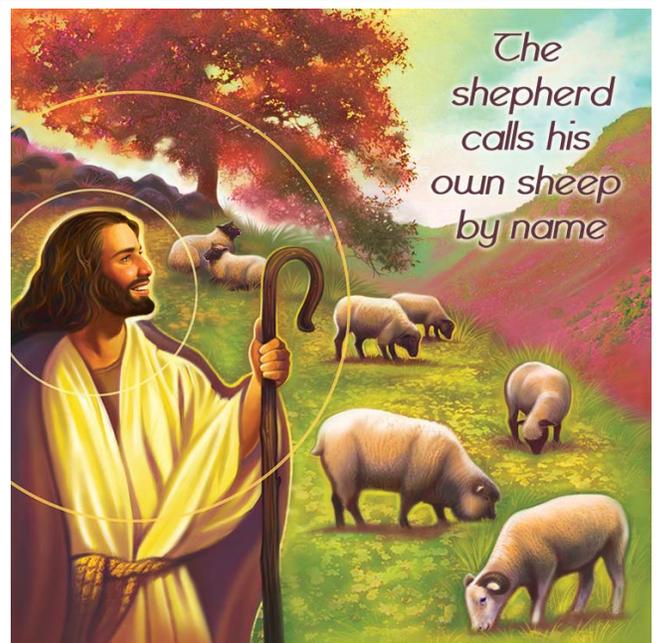
Readings for the Week

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Acts 11:1-18; Ps 42:2-3; 43:3, 4; Jn 10:11-18
Tuesday: Acts 11:19-26; Ps 87:1b-7; Jn 10:22-30
Wednesday: Acts 12:24 — 13:5a; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Jn 12:44-50
Thursday: Acts 13:13-25; Ps 89:2-3, 21-22, 25, 27; Jn 13:16-20
Friday: Acts 13:26-33; Ps 2:6-11ab; Jn 14:1-6
Saturday: Acts 13:44-52; Ps 98:1-4; Jn 14:7-14
Sunday: Acts 6:1-7; Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19; 1 Pt 2:4-9; Jn 14:1-12

Mass Etiquette Column

God is here! Come let us celebrate! We are all called to full, conscious and active participation in the Mass! Come with a heart of gratitude to offer praise, prayer, song, active listening and participation during Mass! Make the gestures of Mass reverently, sing praise to God with all your heart and soul, respond and say all the prayers for the congregation, listen attentively to the Word of God proclaimed and to the homily, receive communion reverently. God gives each of us 168 hours a week to work, study, play, relax and enjoy the gift of life He has given us. **How can we not pray, sing, listen, and celebrate reverently to our very fullest for one hour in gratitude for all God has given us?**



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PRAYER REQUESTS

We Pray For:

Gene Aldridge, Paula Anthony, Gene Bennett, Joe Bennett, Juanita Burch, Billy Carwile, Jerry Carwile, Mallorie Collins, Debbie Critchelow, Jim Curtis, Rick Dale, Amanda Douthitt, Marolyn Dowell, Roger Dowell, Kenneth Dowell, Treyten Drake, Davye Duggins, Sammy Duggins, Tijuana Duncan, Lottie Eauer, **Carroll Ferguson**, Rhett Flener, Ginny Flood, Pat Flood, Cindy Getz, Bill Greenwood, Susan Griffin, **Clyde Hall**, JoAnn Henning, Lisa Henning, Karen Herbert, Kitty Himmelhaver, Bill Hinton, Doug Hinton, Rugene Hinton, Rick Hurley, Merri Hurt, Braddock Inman, Barbara Jarboe, Virginia Jeffries, Mary Ann Johnson, Tracy King, Patricia Lane, Angie Lawrence, Annette Lucas, Margaret Lyons, Red McClellan, Oleta McDaniel, Bevan Michael Miller, Richard Miller, Blaise Mills, **Sharon Morgan**, Dorothy Morris, Don O'Donoghue, Eddie O'Donoghue, Joe Oelze, Earl O'Reilly, Janet O'Reilly, Libby Osborne, Martha Payne, Brian Phillips, Peggy Phillips, **Bobby Potts**, Doris Priest, Joe Priest, Robert Priest, Sandy Priest, Rita Roach, Shirley Robbins, Suzanne Rose, Eric Severs, Rex Lee Sheets, Steve Smith, Jerry Sosh, Virginia Stanford, Lucye Stupak, Pam Sturgeon, Loretta Swink, Adalee Taul, Becky Taul, John N. Taul, Gina Thornsberry, Paul Tucker, Gil Urban, **Regina Walz**, Buddy Weatherholt, Greg Wethington, Raymond Wethington, Jimmy Whitworth, Mary Rita Whitworth, Carolyn Wilcheck, Kevin Wilcheck, Rebecca Wilson, Robert D. Wilson, Anne Wolfe, Sandra Zanone. **Serving in the Armed Forces:** Mandie Adams, Kevin Arnold, Fred Barham, Austin Brown, Timothy Cashen, Cody Garst, Parker Findlay, James Hanor, Jack Hayes, Stevie Higgs, James Howard, Charles Kuhlman, SSgt Bradford O'Reilly, Jordan Pate, Cody Simmons, Liana Tindle, Chase Upchurch, Garrett Wadsworth



Sympathy: Please pray for the repose of the soul of Beavin Thornsberry whose funeral was this week. Please keep Ginna and the family in your prayers.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Russell Carwile, brother of Ralph Carwile, who died last week. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

SRIS ANNOUNCEMENTS

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!!!

St. Romuald Interparochial School and Pre-school are now accepting applications for anyone wanting to pre-register their children for next year. We welcome your inquiries about an education at St. Romuald Interparochial School. A quality education at SRIS is truly a family experience. We have a proud "tradition of excellence." Call 756-5504, email Lori Carwile lcarwile@hotmail.com for pre-school or Sheila Drane srissecretary@hotmail.com, or come by the school to pre-register your children.

Thank you to our advertisers for making the bulletin possible! Please let them know that you are thankful for support of our parish bulletin.

Advertiser of the week

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AROUND AND ABOUT

The Maryland to Kentucky & Beyond 2017

Genealogy Reunion/Conference will be June 22-25, 2017 at Brescia University in Owensboro, Daviess County, Kentucky. For more information, please visit our website <https://sites.google.com/site/mdtoky3> and Facebook site <https://www.facebook.com/MDtoKYandBeyondInc/> Phone 502-366-4962/ email: marylandtokentucky@gmail.com

One Day Trip to The Ark in Williamstown, KY

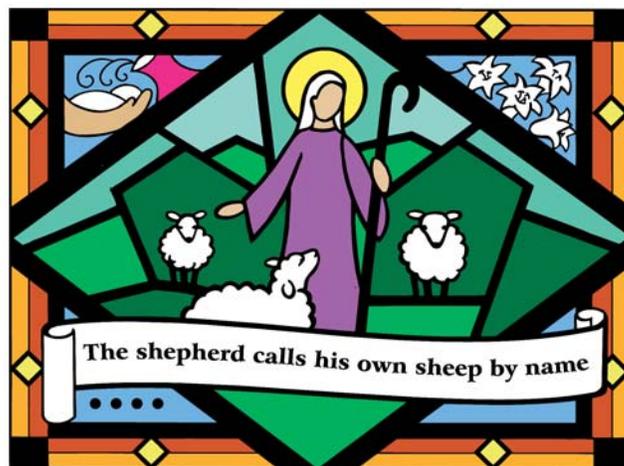
Breckinridge County Chamber of Commerce is offering a one day trip to The Ark on May 23rd (pick up in Hardinsburg). Cost is \$99 per person. For more information call 270-756-0268.

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE (CLI):

Would you like to learn how to be a BETTER LEADER? Young people ages 15-19 (who have completed their freshman year of high school or who just graduated), The Diocesan Youth Ministry Office is sponsoring Christian Leadership Institute, June 25-June 30, 2017, at the Mount St. Joseph Retreat Center. If you: are or would like to be, a youth leader; would like to serve on a retreat team; are a class officer or student council member, CLI is for you. You will learn and use skills in leadership, communication, planning and decision-making. You will also help plan prayer and liturgical celebrations. For registration information contact your youth minister/youth ministry leader or campus minister today. Registration deadline is May 26th. Registrations after May 26th will cost \$10 more. Contact your Youth Minister or your Parish priest if you are interested or email robin.tomes@pastoral.com for more information.

Community Blood Drive: Tuesday, May 9th, 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm at Hardinsburg Baptist Church Fellowship Hall.

Al-Anon Meeting: Mondays 7:00 pm St Romuald Parish Hall. Come find support and understanding to recover a sense of serenity in your life.



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SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2017
FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER; GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

Your calling awaits

Jesus calls us by name to follow him. The question for any Christian then becomes, How? What path will lead me closest to God? What way can I best serve? Determining one's calling, or "vocation" (from the Latin *vocare*, "to call"), is not always easy. But each of us can take certain helpful steps: 1) pray and reflect on what you feel drawn to and where your talents lie; 2) talk to a pastoral minister or spiritual director; 3) confide in trusted friends or family members who can help you consider your options objectively; 4) commit yourself to various practices (Eucharist, service, establishing and maintaining healthy relationships) that will strengthen your spirit and keep you from becoming self-absorbed.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 2:14a, 36-41; 1 Peter 2:20b-25; John 10:1-10 (49). "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

MONDAY, MAY 8
EASTER WEEKDAY

Clean up your act

The notion of what is "clean" and "unclean" is important in Judaism, especially among Orthodox Jews. Purification rituals are observed for a variety of occasions, and many of them require the ritual washing of the hands, or at times a full immersion. Some say that Baptism represents a form of ritual purification adapted from Judaism, and that even the dipping of fingertips in holy water upon entering church is part of that tradition. The apostle Peter, however, helped the early church develop a different definition of purity. Spend some time today reflecting on what helps you feel "clean and pure" spiritually, and then practice it.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 11:1-18; John 10:11-18 (279). "What God has made clean, you must not call profane."

TUESDAY, MAY 9
EASTER WEEKDAY

The good book is also a good read

If you want to focus on what the church is really about, learning a little something about the first decades and centuries of the church can help, such as reading the Acts of Apostles, the book in scripture that tells the early church's story. Things like preaching and proclaiming the message of Jesus, believing and being faithful, teaching, and gathering together. It's doing things like these that make people Christians, then and now.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 11:19-26; John 10:22-30 (280). "It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called 'Christians.'"

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10
EASTER WEEKDAY

Lighten up

Here's a practice you can incorporate into your daily prayer. At the end of your day, recall anything that happened during the day that still troubles you. Rather than carry over the residue of that worry into the next day, try this: Imagine Jesus standing in a beam of light. Now imagine placing your worries into that circle of light—into Jesus' care. This is a way to practice trust and faith. Try this on a daily basis, and more of your life will be brought out of the darkness and into the light of Christ's love and care.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 12:24—13:5a; John 12:44-50 (281). "Everyone who believes in me should not remain in darkness."

THURSDAY, MAY 11
EASTER WEEKDAY

Add a dash of forgiveness

Home cooking is great, but sometimes we are hurt the worst by the folks who share food at our table. Our spouses, our siblings, our children, and our grandchildren often betray the family trust and cause us pain that's hard to forgive. But just as Jesus forgave his closest disciples, those who betrayed him, denied him, and abandoned him in his hour of need, we have the power to forgive our family members for their offenses against us. Peace, like charity, begins at home.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 13:13-25; John 13:16-20 (282). "The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me."

FRIDAY, MAY 12
EASTER WEEKDAY

Listen up

In the gospels Jesus' words are often directed to a particular group of people—to the Pharisees and scribes, the crowd, his disciples. Most of us regularly hear the word of God in a large group, the liturgical assembly where, Vatican II reminds us, the presence of Christ is as real as the Eucharist. But faith can also be enlivened in other gatherings such as Bible study groups, small Christian communities, a men's or women's group, in the family. Paying attention to what Jesus says when we pray with an open Bible, or with a group of believers, can help to assure that we are becoming more transparent to the Christ within.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 13:13-25; John 13:16-20 (283). "Whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me."

SATURDAY, MAY 13
EASTER WEEKDAY

Hang in there

Persecution has been part of the life of Christians since the church began. Paul and the first disciples faced beatings, imprisonment, mockery, and derision. Yet something about their experience of God was so compelling that they couldn't help but preach and live the Good News. The early disciples persevered and, as scripture records, they were "filled with joy and the Holy Spirit." Today we still face emotional and sometimes physical persecution from folks who don't quite get the gospel, including those with "high standing" in our lives. Let us pray for the courage of our foremothers and forefathers to resolutely live the gospel.

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 13:44-52; John 14:7-14 (284). "[They] . . . stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their region."

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