

# The Fourth Sunday of Easter

## April 21, 2024



## Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

Saint Mary 14 Park Street + Sacred Heart 58 Church Street + Saint Mark 105 Stanley Street  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts

## Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

Rev. David A. Costa, Pastor  
Rev. Deacon Joseph E. Regali, Parish Deacon  
Sister Kathleen A. Corrigan, S.U.S.C., Pastoral Associate  
Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P. & Rev. R. Gabriel Pivarnik, O.P., Weekend Assistants  
Mrs. Martha O'Neill, Administrative Assistant  
Mrs. Jean Howard, Business Manager  
Mrs. Elaine Corvese, Director of Religious Education  
Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal, Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School  
Mr. Adam Turcotte, Director of Music  
Mr. Miguel Peixoto, Buildings Supervisor  
Mr. James Kitsock, Building Maintenance

### Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School

Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal  
57 Richards Avenue,  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760  
(508) 695-3072 FAX (508) 695-9074  
[smsh@smsh.dfrcs.org](mailto:smsh@smsh.dfrcs.org) [www.smhschool.com](http://www.smhschool.com)

### Saint Mary Cemetery

Mr. Jarrod Ward, Superintendent  
Towne Street  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760  
(508) 695-1173 or email [ripco@comcast.net](mailto:ripco@comcast.net)

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saint Mary Church • Saturday 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

### Sacrament of Baptism

Baptisms are celebrated on designated Sunday afternoons at 12:30 pm, with a limit of four families at each baptism. Please contact the office at [stmaryna@noozi.com](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com) for more information and available dates/locations.

### Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage is usually celebrated on Saturday morning and afternoon. Please contact the Parish Office at least nine months in advance to begin preparation.

### Sacrament of the Sick

Pastoral care to those in need of the sacrament of the sick is arranged through the parish office. Please call to arrange a visit.

### Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is offered on the first Friday of each month in **Saint Mark Church** beginning at 9:00 am and ending at 6:00 pm with Benediction.

### Parish Offering

If you are attending in person, you may drop your contribution in the collection basket. You are welcome to mail your budget envelope to the parish office, at 14 Park Street, North Attleborough, MA 02760. You may also leave your envelope in the drop box located outside the parish office door, to the right on the landing. Thank you for your ongoing support!

### Weekend Masses

Saturday 4:00 pm **Saint Mary Church**  
Sunday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Sunday 9:30 am **Saint Mary Church**  
Sunday 11:00 am **Sacred Heart Church**

### Weekday Masses

Monday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Tuesday 4:30 pm **Saint Mark Church**  
Wednesday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Thursday 8:00 am Communion Service  
**Saint Mark Church**

*Links to:* Transfiguration of the Lord Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/Transfiguration-of-the-Lord-Parish-North-Attleborough-106529317647894/>

YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/ysfaxaty>

### Parish Office

14 Park Street,  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760

Parish e-mail • [stmaryna@noozi.com](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com)  
Parish website • [www.saintmaryna.com](http://www.saintmaryna.com)  
Phone 508-695-6161 Fax 508-695-5248

Faith Formation • [TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com](mailto:TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com)  
Faith Formation • 508-695-3823

Music Ministry • [transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com](mailto:transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com)

# MASS Intentions

## April 20/21 – The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

**Saturday** April 20 – Vigil (St. Mary)  
4:00 pm Mary & Joseph Cabral  
Barbara Linfield  
James R. Stack

**Sunday** April 21 (St. Mark)  
8:00 am Noreen Darragh

**Sunday** April 21 (St. Mary)  
9:30 am Philip & Karleen Winn

**Sunday** April 21 (Sacred Heart)  
11:00 am Harry Belham  
Raimundo “Ray” Rodriguez

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**Monday** April 22 (St. Mark)  
8:00 am Barry Quinlan

**Tuesday** April 23 (St. Mark)  
4:30 pm People of the Parish

**Wednesday** April 24 (St. Mark)  
8:00 am People of the Parish

**Thursday** April 25 (St. Mark)  
8:00 am Augusto & Virginia Almeida  
Manuel & Judith Moreira

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## April 27/28 – The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

**Saturday** April 27 – Vigil (St. Mary)  
4:00 pm Albert & Elsie Jette  
Joseph Smith

**Sunday** April 28 (St. Mark)  
8:00 am People of the Parish

**Sunday** April 28 (St. Mary)  
9:30 am Emma Zimmer Fitzpatrick

**Sunday** April 28 (Sacred Heart)  
11:00 am Robert Misisco  
Virginia Misisco

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### Parish Contributions

Collection for April 13/14: \$11,786.90

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### Marriage Congratulations!



Our prayerful congratulations are extended to **Annya MacDonald and Connor Blanchette** who were united in the Sacrament of Marriage, Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, in Saint Mark Church, and to **Jaimie Darling and Gregory Peschel** who were united in the Sacrament of Marriage, Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, in Sacred Heart Church. *May God’s choicest blessings come upon you as you begin to live this sacrament of love.*

### Welcome & Congratulations!



On Sunday, April 14, **Deborah A. Westman** was initiated into our Catholic Church during the 11 am Mass. We thank Deb for her wonderful witness, and pledge our prayerful support and encouragement as she joins us in living our Catholic Faith! Our heartfelt congratulations are extended to Deb and her sponsors on this joyous occasion!

### 2024 Mass Intention Book

The 2024 Mass Intention Book is open. The current Mass schedule provides for fewer opportunities for parishioners to remember their beloved dead at weekend Masses. For this reason, we will schedule, when necessary, multiple intentions for weekend Masses. There is no limit on the number of daily Mass intentions. Please contact the office via email, phone, or in writing with your requests.



### 2024 Lenten Parish Charity

As announced previously in this bulletin, we are currently gratefully receiving your donations for our 2024 Lenten charity: the Holy Union Sisters ministering in Tanzania, Africa. The Sisters are currently celebrating 50 years of presence and work among the people in this developing nation. To mark this significant anniversary, they are focusing on three projects: a new autism center at their school for physically challenged children & youth; a new formation house for the Congregation; and a health care center for a growing, rural village. Our donations will help make these projects a reality.

You may use the donation envelopes found at the doors of each of our church buildings or use your own envelope. If doing this, please mark it “Lenten Charity.” If writing a check, please write it out to “Transfiguration Parish.” The parish will send one combined check to the Holy Union Sisters. Your donations may be sent directly to the parish office or dropped in the collection basket at weekend Mass. We ask that you send your donations *on or before April 28!*

As of this printing, our parishioners have donated a remarkable **\$20,805.00** for the good work of the Holy Union Sisters in Tanzania! On behalf of the Sisters and those they serve throughout Tanzania:

**Mungu awabariki sana!**  
(May God bless you abundantly!)

### Thank You for Responding to SVdP’s Call to Serve

Many thanks to all those who responded to our St. Vincent de Paul Conference’s Call to Serve this past weekend! I am thrilled to report that over 30 parishioners expressed an interest in joining or volunteering with our SVdP Conference. If you could not make it to the Call to Serve event, but would like to learn more, please call the Conference at: 508-212-4755. Thank you for your steadfast support of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul! ~Fr. Costa

### Baptism Congratulations

Our prayerful best wishes are extended to six of our children and their families who recently celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism. Please welcome and remember:

#### *Genevieve Alex Connolly*



Child of Carrie & Justin Connolly  
Godchild of Marissa DeRossi

#### *Kennedy Clare Hillard*



Child of Janel & Brad Hillard, Jr.  
Godchild of Renee Loffredo & Samuel Perreault

#### *Wren Ellis McConville*



Child of Callan & Joseph McConville  
Godchild of Bridget McConville & Cormac Danielson

#### *Lincoln Henry Waite*



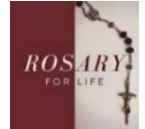
Child of Katherine & Benjamin Waite  
Godchild of Carrie & Justin Connolly

### Friends of North Attleboro's Council on Aging: Yard Sale/Shredding Event – Saturday, April 27

All are invited to attend a **Yard Sale** on Saturday, April 27 from 9 AM to 1 PM at the North Attleborough Senior Center (204 Elm Street). *All proceeds are to benefit the Council on Aging.* In addition, a **Shredding Event** for seniors will be held on Saturday, April 27 from 10 AM to 1 PM at the North Attleborough Senior Center (204 Elm Street). *Seniors may bring up to 2 boxes of documents to be shredded.* This event is sponsored by TRIAD and funded by District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn, III. We hope to see you there!

#### Rosary for Life

The Respect Life Committee of Transfiguration of the Lord Parish is pleased to announce that we will lead a Rosary for Life at 4:00 pm, prior to the 4:30 pm daily Mass in **Saint Mark Church** on the *first, second, fourth, and fifth Tuesday* of each month. The communal Rosary is also livestreamed for any participants who wish to join us remotely.



#### Tuesday Communal Rosary Schedule



**Tuesday, April 23, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**  
Tuesday, April 30, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)  
Tuesday, May 7, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)  
Tuesday, May 14, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)

#### Women's Guild Closing Banquet

What a delightful year it's been for our Women's Guild Program! We've had the pleasure of forging new friendships within our Transfiguration of the Lord Parish community while enjoying enriching experiences in both faith and social activities. As we reflect on these moments, we eagerly anticipate our closing banquet scheduled for **Thursday, May 9th at 6:00 p.m.** at Conrad's Casual Dining Restaurant in Foxborough. The dinner will be buffet style and will include "Conrad's Famous Steak Tips", Stuffed Chicken Breast, and Baked Haddock. The cost will be \$35.00 pp. To RSVP for this special occasion, kindly reach out to Karen Smith at (508) 212-7377 or Diana Gray at (508) 695-1143.

#### *Kolby Matthew Kelleher & Kooper Michael Kelleher*



Children of Kathryn & Kevin Kelleher  
Godchildren of Laura Malone, Jerome Kennedy,  
Brianne Kelleher & John Connell

# SAINTS

## SAINT MARY-SACRED HEART

### Here's to the Saints Mathematicians!

During the 2nd Trimester, the SMSH Middle School students participated in the New England Math League Mathematics Contests. We are proud to announce that all three grades have been recognized among the top schools participating in our region.

Grade 8 placed 19th out of 49 schools. At SMSH Sarah Beardsworth and Leia Constantine tied for first place, Kaitlyn Wilfert placed second and Kate Mankins placed third.



Grade 7 placed 25th out of 48 schools. At SMSH first place was earned by Cameron McMullen, second place by Liam Hutchinson and third place by Anthony Calderone.



Grade 6 placed 20th out of 47 schools, with Paige McMullen in first place, Coby Morin in second place and Miles Ferris in third place at SMSH.



Congratulations to all of our middle school participants for a job well done!

### Friends of SMSH Outing

As announced, the Friends of SMSH is offering various one-day and multi-day outings. Join us on Wednesday, May 22 for the “*Ricky Nelson Remembered*” show, at Lake Pearl in Wrentham, MA. Price per person is **\$89.00** and includes luncheon, tax and gratuity, and show ticket. Information flyers are available at the doors of the church or you may contact Nancy Chapman or May Courbron at 508-243-2904 or by email: [friendsofsmsh@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofsmsh@gmail.com) for more information. Please note that tickets are NOT sold at the door.

### Faith Formation Program 2023-2024

Director of Religious Education ~ Mrs. Elaine Corvese  
508-695-3823; [transfigurationreled@gmail.com](mailto:transfigurationreled@gmail.com)

Faith Formation Office hours:  
Monday – Thursday: 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### Dates of First Communion:



HOLY EUCHARIST

May 4, 2024: 10:00 a.m. Saint Mary Church  
May 4, 2024: 1:00 p.m. Saint Mary Church  
May 11, 2024: 10:00 a.m. Saint Mary Church

### New Website & New Online Giving Platform



Please note that we are in the process of redesigning our parish website and plan to roll out our new online presence within a few weeks. As part of this process (and it is a lengthy process, for sure!), our online giving platform will also change.

At present, our parish uses two distinct online giving companies. These were both used before the merging of the parishes into the new Transfiguration Parish. The new website company has an online component which ties directly into our parish census allowing for more streamlined financial recording and tracking. There are many threads that need to be woven together before this process is up and running.

When all of these moving parts are in place and ready to work for us, we will be doing a full roll-out of the new website and the new online giving platform. Your patience is GREATLY appreciated!

### Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School: Friends for Life!

Learning to make friends and how to be a good friend are foundational skills taught at our Catholic schools. Our students are also taught how to develop a relationship with God as well - the most important friendship we will ever need!



Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School's Kindergarten is a child-centered program designed to establish a strong foundation for learning in the early years. SMSH provides a caring, Catholic learning environment – one that promotes cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual development of all children. We invite you to learn more about our school's strong curriculum by visiting our website [www.smshschool.com](http://www.smshschool.com). If you want your child to attend a school that balances faith with education, consider joining the Saints community of learners.

## Knights of Columbus Council #330



**Knights of  
Columbus®**

### Monthly Meeting:

Council #330 of the Knights of Columbus has been serving the Catholic Community of North Attleborough for 125 years. The Knights meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm, in the St. Mary Church Hall. Please drop by on meeting nights if you'd like to learn more about the Knights. Council #330 is committed to assisting local charities that align with the values of our Faith such as the Parish, the Parish school, and Abundant Hope. Please contact Jim Schromm via email with any questions: [jim.schromm@verizon.net](mailto:jim.schromm@verizon.net).

### Knights of Columbus Diaper Drive:

The Knights of Columbus are organizing a Diaper Drive to benefit Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center. We are requesting donations of diapers in all sizes, but Abundant Hope is in dire need of larger size diapers, (sizes 4, 5 and 6). We are also requesting donations of diaper wipes. We will have containers at each of the three North Attleborough churches, this weekend of April 21, and continuing into the month of May. Thank you very much for your support of Abundant Hope and the Knights!

### Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society



Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization, leads women and men to join to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are in need or are suffering, in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul. The Society meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month in the parish hall in Saint Mary Church at 6:30 pm. Please join us!

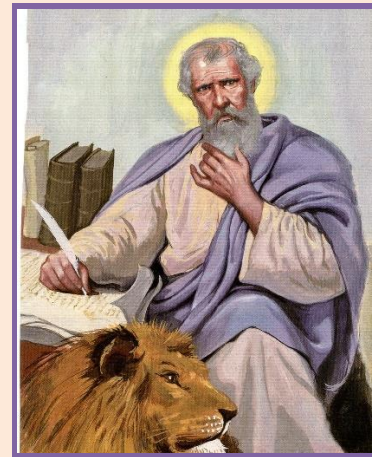
### Call for Assistance:

If you need assistance, please call the help line for our parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society. They can offer information about the types of assistance available. Please call 508-212-4755 for help or more information.



Please join us at **Saint Mark Church** on Friday, **May 3<sup>rd</sup>**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending at 6:00 p.m. with Benediction. Remember, as we share in the work of Redemption, so will we be rewarded with our own redemption. For more information call Joanne Regali (508-643-3821) or Arlene Hall (508-801-2243). Please leave a message if the call is not answered immediately.

## Saint of the Week: Saint Mark Feast Day: April 25<sup>th</sup>



Most of what we know about Mark comes directly from the New Testament. He is usually identified with the Mark of Acts 12:12. When Saint Peter escaped from prison, he went to the home of Mark's mother.

Paul and Barnabas took him along on the first missionary journey, but for some reason Mark returned alone to Jerusalem. It is evident, from Paul's refusal to let Mark accompany him on the second journey despite Barnabas's insistence, that Mark had displeased Paul. Because Paul later asks Mark to visit him in prison, we may assume the trouble did not last long.

The oldest and the shortest of the four Gospels, the Gospel of Mark emphasizes Jesus's rejection by humanity while being God's triumphant envoy. Probably written for gentile converts in Rome—after the death of Peter and Paul sometime between A.D. 60 and 70—Mark's Gospel is the gradual manifestation of a "scandal": a crucified Messiah.

Evidently a friend of Mark—calling him "my son"—Peter is only one of this Gospel's sources, others being the Church in Jerusalem (Jewish roots), and the Church at Antioch (largely Gentile). Like another Gospel writer Luke, Mark was not one of the 12 apostles. We cannot be certain whether he knew Jesus personally. Some scholars feel that the evangelist is speaking of himself when describing the arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane: "Now a young man followed him wearing nothing but a linen cloth about his body. They seized him, but he left the cloth behind and ran off naked" (Mark 14:51-52).

Others hold Mark to be the first bishop of Alexandria, Egypt. Venice, famous for the Piazza San Marco, claims Mark as its patron saint; the large basilica there is believed to contain his remains.

A winged lion is Mark's symbol. The lion derives from Mark's description of John the Baptist as a "voice of one crying out in the desert" (Mark 1:3), which artists compared to a roaring lion. The wings come from the application of Ezekiel's vision of four winged creatures to the evangelists.

Mark fulfilled in his life what every Christian is called to do: proclaim to all people the Good News that is the source of salvation. In particular, Mark's way was by writing. Others may proclaim the Good News by music, drama, poetry, or by teaching children around a family table. How do you fulfill that challenge?

## About World Day of Prayer of Vocations April 21, 2024

On this 61st anniversary of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, also liturgically known as Good Shepherd Sunday, we are invited to pray for and promote all vocations. Initiated by Saint Paul VI during the Second Vatican Council in 1964, the purpose of this day is to help all of us respond to God's call and to support in prayer all those who are discerning how to best respond to the needs of today in the vocation God calls them to be.

As Catholics, we firmly believe that God has a plan for our lives! He calls some to marriage, some to the priesthood, and others to religious life or to live as generous single people. Fully living our own vocations—and teaching young people how to discern God's call—is a serious duty, but also a joyful one. During this week, please encourage the young people in your life—children, grandchildren, students, and friends—to be open if God calls them to priesthood or religious life.

Here's something to think about: We belong to the Diocese of Fall River which consists of 69 parishes spread across southeastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod and the Islands of Martha's Vinyard and Nantucket. These parishes are grouped in five deaneries. We belong to the Attleboro deanery which covers the seven parishes found in Attleboro, North Attleborough, Mansfield, Norton, and Seekonk.

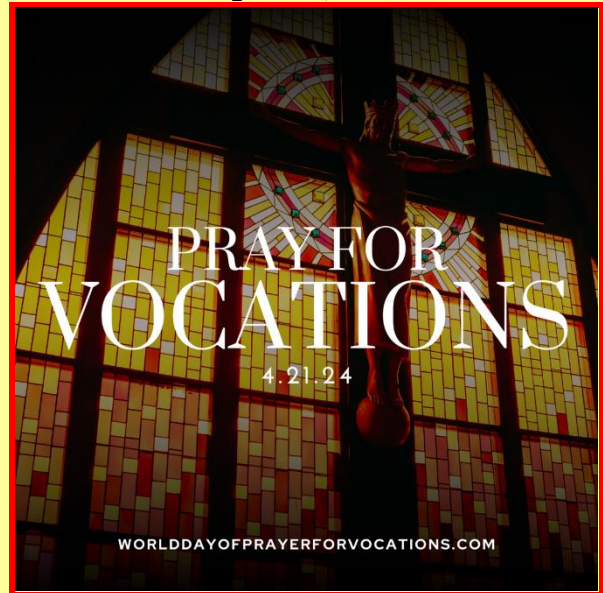
There are a total of 133 diocesan priests in our diocese. Diocesan priests are ordained for service within a particular diocese and in most cases, spend their entire priesthood serving in that diocese. We also have approximately 69 religious order priests (like Fr. Ken and Fr. Gabriel) serving in our diocese. Of the 133 diocesan priests, 77 are retired, sick, or on leave of absence, 4 are serving outside of the diocese, and 56 are serving within our diocese. Of these 56, Fr. Costa, (who will turn 65 this November) is 5th in seniority (by number of years ordained – 39 years this June). 60 of the 69 parishes are staffed by diocesan priests. The other nine parishes are staffed by Sacred Hearts, LaSalette, Holy Cross, Incarnate Word, and Vocationist Fathers and Brothers.

In addition to the priests, our diocese is served by 91 permanent deacons (Deacon Joe being one) and there are 92 consecrated religious women (Sister Kathee being one) from 12 different communities/congregations serving and living within the diocese. The majority of our women religious are retired, living and volunteering in a number of ways throughout the Diocese.

This year, we have no retirements among our diocesan priests. There will be one priestly ordination (Brian Bangs, from Sandwich, MA) and one transitional deacon ordination (Lucas DaCosta from Fall River). After they are ordained, we will have two men studying for the priesthood; one is from the Azores, Portugal and the other from Brazil. Our parish is blessed to have one young man (Evan Mello) applying to the seminary for this September.

From this brief overview of statistics you can see we need priests, deacons, consecrated religious and dedicated lay ministers. Please add this important intention to your private prayer. Encourage our young men and women in their Faith. Pray for Evan as he begins his seminary formation and ask the Lord to inspire more women and men to answer the call to serve God's holy people.

## World Day of Prayer for Vocations April 21, 2024



### Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group

#### Monthly Meeting:

The next meeting of the Respect Life Group will take place on Thursday, **May 2, 2024 at 6:30 pm in Sacred Heart Church's Library**. We hope to see you there!

#### Local Walk for Life - May 10th | 9:30am-2pm:

Diocese of Fall River  
Secretariat for The New Evangelization

LOCAL WALK FOR LIFE  
May 10, 2024

The National Shrine of Our Lady of La Salette, North Attleboro

Most Rev. Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.

Massachusetts State Legislature Representative Alan Silvia

Individuals are invited to attend the Local Diocesan Walk for Life on Friday, May 10th, at La Salette Shrine in North Attleboro. The day will include Mass with Bishop da Cunha, keynote by Massachusetts State Legislature Representative Alan Silvia, Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Adoration, and Walk for Life. Registration for Mass is -required due to limited seating. Register yourself or a group here:

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/cjsz3fg>

For more information, email [irobinson@dioc-fr.org](mailto:irobinson@dioc-fr.org).

# The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter - April 21, 2024

READINGS FOR THE  
WEEK



Excerpts from the *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, second typical edition* © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. Used with permission. All rights reserved. No portion of this text may be reproduced by any means without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

## First Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said:

"Leaders of the people and elders: If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved, then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; in his name this man stands before you healed. He is the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved."

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

THEN PETER, FILLED WITH  
THE HOLY SPIRIT, SAID TO  
THEM, "RULERS AND  
ELDERS OF THE PEOPLE!

- ACTS 4:8



## Responsorial Psalm

**R. The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.**

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

**R. The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.**

I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me and have been my savior. The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. By the LORD has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes.

**R. The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.**

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD; we bless you from the house of the LORD. I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me and have been my savior. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his kindness endures forever.

**R. The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.**



## Second Reading

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

Beloved:

See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*



## Gospel Acclamation

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

*I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;  
I know my sheep, and mine know me.*

R. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

## Gospel

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

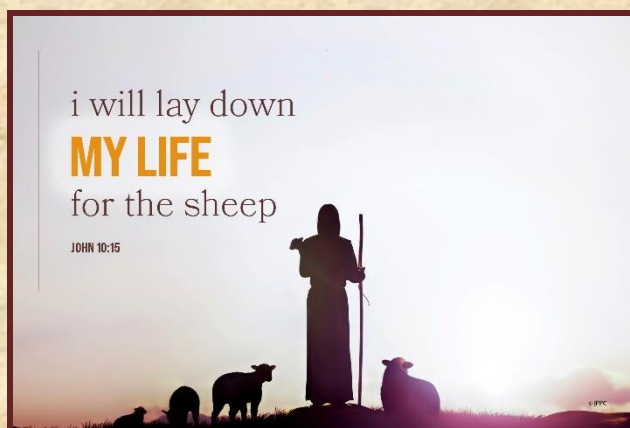
† A reading from the holy Gospel according to John  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*



## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### Shepherd:

The image of the good shepherd has always been with the Church. Pictures of the Good Shepherd crowd our imagination. From childhood on, we can remember a thousand pictures of the same Good Shepherd. The sheep are content and snow white. A lamb rides aloft the kindly and gentle shepherd's shoulder. This image comforts, sustains, and calms. Year in and year out, the Church celebrates Jesus as the Good Shepherd on this Fourth Sunday of Easter. It's a rich image worth our careful meditation.

### Comment:

Peter's first miracle got him in trouble. As leader of the early Church, he learned firsthand that his life would follow that of his master. A small introduction to today's first reading is in order: Peter's cure of the invalid who asked for money set the onlookers abuzz. Word spread rapidly, and Peter was unceremoniously thrown into jail, and the following day, he was brought before the elders and scribes. He was ordered to explain himself, his words, his actions, and the belief of those he led and served. This was his chance to justify himself and his fledgling community.

But Peter did not justify anything. He simply proclaimed his belief and suggested to the skeptical if not cynical listeners that they also accept this rejected one, Jesus Christ the Nazorean "whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead." Peter's words and eventually his actions witnessed his faith. Peter spoke fearlessly of Jesus who, like a good shepherd, laid down his life for his sheep. The Gospel reading for this "Good Shepherd Sunday" also follows upon a cure. Jesus cured the man born blind, and for this he was questioned severely by the Pharisees. Jesus' discourse on the good shepherd describes his relationship to the man born blind and to us—all of us, Pharisees included.

It is interesting to note that Jesus uses the image of a shepherd. In Israel's history, shepherds were held in high enough regard. After all, the great king, David, was a shepherd. But now in Israel, shepherds were outsiders. Their consuming occupation kept them outside, literally and figuratively. They were outside in all kinds of weather, and they were also outside the law, in that they were unable to obey its ever-demanding rigors. In the eyes of the harsh rule-makers, the shepherds were among those stones rejected by the builder, cast onto the rubble heap.

### Reflection:

Jesus uses these outsider shepherds as a new image of redemption. Jesus is not talking about the shepherd as such or the sheep as such, but about the relationship between the shepherd and sheep. Clearly the phony shepherd will flee at the first sight of trouble. And one can safely wager that most shepherds would not be inclined to die for a sheep, but would write the animal off as a loss and one of the costs of doing business in a harsh terrain. But the good shepherd differs dramatically; he will go so far as to lay down his life for his sheep—an unheard-of claim. The current religious leaders of Israel clearly wouldn't do this; rather they seem to harangue their followers.

In Israel at Jesus' time, shepherds tended relatively small flocks and knew their sheep by name, knew their markings and temperaments. The good shepherd knows his own more intimately than this. He knows them the way the Father knows Jesus. The depth of intimacy between leader and follower is the same as the intimacy between Father and Son. And that intimacy can include everyone on earth. During this Eastertide, we reflect more deeply on the Resurrection. The leader has laid down his life for the led. He has done so freely for our sake. He has laid down his life willingly and taken up his risen life gladly.

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# Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, April 21, 2024



Invest time each week to expand your vocabulary and deepen your faith.

21 April 2024

## WORD OF THE WEEK

### Evangelist *\i-'van-jə-list\*

One who announces Good News, particularly the message of the gospel. Often refers exclusively to the four gospel writers Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John. The New Testament also uses this term in reference to Philip, the deacon, and Timothy, a worker with Paul.

Pronunciation: <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-Evangelist>

### CONTEXT

**Evangelizers** take on the "smell of the sheep" and the sheep are willing to hear their voice.

—Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*

We are all **evangelists**, but we almost always **evangelize** about the wrong things.

—Matthew Kelly

Saint Juan Diego, the peasant to whom Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared, is essentially the **evangelizer** of an entire hemisphere. —USCCB.org

### WHY IT MATTERS

All Christians are summoned to the role of **evangelists**, a term first used in reference to the gospel writers in the third century. As followers of Jesus, our common vocation is to bring Good News to the poor, sick, lonely, imprisoned, and socially marginalized. The words of the four primary **evangelists**—Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John—instruct us in the mission we're invited to share.

From *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Evangelization in the Modern World): The world is calling for **evangelizers** to speak to it of a God whom the **evangelists** themselves should know and be familiar with [122].

### RELATED WORDS

Mission | Vocation | Gospel | Proclamation

## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

### What's an evangelist?

**Evangelist** translates from Greek as "messenger of good tidings." All baptized persons are called to be such messengers. Isaiah speaks of the "beautiful feet" of those who bring Good News. Ephesians describes apostles, prophets, and **evangelists** as central players in the church. Biblically, **evangelist** is not an exclusive term.

By the third century, the formal list of **evangelists** is reduced to the four gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They concretized the Good News the church would proclaim going forward.

By the fourth century, the symbology of the four **evangelists** became standardized as man, lion, ox, and eagle. Facing the four directions, these extraordinary creatures are four and yet unified in movement. They also burn like hot coals. Matthew, whose gospel emphasizes Jesus' humanity, is represented by the man. Mark highlights Jesus' divinity and kingship, so is identified as the lion. Luke holds up the sacrificial role of Jesus and so becomes the ox. John is the eagle as his gospel soars with a transcendent perspective on Jesus as the Christ.

—Alice Camille, from *Questions Catholics Ask* <http://tinyurl.com/QCA-Evangelist>

## REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

FEAST OF MARK, EVANGELIST (APRIL 25)

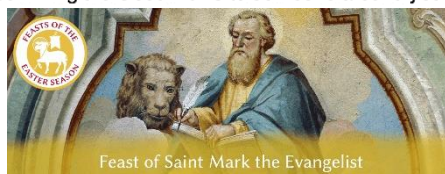
### I've got Good News

Mark was an **evangelist**, one who brings Good News. He was also one of the four **evangelists** who are credited with writing the gospels. Mark's gospel is the shortest, but it packs a punch with its message of the suffering servant Jesus who endured defeat and death so that we all might be saved.

READINGS: 1 Peter 5:5b-14; Mark 16:15-20 (555 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/042524.cfm>). "Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature."

### FAITH IN ACTION

Mark's mission of sharing the Good News of our salvation didn't stop with him. It extends to all who hear and believe the gospel. Bring the Good News to someone around you today.



Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist

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