



SUNDAY REFLECTION

Today's readings dovetail together admirably to give us insight into a significant challenge that lies before us as Church. Although at first sight John seems to have little interest in the Church, this initial reaction should not be exaggerated. The episode with the Samaritan woman (4:39-42), the prophecy of Caiphas (11:52), Jesus' final prayer to the Father (17:1-19), post-resurrection appearances to the disciples (20:21), the final words of Jesus (20:29), and the references to the Paraclete, all imply an awareness of, and commitment to, the future growth of the Church. In particular John uses two images of Church that give us insight and challenge. He refers to the Church as the Vine (15:1) and, in today's reading, as the sheepfold of the Lord. The community is the sheepfold and Jesus is the Good Shepherd. the sheep listen to the Word of the Lord and follow Him. The Shepherd knows each one personally, gives each one new life that continues into eternity, and the assurance of a permanent new life that continues into eternity, and the assurance of a permanent place in His love. Each member of the flock is important since Jesus treats each one as a special gift of the Father. Interestingly enough, the reading ends with the statement, "The Father and I are one" (10:30), since for John it is the

unity of the Trinity that gives rise to the nature of the Church as a unity in Christ. Their unity is the foundation for our unity. We show our faith in the nature of God's inner life in the way we live that unity in the community of the Church. However, as God reached out in Christ to spread that unity to others, so too we are called as Church to spread the unity of Christ's community throughout the world. Thus Jesus can say, "I made Your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (Jn.17:26), and twice calls for unity as a sign to the world of the disciples' faith in Him, "That they may all be one. As You, Father, are in Me and I am in You, may they also be in Us, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me" (Jn. 17:21, also 17:22).

This unity in faith is also describe by the author of the Book of Revelation in today's second reading, in which he has a vision of the unity of those who have both placed their faith in Jesus and lived out the consequences of that faith in persevering through tribulations. Like the gospel, he speaks of the eternal life that they enjoy because of their union with the Lord. In the discourse from which today's gospel reading is taken, Jesus proclaims, "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to My voice. so there will be one flock, one shepherd" (Jn. 10:16). Within less than thirty years of the death of Jesus the early Church realized under the guidance of the Holy spirit that this meant reaching out to the Gentiles (Acts 11:18). It was a lesson that Paul and Barnabas also learned during their stay in Pisidian Antioch. Thus the Church reaches out to draw others into the unity of the flock of the Lord.

Today's beautiful thanksgiving psalm draws together our appropriate response to the challenging call to belong to the chosen community of the Lord. After all, "It is He that made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture (Ps. 100:3). Today's liturgy calls us to renew our spirit of unity as a parish community and to revitalize our outreach to others to that we can all be one flock under the one Good Shepherd.

STEWARDSHIP: Paul and Barnabas encountered both violent rejection and joyful acceptance of the message that they preached. We, too, may meet with mixed reactions when we use our gifts in the service of God. But, the Gospel assures us, the reward for those who follow faithfully is eternal life.

READINGS FIFTH SUNDAY EASTER

15 MAY '22

Acts 14:21-27: The joyful message of the Gospel is undeterred even when it meets with resistance. Today's reading from the Acts of the Apostles shows it moving beyond the confines of its Jewish origins to the pagans. The Gospel is for everyone.

Rev. 21:1-5: Oure Sunday worship is a sharing in the continual worship of heaven and earth before God's throne. The author of the book of the Apocalypse pulls back the veil to give us a glimpse of what is really happening.

Jn. 13:31-35: We are the Lord's flock, gathered together by the Good Shepherd. But we are not just a crowd. He knows each one of us personally and, deep down, we know Him and recognize His voice..

Give thanks for all women on Mother's Day

"Dearest mothers, thank you, thank you for what you are in your family and for what you give to the Church and the world." — [Pope Francis, general audience, 2015](#)

Mother's Day has been celebrated as a national holiday in the United States on the second Sunday of May since 1914. But Catholics have been celebrating a sort of mother's day since the first few centuries of the Church. The fourth Sunday of Lent, or Laetare Sunday, traditionally was a time to return to your mother church (home parish) and leave an offering. For this reason, it was also called Mothering Sunday.

"The word 'mothering' came to have other associations; it became a feast day for the mothers of families. All the children who were away from home went back on that day to visit their mothers, taking with them 'a present of money, a trinket, or some nice eatable, and they are all anxious not to fail in this custom.' The 'nice eatable' was often a mothering cake." It is easy to see how this ancient tradition might have influenced Mother's Day traditions in the United States.

And devotion to Mary, the mother of God and our spiritual mother, in the month of May adds deep spiritual meaning to this holiday. "Motherhood has always been a sacred and noble vocation, but Mary raised it to even greater stature when she became the Mother of God. As the mother who is 'blessed among women' (Luke 1:42), Mary gives us the clearest and most inspiring picture of what the ideal mother should look like, and every Christian mother would be wise to take her cues from the one who excelled at motherhood like none other," explained Father Michael Van Sloun for the [Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis](#).

[Pope Francis](#) pointed out that the parallels between Mary and other mothers include love and devotion to their children, of course, but it also includes great sacrifice and suffering. "It is they, mothers, who most hate war, which kills their children. Many times I have thought of those mothers who receive the letter: 'I inform you that your son has fallen in defense of his homeland ...' The poor women! How a mother suffers! It is they who testify to the beauty of life."

"A society without mothers would be a dehumanized society, for mothers are always, even in the worst moments, witnesses of tenderness, dedication and moral strength," added the pope. And they are also crucial to evangelization. "Without mothers, not only would there be no new faithful, but the faith would lose a good part of its simple and profound warmth."

"For all of its joys, motherhood brings with it its share of crosses. Such is the blessing and curse of unconditional love," wrote [Our Sunday Visitor](#) agreeing with the pope. "Despite these challenges, though, mothers also serve as a vital part of the antidote, and this is where they can find encouragement and hope."

Each year many parishes ask women to stand and receive a blessing on Mother's Day, which is an "all-too-rare public recognition of the tireless work done by mothers, as well as their willingness to give fully of themselves purely out of their love for their families" pointed out [Our Sunday Visitor](#) in this year's editorial about the holiday. But the author went on to point out that many women can be hurt by this event.

"As many mothers proudly stand to receive the priest's blessing on Mother's Day, others remain still and seated — conflicted as to whether they deserve to stand shoulder to shoulder with the other moms, or unwilling to reveal publicly the loss they have suffered, or wondering whether they deserve to be called a mother at all." Many in the pews have lost a child through

miscarriage, stillbirth or death after birth. Others have placed a child for adoption. "The motherhood of these women, however, is undeniable. If life truly begins at conception, which the Church has consistently taught, then so, too, does motherhood."

The [Apostolate of Hannah's Tears](#) is a Catholic ministry for women who have had a miscarriage, stillbirth, lost a child, struggling with infertility, having a difficult pregnancy or in the waiting process for adoption.

Mother's Day can also be a very painful for women unable to conceive. "Many Catholics carry the heavy weight of the crosses of infertility and pregnancy loss in silence. This can be particularly painful at the moment of the Mother's Day blessing, when these women often feel singled out, isolated, and forgotten" explains [Springs in the Desert](#), a Catholic infertility ministry. It is offering a virtual Mother's Day retreat for women facing infertility. [Register online](#).

"The Church affirms the dignity and innate call of every woman to motherhood. Every woman has the capacity to 'give life' in a variety of ways, all of which are necessary to create a culture of life and a civilization of love," Springs in the Desert explains in its resources for pastors on Mother's Day. "Our parish family can honor biological mothers, who sacrifice so much to give life, as well as those women who live out their call to be mothers in other ways: adoptive mothers, foster mothers, godmothers, aunts, spiritual mothers, religious sisters, mentors and those women who see the needs of others and come to their aid."

So in every joy and struggle, mothers should look to their patron and ultimate role model who is always there to help. The Bible tells us about many other faith-filled mothers as well. "These ancient women faced some of the same challenges and felt many of the same emotions that mothers feel today," according to [Teaching Catholic Kids](#).

Still looking for a special gift for the moms in your life? You don't have to spend money to show how much you care. Send a spiritual bouquet for Mother's Day and ask Mary to intercede for them. Pray the rosary for your mom(s). The [Family Rosary website](#) allows you to create a free, customized Mother's Day e-card where you can detail your prayer goals. If you prefer to make a card by hand, Life Teen International offers a variety of [Scriptures](#) that highlight the role of a mom. And Busted Halo offers a [virtual Mother's Day retreat](#) designed to deepen the relationship you have with your mom, especially at a time when that relationship is evolving. And the [U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) and [Creighton University's Online Ministries](#) offer prayers for mothers struggling through a variety of challenges as well as blessings.

PRAYERS

TO THE MOMS WHO ARE

To the Moms who are struggling, to those filled with incandescent joy.

To the Moms who are remembering children who have died, and pregnancies that miscarried.

To the Moms who decided other parents were the best choice for their babies, to the Moms who adopted those kids and loved them fierce.

To those experiencing frustration or desperation in infertility.

To those who knew they never wanted kids, and the ways they have contributed to our shared world.

To those who mothered colleagues, mentees, neighborhood kids, and anyone who needed it.

To those remembering Moms no longer with us.

To those moving forward from Moms who did not show love, or hurt those they should have cared for.

Today is a day to honor the unyielding love and care for others we call 'Motherhood,' wherever we have found it and in whatever ways we have found to cultivate it within ourselves.

- Hannah Kardon, Pastor at Elston Avenue United Methodist Church

**LITURGICAL SCHEDULE
FOURTH WEEK OF EASTER
7 - 15 MAY 2022**

Saturday 7 May Easter Weekday 3

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Easter Preface V, Eucharistic Prayer II
(Intention: Greg & Matt Mytych)**

10:00 a.m. First Communion Mass

2:00 p.m. First Communion Mass

5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass Fourth Sunday of Easter

**Proper of Day, Gloria, Creed, Easter Preface V, Eucharistic Prayer II
(Intention: Eric Wanamaker RIP)**

Sunday 8 May Fourth Sunday of Easter

**7:00 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Gloria, Creed, Easter Preface V, Eucharistic Prayer II
(Intention: Parish of St. Stephen, Martyr)**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Gloria, Creed, Easter Preface V, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: Maryjo Mazure)**

**11:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Gloria, Creed, Easter Preface V, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: Linda Zagame RIP)**

Monday 9 May Day Off

9:30 A.M. - MEETING

Tuesday 10 May Easter weekday 4 St. John of Avila, St. Damien de Veuster

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Saints, Easter Preface II, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: Johli Davis)**

10:30 a.m. Mass Georgian Manor

Wednesday 11 May Easter Weekday 4

**6:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Easter Preface III, Eucharistic Prayer II
(Intention: Kelly Winslow)**

7:00 – 8:00 a.m. Confessions

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Easter Preface III, Eucharistic Prayer II
(Intention: David & Linda Holingsworth)**

10:00 a.m. Mass Willow Creek

12:00 p.m. Mass Portsmouth Naval Hospital

Thursday 12 May Easter Weekday 4

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Easter Preface IV, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: Karen Karr RIP)**

5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Confessions

**6:30 p.m. Mass Proper of Day, Easter Preface IV, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: Fr. Jim Smith RIP)**

Friday 13 May Easter Weekday 4 F Our Lady of Fatima

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Feast, Easter Preface V, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: intentions Our Lady of Fatima)**

12:00 p.m. Portsmouth Naval Hospital Mass

5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Adoration & Confessions

Saturday 14 May F St. Matthias Apostle

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Saint, Gloria, Preface of Apostle II, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: Tokuji Okamoto)**

1:30 – 4:30 p.m. Confessions

5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass Fifth Sunday Easter

**Proper of Day, Gloria, Creed, Easter Preface I, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: James Allen Neary II RIP)**

Sunday 15 May Fifth Sunday of Easter

**7:00 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Gloria, Creed, Easter Preface I, Eucharistic Prayer II
(Intention: Philip Zelenak RIP)**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Gloria, Creed, Easter Preface I, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: Parish of St. Stephen, Martyr)**

**11:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Day, Gloria, Creed, Easter Preface I, Eucharistic Prayer III
(Intention: Dr. Jack Earley RIP)**

2:00 p.m. Mass Brig`

ST. PADRE PIO'S COMMUNION PRAYER

**My past, O Lord, I
entrust to your
mercy.
My present to your
love.
My future to your
providence.**