

## Fourth Sunday of Easter – Year A

This Sunday is the Fourth Sunday of Easter and is also called Good Shepherd Sunday because our Gospel reading is taken from John 10, where Jesus declares, “I am the good shepherd”, which highlights Christ’s sacrificial love, protection, and guidance of his flock.

This Sunday, April 26, is also the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The word vocation comes from the Latin *vocare*, meaning “to call.” Each of us has been called by God (Isaiah 43:1), and it is first and foremost Christ to whom we have all been called, for it is Christ who reveals God to man and man to himself (Pope St. John Paul II, *Angelus*, December 15, 1996).

It is also Christ who gives us our vocations. For many of us, our vocation is to holy matrimony, when a man and a woman promise before God and his Church to form an intimate, indissoluble community of life and love, and to have and raise children in the Catholic faith.

Some of us, meanwhile, are called to total detachment and abandonment to divine providence as men and women religious, who show the world in a radical way, through perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, that this earthly life is not all there is – that all of us were made to love and to be loved, and to enjoy God forever in heaven.

Then there are those of us who are called to become priests, to give our lives in service to the Gospel, especially through administering the sacraments. St. John Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests, famously described the priesthood as *the love of the heart of Christ*.

It is happy, healthy, and holy vocations from our parish, from our diocese, and throughout the world that we ask God to grant us this Sunday and, indeed, every day, to build up the Church and to announce, by both word and action, that salvation and eternal life are offered to all through the life, death, and resurrection of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

Father Frei