



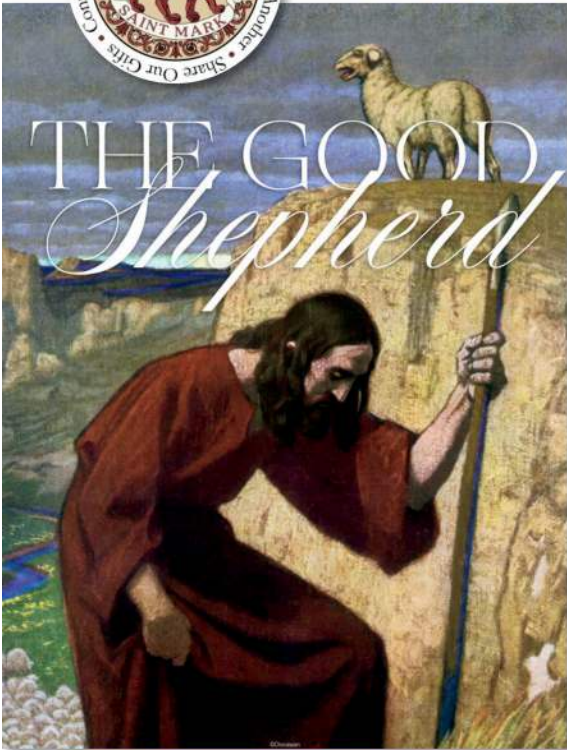
*Good Shepherd Sunday*

# SAINT MARK

Fourth Sunday of Easter • April 26, 2026 • Spanish Page 16



# WELCOME TO ST. MARK!



Today is the Fourth Sunday of Easter! The readings can be found in the music handouts or on page 869 in the St. Augustine Hymnal. The Order of the Mass can be found on page 7.

**We invite you to make St. Mark your parish home!**

Thank you for being a part of our parish, either as a visitor or a long-time parishioner. We are thankful that you are here and welcome you back anytime for Mass, prayer in our Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration Chapel or any of our programs.

At St. Mark, we believe we are all called as one by Christ to embrace the spirit of stewardship and engagement to Grow in Christ, Serve One Another, Share Our Gifts and Connect in Faith. This mission is our quest for holiness. It is by our intentional discipleship that each of us become stewards of the gifts God has given us and to share them with others. Our time, our talent and our treasure are given to us by God to share with others by spreading the Gospel and building His kingdom.

If you are interested in registering as a member of St. Mark, please go to [stmarknc.org/registration](http://stmarknc.org/registration) or use the QR code. You may submit the form online or bring a paper copy to the Welcome Desk during business hours, including Sunday 8:30 am-12:15 pm. Forms can be found in the narthex. Please know, you do not need to be Catholic to join and come to our parish.



Please join us in the Prayer to St. Michael after the Final Blessing. **Please do not leave the church until after the priests, deacons, and servers have exited the church.**  
**Thank you.**

**S**aint Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the Power of God, cast into hell, Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

## Guidelines for Communion For Catholics

1. To be in a state of grace, that is to say, to be free from any unconfessed mortal sin.
2. To abstain for at least one hour before Holy Communion from any food and drink, with the exception of water and medicine.
3. To know what you are receiving and to approach the altar with devotion.
4. *You may receive Holy Communion standing or kneeling.*
5. ***Please consume the Holy Eucharist in front of the minister of Holy Communion, before walking away.***

**For Non-Catholics:** We welcome you to Holy Mass and are glad you are here. Please feel free to participate by singing, standing, kneeling, etc. However, the reception of Holy Communion is reserved for Catholics in a state of grace. At the time of Communion, please feel free to come forward with your arms crossed over your chest for a blessing or to remain in your pew.

See page 1302 in the hymnal for more information.

Thank you for generously sharing your gifts with the parish.

You may make an online donation at [stmarknc.org/online-giving](http://stmarknc.org/online-giving) or scan the code.



## We are called...

as one by Christ to embrace a spirit of stewardship and engagement to Grow in Christ, Serve One Another,

*Share Our Gifts*  
and Connect in Faith.



## FROM THE PASTOR



Today's readings on this fourth Sunday of Easter offer us a glimpse into the heart of our loving Savior. He is the Good Shepherd and we can confidently

place our trust in Him as we live the stewardship way of life.

This endearing image of Jesus as our shepherd, and His personal love for each one of us, is described in our Gospel passage from John, through the words of Jesus Himself. Here we read Jesus' description of Himself as the "Good Shepherd." He says of Himself, "The sheep hear his voice, as the shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice."

This aspect of our Lord's tender and personal love for each one of us is a compelling reason to embrace the stewardship way of life — in the offering of our time, talent, and treasure to Him, we can express our gratitude to Him for the incomprehensible love He has for us.

Embracing this way of life certainly requires trust on our part. But Christ has proven Himself worthy of our trust. He "bore our sins in His body." He calls Himself our shepherd and He offers Himself as the guardian of our souls. He has withheld nothing of Himself and His goodness from us. He would never ask anything of us that would bring us harm. He tells us "I came so that [you] might have life and have it more abundantly."

This Easter season, let us resolve to entrust ourselves and our lives gratefully to Him. © Catholic Stewardship Consultants, 2026

### Pastoral Pondering

As we continue our treatment of the basics of the faith and following up on last week's discussion of cohabitation, **this week I wanted to focus on *Natural Family Planning* which some people misconstrue as *Catholic contraception*.**

Natural Family Planning: The Catholic Way to Responsible Parenthood

Natural Family Planning (NFP) consists of moral, scientific methods that help

married couples achieve or postpone pregnancy by observing a woman's natural signs of fertility—such as cervical mucus and basal body temperature—without drugs, devices, or surgery.

The Catholic Church fully supports NFP because it respects God's design for marital love, which is both **\*\*unitive\*\*** (bonding) and **\*\*procreative\*\*** (open to life). Unlike artificial contraception, which deliberately blocks fertility, NFP works with the body's natural cycles through periodic abstinence when needed.

### Church Teaching

In *Humanae Vitae* (1968), Pope St. Paul VI taught that couples may use the infertile periods for serious reasons, while always remaining open to the gift of children. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2370) affirms that methods based on self-observation and infertile periods are morally acceptable because they respect the dignity of the spouses and promote authentic freedom.

NFP is **not** "Catholic contraception." The difference is in the heart: contraception rejects fertility in the act itself; NFP involves responsible discernment and periodic continence when there are just reasons (health, financial, emotional, or other proportionate circumstances). Couples should prayerfully discern together, ideally with a priest or spiritual

director, avoiding a selfish "contraceptive mentality."

NFP can also help couples conceive by identifying the fertile window.

### Benefits for Catholic Couples

- Strengthens marriage through better communication, mutual respect, and shared sacrifice.
- Respects the woman's body and natural rhythms.
- Highly effective when properly learned and used.
- Supports monitoring of reproductive health.

Popular Church-approved methods include the **Sympto-Thermal Method**, **Creighton Model**, and **Marquette Method**. Instruction from a certified teacher is strongly recommended.

### A Parish Invitation

As the domestic Church, families thrive when they live God's plan for love and life. If you are preparing for marriage, a newlywed, or seeking to grow in this area, contact your diocesan Family Life Office or visit the USCCB Natural Family Planning page for resources and local classes.

May the Lord bless all married couples as they cooperate with God in the beautiful vocation of responsible parenthood!

## PASTORAL COUNCIL

Fr. John is seeking parishioners to serve on the Pastoral Council, working with him to guide the life of the parish and support its mission.

### Who can serve?

- Age 18+
- Active in parish life
- Committed to prayer and service

### Role of the Council:

- Assist with long-range pastoral planning
- Help set priorities for parish life
- Offer insight into the needs of the community

### Commitment:

- 3-year term
- Monthly meeting
- One hour of Adoration each month
- Stay informed and engaged in parish life



Please prayerfully consider whether you are being called to serve. To learn more or apply, contact John Ferrannini at [jferrannini3@gmail.com](mailto:jferrannini3@gmail.com).

## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

### Please Pray For

To submit a prayer request, visit: [stmarknc.org/prayerchain](http://stmarknc.org/prayerchain)

Tom Addison	Charlie Donovan	The Kibbee and	Paul Nealon Jr.
Julie Andrews	Jane & William	Farnejad Family	Paul Sr. and Sally
Donald Arrup	Dragoon	Mary Kate Knight	Nealon
Maryann Bahret	Joanne Errick	Dennis Koenig	The Ober Family
Lizzy Balzer	Jack Evans	Jackie Kopicki	Louise Painter
Daisy Bayona	Charles Fillipo	Aubrey Lamb	Fernando Paverpai
Deidre Beck	Al Fischlein	Craig Leiker	Doug Peterson
Richard Biddy	Alan Friedl & Family	Carolina Liendo	Nicole & Bruce
Brian Blatchford &	Tom Fox	Marie Ligon	Preiss
Family	Valeria Gerbasi	Peter R. Loew	Angela & Gianni
Virginia "Gini" Bond	Daniel Gilbridge	Kitty Long	Piraino
Kathy Brandt	Denny & Monica	Wilfredo Lostaunau	Johnathan Rametta
Dave Breen	Golden	Margaret Lynch	Joette Reid
Helen Sally Buff	Tom Goodwin	Utelia Malwitz	Lindsay Remington
Carmen Cabranes	Lucas Graf	Tom & Colette	Butch Remesch
Anne Caestecker	Paige Grieshop	Manente	Thomas Rynne
Michelle Chicoine	Rachel Grieshop	Melissa McDonald	Phyllis Searles
Rod Clair	Helen Haddad	Cathy Milligan	Mark Shields
Jim Clark	Fran Hehn	Terry Milstead	Pennie Singh
Beth Collins	Laura Hehn	Lucille Modica	Todd Singh
William Conklin	Allan Helmbrecht	Linda Morella	Bill Sirnack
Vic Crognale	Madeline Louise	Mary Morgan	Robert Somerville
Janice D'Angelo	Henwood	Haleigh Moss	Betsy Spartz
Sheila DeArmon	Kevin Herman Sr.	Niall Mulkeen	Mike Tolbert
Judy and Rich	Hannah Hopkins	Elizabeth Mulligan	Alston Torres
Deboer	Frank Hunnicutt III	Angeles Murphy	Haley Velez
John Deluca	Suzy Iskander	Maria Magdalena	Julio Velez
Joan Demarco	Cathi Kalberier	Murphy	Kristine Yeager
Henry Diener	Karen Kastl	Carl Muti	Margaret Yeager

## MASS INTENTIONS

### Sunday, April 26

7:30 am	† St Mark Parishioners
9 am	† Charles Williams
11 am	† Patrick Mann
1 pm	The Almanza Franco Family
4:30 pm	† Theresa Prah
5 pm	Brian and Marin Hack

### Monday, April 27

7 am	† James Vaccarelli Jr.
9 am	† The Jalbert Family

### Tuesday, April 28

7 am	† Kay McAfee
9 am	† Deacon Ron Sherwood

### Wednesday, April 29

7 am	† Arlene Milone
	† William Randy Templeton
6:30 pm	Purgatorial Society Mass

### Thursday, April 30

7 am	St. Mark Parishioners
9 am	Jayden Gomez

### Friday, May 1

7 am	John & Lucy Torres
9 am	† Sue McCarron
7 pm	† Esperanza Rodriguez

### Saturday, May 2

9 am	† Deacon Ron Sherwood
5 pm	St. Mark Parishioners

### Sunday, May 3

7:30 am	† Jim Fall
9 am	Suarez Family
11 am	† Anna Veltri
1 pm	† Adela Penafiel
4:30 pm	† Pham, Cong
5 pm	† Jose Mendoza

† Deceased

## READINGS | WEEK OF APRIL 26

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Fourth Sunday of Easter</b> Acts 2:14a, 36-41; Ps 23:1-3a, 3b4, 5, 6; 1 Pt 2:20b-25; Jn 10:1-10
<b>Monday</b>	Acts 11:1-18; Ps 42:2-3; 43:3, 4; Jn 10:11-18
<b>Tuesday</b>	Acts 11:19-26; Ps 87:1b-3, 4-5, 6-7; Jn 10:22-30
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Memorial of Saint Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church</b> Acts 12:24-13:5a; Ps 67:2-3,5,6 and 8; Jn 12:44-50
<b>Thursday</b>	Acts 13:13-25; Ps 89:2-3, 21, 22, 25 and 27; Jn 13:16-20
<b>Friday</b>	Acts 13:26-33; Ps 2:6-7, 8-9, 10-11ab; Jn 14:1-6
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Memorial of Saint Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church</b> Acts 13:44-52; Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4; Jn 14:7-14
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Fifth Sunday of Easter</b> Acts 6:1-7; Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19; 1 Pt 2:4-9; Jn 14:1-12

### Saint Mark Purgatorial Society

Saint Mark offers the opportunity for you to have your loved ones remembered at a monthly Wednesday 6:30 pm Mass for a calendar year. Names enrolled for the year will also be placed on the altar during our Masses in November. To enroll a family member, please contact the Office at 704-948-0231 or complete the form on our website at [stmarknc.org/purgatorial-society](http://stmarknc.org/purgatorial-society).

The following members will be remembered on April 29, 2026.

**JoAnn Nigro**  
**Deacon Michael Langsdorf**

## PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY

**Air Force:** C4C Andrew Bauders; Airman Gregory Burke; Amn Antonio Diaz; Lt. Col. Michael Dragoon; Capt. Stephen Hack; Lt. Col. Douglas Colcain; Capt. Ryan Loyd; Alejandro Martinez; Sgt. James McCormick; SCANG Sgt. John Andrew McCormick; 2nd Lt. Connor Milligan; Airman Chloe Scott; Amn Michael F. Yellico

**Army:** 2nd Lt. Amelia Andretti; Capt. Patrick Camatcho; Capt. Sarah Camatcho; Major Robert Caraccilo; SSgt. Darcy Fisher; Kyle Hawk; PFC. J. Parker Hogan; Capt. John Hughes; Pvt. Chaz Margo; Maj. Daniel McCormick; 2nd Lt. Maria Morell; PV2 Matthew Pressley; Maj. Stephen J. Romeo; SSG Andrew Sales; Andrew Santos; Capt. Ramon Ricardo Tapia; Spl. Forces Nolan Tillotson; Josh Wagner; 1st Lt. Nick Worth; 2nd Lt. Matthew Zagar

**Marines:** LCPL. Richard Breier; 2nd Lt. Drew Brenner; Maj. Matthew Santoli; Cpl. Ben Holden; 1st Lt. Nathanael Rusciollelli

**Navy:** DCFN Matthew J Bixler Jr.; LCDR. Matthew Giannone; SR Chase T. Golden; Lt. Albert Remy, Jr.; LCDR. Jordan Mayo; ENS. Rory Moran; OSSN. Daniel Pressley; LCDR. Jenna Hehn Quist; ENS. Tyler Spear; LCDR. William Vey; CTT2. Zachary Wortham

..and all service members not listed.

# CMGConnect

## Safe Environment Training

Did you know that **ALL clergy, religious, seminarians, employees, and volunteers are required to complete a background check and safe environment abuse prevention and education training?** And once safe environment certified, annual renewal training is required. Find more information about the Diocese of Charlotte's Safe Environment program and register for a CMG Connect account that combines all Safe Environment screening, onboarding and training in one place: [charlottediocese.org/offices/safe-environment/](http://charlottediocese.org/offices/safe-environment/)

Questions? Please contact our parish local Safe Environment coordinator: Lizzy Coleman, [elizabeth.coleman@stmarknc.org](mailto:elizabeth.coleman@stmarknc.org), 704-948-0231, ext.119.

You may also contact the Diocese Safe Environment department at [safeenvironment@rcdoc.org](mailto:safeenvironment@rcdoc.org).

## CPR Classes

When: Sat. May 2, 6 pm;  
Sun. May 3, 8 am, 10 am, 12 pm  
Where: Room 200, Kerin Family Center

We will offer CPR classes in May. This class is "Hands Only" and does not include breathing. AED device training is included.

Classes will be offered after the Saturday 5 pm Mass on May 2 and after the 7:30 am, 9 am, and 11 am Masses on Sunday, May 3.

For more information, please contact KC Shinnars at [nccnms1@yahoo.com](mailto:nccnms1@yahoo.com) or 704-458-8783.

## Widow's Ministry

When: Thursdays, 10-12 (weekly)  
Where: Kerin Family Center, Room 204

We welcome you to join our widow's ministry, a caring and supportive community where widows come together to share experiences, offer encouragement, and support one another.

Through conversation, planning, and community, we walk alongside each other as we navigate grief and begin building new lives filled with hope and purpose.

Contact: Karen Lynn, 405-305-9380, [cwik2016@aol.com](mailto:cwik2016@aol.com)

## Walking with Moms in Need: Diaper and Wipe Drive May 2-10

As Mother's Day approaches on May 10, we have a simple, meaningful way to support mothers in our community.

From May 2-10, St. Mark will host a Diaper and Wipe Drive to benefit local organizations that serve women and children in need. Diapers and wipes are among the most requested and most needed items for young families. Your donation directly helps a mother care for her child.

This effort is part of our ongoing Walking with Moms in Need ministry, where parishioners accompany mothers through both practical support and personal care. Because of your generosity, thousands of diapers, wipes, and other essentials have already been shared with families across our community, reaching partners like Ada Jenkins, Angels & Sparrows, Caterpillar Ministries, Catholic Charities, Hope House, and the Community Pregnancy Center of Lake Norman.

But more than numbers, it is the impact on real lives that matters most. One mother shared, "I feel so touched and blessed."

As we honor mothers this month, consider how you can help. Bring diapers and wipes to the parish May 2-10. Please leave them in the narthex collection bin. **Sizes 3-7 most in need (5-7 are truly most wanted).**

Upcoming Opportunities:

- May 2-10: Diaper and Wipe Drive
- Aug 15-16: Ministry Fair
- Sept 12-20: Diaper Drive
- Oct 3: Walk for Life
- Oct 10-12: Coat, Blanket, Toy, and Baby Supply Drive

To get involved or learn more: [walkingwithmoms@stmarknc.org](mailto:walkingwithmoms@stmarknc.org)

Together, we can make sure every mother knows she is not alone.



**Walking with Moms in Need**

**DIAPER & BABY WIPE COLLECTION**  
**May 2-10**

As Mother's Day approaches on May 10, help support mothers in our community. Diapers and wipes are among the most needed items for young families. Your donation provides real, immediate help to a mother caring for her child.

Donations benefit local organizations serving women and children in need.

**Leave donations in the Narthex Bin.**

*A simple gift.  
A meaningful difference.*

# STEWARDSHIP

## Stewardship Spotlight: Social Committee

Hospitality is known to be an important mark of a stewardship parish. This week's spotlight is on our Social Committee, a group that embraces hospitality and helps make St. Mark welcoming by setting up, serving food and drinks, and cleaning up at a variety of parish events throughout the year. This committee's work is an excellent example of both Serving One Another and Connecting in Faith.

The Social Committee is made up of a group of amazing men, women, and teen volunteers who serve at social functions sponsored by the Church. Some of the events where they serve include Donut Sunday, First Holy Communion receptions, Confirmation receptions, St. Mark Feast Day, Meet and Greet events for new parishioners, the annual Ministry Fair, SeptemberFest, and parties for the clergy. Committee members sign up for the events and times that work best with their schedules, so this is a great way to get involved without needing to commit to weekly or monthly meetings.

Please note that we are committed to protecting children and vulnerable adults. In compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, St. Mark follows the established policies and procedures for volunteers in the Diocese of Charlotte. New volunteers who are 18 or older please visit [stmarknc.org/SAFE](http://stmarknc.org/SAFE) and follow the steps listed to become eligible to volunteer.

The Social Committee is always looking for new members. Social Committee volunteers love our church, welcome new parishioners, and share friendly smiles and conversations. Some of these volunteers have been serving on the committee for over 10 years! Please contact Social Committee chair, Debbie Fishbaugh at [dafishbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:dafishbaugh@gmail.com) or 704-906-2008 to learn more or to join this fun group!



## Coming Up at St. Mark

### Sat/Sun May 2-10

Walking with Moms Diaper Drive

### Sunday, May 10

Mother's Day May Crowning

### Saturday, May 23

Diaconate Ordination

### Sunday, May 24

Pentecost

### Saturday, May 30

Priest Ordination

### Saturday, June 6

Men's Evening of Reflection

### June 8-11 & July 20-23

Preschool Camp

### Saturday, June 13

Catholic Charities Houseware Collection

### Sunday, June 21

Father's Day Donuts for Dad

### June 22-26

Vacation Bible School

### June 26-28

St. Mark Marriage Retreat

## Ongoing Food Bin and Gift Card Collection

Please remember to bring non-perishable food donations with you any time you come to the church. We have a permanent food collection bin inside the entrance of the church. Volunteers take this food every week to various food pantries in Huntersville and Charlotte.

**Grocery gift cards (\$25) can also be left in the parish office.**

**Please do not leave anything else in the Narthex Bin unless there is a specific collection, such as the upcoming diaper and wipe drive. It is a hardship to the volunteers to sort through clothing and household items.** We do not use these items and do not have a way to get them to people in need.

Thank you!

## Mother's Day Spiritual Bouquet

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 10. This Mother's Day, we invite you to honor the mothers in your life in a truly meaningful way. Through our Spiritual Bouquet, their names will be remembered in prayer at all Mother's Day Masses on Sunday, May 10.

Whether living or deceased, each mother entrusted to these prayers is lifted up in thanksgiving, love, and hope before the Lord.

You may stop by the Narthex to fill out a card and make your offering, or submit your intentions online at [stmarknc.org/Mothers-Day](http://stmarknc.org/Mothers-Day).

A simple gift. A lasting prayer.



## Volunteer Opportunity: Food Pantry Parking Attendant

*When: Thursdays, 9 am-12 pm*

*Where: Nourish Up Food Pantry, Huntersville United Methodist Church, Stumptown Rd.*

Join us in making a difference! Nourish Up is looking for a friendly, dependable volunteer to help manage their parking lot on Thursday mornings.

What you'll do:

- Welcome clients with a smile and assign arrival numbers
- Keep the flow of guests moving smoothly into the building
- Assist with loading groceries into cars

Your help ensures families receive food with dignity and care. If you enjoy meeting people and lending a hand, this is the perfect role for you!

Contact: Lauren Steele,  
[laurenfloyd@verizon.net](mailto:laurenfloyd@verizon.net)

# MARRIAGE MINISTRY



## SPRING *Date Night* Challenge

- One Date. Once a Month. Three Months.
- March • April • May
- Go on one intentional date each month
- Snap a photo together and submit it
- Each date = entry to win prizes
- **Our goal:** Build a culture of intentional relationship growth

### Marriage Ministry at St. Mark *There's Still Time for the Date Night Challenge*

Take one intentional date each month through May, with simple conversation prompts to help grow friendship, communication, and connection.

Marriage is a vocation and a path to holiness. Strong marriages are built over time through presence, gratitude, sacrifice, and shared life. At St. Mark, we believe strong families build a strong parish, and what happens at home shapes the life of the Church.

As Christine Wisdom shared, "Healthy marriages don't just benefit couples. They shape the culture of a parish and help create a place where people feel known, supported, and not alone."

This isn't about fixing problems. It's about strengthening what you already have.

To join, sign up at [stmarknc.org/communio](http://stmarknc.org/communio) or scan the QR code to the left. Take one small, intentional step, because when marriages are strong, the whole Church is stronger.



### Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience

*It's not too late to make a resolution to enrich your marriage!*

The Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience helps couples to better communicate in all areas of their relationship.

Make a good marriage a great one by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience: May 1-3, 2026, in Raleigh, May 29-31, 2026 in Hickory, or Nov. 6-8, 2026 in Emerald Isle. Early sign-up is recommended.

For more information, visit our website at [NCMarriageDiscovery.org](http://NCMarriageDiscovery.org) or contact us: [applications@NCMarriageDiscovery.org](mailto:applications@NCMarriageDiscovery.org) or 919-740-7435.

### Retrouvaille Marriage Weekend

*Does Your Marriage Need Help?*

We recommend the Retrouvaille. Not only are there retreats, but their website as valuable resources and support.

This is a welcoming and loving space for couples who have been living with the misery of a failing marriage.

Retrouvaille offers hope: hope that it is not too late, hope for a different and better marriage. Retrouvaille helps couples to show each other mercy through the opportunities it provides to listen, to forgive, to be reconciled and to move into their futures believing that God loves them and, with His help and their efforts, their marriages can be healed and restored.

For over 48 years, Retrouvaille has provided help for marriage problems/difficulties/ crises.

For more information about an upcoming couples Retrouvaille Weekend program in Charlotte area on May 1-3, email [billlynfolsom@gmail.com](mailto:billlynfolsom@gmail.com) (3 L's in a row), call 727-343-6701 or visit [HelpOurMarriage.com](http://HelpOurMarriage.com).



May 1-3, 2026

Friday 6-8p / Saturday 8a-7p / Sunday 8a-4p  
Belmont Abbey College - Belmont, NC

The Domestic Church Marriage Retreat is for Catholic married couples who desire to grow in holiness together. It provides a renewed experience of marital spirituality allowing us to encounter Christ and grow toward sainthood. Come, receive the Good News, and stir up the grace of your Sacrament!

contact: [region14@domesticchurchfamilies.com](mailto:region14@domesticchurchfamilies.com).

Nursing babies are welcome!  
The \$150.00 registration fee includes meals and materials.  
There are limited scholarships available.

Register





# The Fourth Sunday

## GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is celebrated as Good Shepherd Sunday and the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. In today's Gospel from St. John, Jesus speaks of himself as the Good Shepherd, the one who knows his sheep and lays down his life for them.

The Church gives us this day each year to pray in a particular way for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

On the cover this week, we highlight one of our own, Fr. Christopher Angermeyer, who was ordained in June 2025. The Good Shepherd is not only an image from Scripture. It is lived out in the life of the Church today through the ministry of our priests.

When a man becomes a priest, he sets aside his own plans and follows Christ in a life of service to the Church and her people. Day by day, our priests preach the Gospel, celebrate the sacraments, and walk with us through the ordinary and extraordinary moments of life.

Below are photos from this year's Holy Thursday Mass, when our priests, deacons and seminarians gathered together at the altar. After Mass, they remained to strip and clean it, a quiet act of service at the end of a very full day.

It is not often that we see them all in one place. Most days, they are spread out across the parish and throughout the diocese. But during Holy Week, they were here together, leading us through the most sacred days of the year.

We are grateful for our priests, deacons, and seminarians, and for all who serve. Please continue to pray for an increase in vocations and for those who may be called to say yes.



*Jesus, Good Shepherd, you call each by name.  
Raise up priests, deacons, and consecrated religious,  
and give them the grace to follow you.*



Your donation to the DSA directly supports the formation of men to the Holy Orders. Thank you for your donation.

# OF EASTER

# Alleluia

## ABOUT THE GOOD SHEPHERD WINDOW

On May 15, 2008, my husband Jim and I lost our middle child, Joshua, to an accident while home for a short break from serving as an army infantry soldier in the Iraq war. Joshua was 22. The devastation from losing him at such a young age was more than my husband and I could bear. We felt as if our hearts were ripped out and that we would never be able to heal and move forward with our lives.

Our other two children, Hank and Rachael, no less felt the same. One minute Josh was there, and the next minute, he was gone. I have learned to live with a "little gray cloud" that hovers over my head every day of my life now. Sometimes it just hovers, while other times it bursts and pours down on me in a flood of deep and desperate emotions. At these moments, I think of the stained glass and the little lost lamb depicted as "my Joshua" being held close in the arms of Christ.

When the new Saint Mark Catholic Church was being built, my husband and I went to Monsignor Bellow and asked him specifically if we could do something in honor of our son for the church. We asked if it would be possible to memorialize the round stained glass over the altar for Joshua. Father Richard looked me straight in the face and responded, "I have got an idea better than that, and I understand you're an art teacher, so why don't you just design it yourself?"



I was delighted to be given such a task. We asked our family and friends to make memorials to Saint Mark for the stained glass over the altar in honor of Joshua. With God's help we were able to raise enough funds to supplement our initial gift and create the large stained glass window up over the altar, a memorial to my beautiful son, Joshua Manning Carter.

Father Richard and I discussed the theme for the window. He was quick to let me know of his love for the "Good Shepherd." That is all it took. I worked on the design during my summer break from teaching art at Hopewell High School as I also have always been comforted by thinking of the Good Shepherd. I wanted to paint Christ holding a little lamb. It brought comfort to me to think of the little lamb as my Josh. Not long after my painting was made into the large stained glass window, it was installed up over the altar in this beautiful new Saint Mark Church. My husband and I were there with everyone else on the stained glass window committee to see the stained glass being installed.

Finally, my Josh is at rest and my family draws a most amazing comfort knowing that Joshua is high above the altar looking down on us all. My Lord gave me an artistic gift that I never realized would help me create a long and lasting memorial for a soldier whose life ended way too soon.' — by Erin Carter, artist

## PRACTICING THE VIRTUES: CHARITY

On the Fourth Sunday of Easter, the Church reflects on Jesus as the Good Shepherd. He knows His sheep, calls them by name, and lays down His life for them.

The virtue we consider this week is charity.

As Fr. John often reminds us, growth in the spiritual life often happens when God transforms a vice into a virtue. The vice opposed to charity is selfishness. When we turn inward, we can begin to see others in terms of what they offer us rather than who they are.

Christ shows us a different way. The Good Shepherd does not act out of convenience or self-interest. He gives of Himself freely, seeking out, guiding, and protecting those entrusted to Him.

In our church, the word Charity appears above the image of St. Katharine Drexel, beneath the words of Christ's command. Her life is a witness to what charity looks like when it is lived fully: generous, sacrificial, and attentive to those in need.

On this World Day of Prayer for Vocations, we also pray for those called to reflect the love of the Good Shepherd in a particular way, and for the courage to respond to God's call in our own lives.

As we continue through the Easter season, the virtue of charity invites us to reflect the love of Christ in our daily lives — in small acts of patience, generosity, and care for one another. In this way, we begin to love not as the world loves, but as Christ loves us.

*In our church, the image of the Good Shepherd appears above the altar, a quiet reminder of Christ who knows His sheep and carries them with care.*



# YOUTH MINISTRY



## Community School of Davidson Pro-Life Club Thank You, St. Mark!

A heartfelt thank you to the parishioners of St. Mark for your incredible support of this year's Diaper and Wipe Drive.

Led by parishioner Annie Morell, a sophomore at Community School of Davidson, and alongside fellow parishioner Lelia McQuaid, this student-led effort collected an amazing 18,500 diapers and 26,000 wipes to support mothers and babies in need.

These donations will go directly to local organizations serving families in our community, offering real help where it is needed most.

Annie, Lelia, and the entire Pro-Life Club are deeply grateful for your support, encouragement, and witness. Thank you for coming alongside them and helping bring this effort to life.

*Before I formed  
you in the womb,  
I knew you.  
— Jeremiah 1:5*



## Vacation Bible School Summer 2026!

**Space is Limited: Register Today!**

**June 22-26, 9 am-12:30 pm**

**K-5th Grade Register to Attend**

**6-12th Grade Can Volunteer**

Register and info: [www.stmarknc.org/VBS](http://www.stmarknc.org/VBS)

For volunteer information, contact:

Maddie Torres: [maddie.torres@stmarknc.org](mailto:maddie.torres@stmarknc.org)

Sharon Torczynski: [sharon.torczynski@stmarknc.org](mailto:sharon.torczynski@stmarknc.org)



# HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY


St. Mark High School Ministry

*The*  
**Road to Emmaus**  
*Life Night Series*

**All high schoolers are invited to come learn how to celebrate Easter like the Apostles did!**

**April 19, 26 and May 3, 10, 17**

**Each Life Night will run from 6-8pm in the Parish Hall**



## High School Ministry Summer 2026 Registration

*Give your teen something meaningful this summer.*

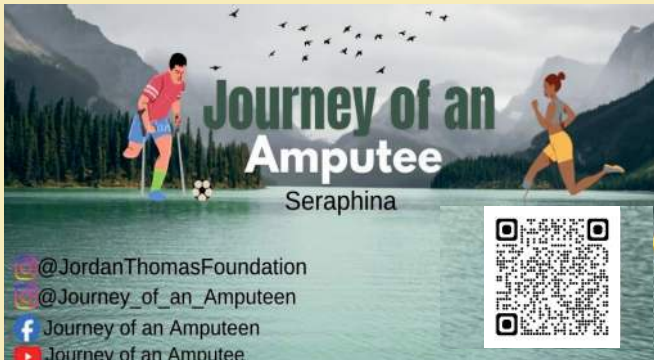
Registration is now open for two powerful opportunities through St. Mark High School Ministry: the Steubenville **Conference and Life Teen Camp Covecrest**. Both are designed to help teens step away from the noise of daily life and encounter Christ in a real and lasting way.

**Steubenville Conference:** The Steubenville Conference is a three-day Catholic youth conference that brings together thousands of teens from across the country. Through dynamic speakers, powerful worship, Eucharistic Adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and time in small groups, teens are invited into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Many describe it as a turning point in their faith, where what they've learned becomes personal and real.

**Life Teen Camp Covecrest:** Camp Covecrest is a weeklong Catholic summer camp set in the mountains of Northern Georgia. It offers a unique balance of prayer and adventure. Each day includes Mass, opportunities for Confession, engaging talks, and small group time, along with outdoor activities like ropes courses, sports, and even whitewater rafting. Teens grow in their faith while also building strong friendships within their parish community.

Both experiences are open to rising freshmen through graduating seniors. Space is limited and spots are filled on a first come, first served basis. For more information or to register, contact [augustine.free@stmarknc.org](mailto:augustine.free@stmarknc.org).

*Come be part of a summer that can truly make a lasting difference.*



**Journey of an Amputee**  
Seraphina

@JordanThomasFoundation  
@Journey\_of\_an\_Amputee  
Journey of an Amputee  
Journey of an Amputee

Hi, my name is Seraphina, and I have been a parishioner at St. Mark for 10 years. This church has been more than a place of worship it has been a home filled with faith, love, and people who have supported my family throughout my journey.

I was born in China with Proximal Femoral Focal Deficiency (PFFD), a condition that prevented my leg from developing normally. When I was seven, I joined my forever family in the United States, and together we made the difficult decision for amputation so I could learn to walk.

Today, I love to bike, run, swim, and dance. I have accomplished so much, and there is still more to achieve. If it weren't for the Jordan Thomas Foundation, I would not be where I am today.

Please help me give back so kids like me can achieve their dreams. Even \$1 makes a difference. **Please donate using the QR code above.** Thank you.



**saint mark**  
preschool

## Summer Preschool Camp

Looking for a joyful way for your child to grow in faith and have some summer fun? St. Mark Preschool invites children to join us for two special weeks of summer camp filled with faith, friendship, and hands-on activities.

This year's themes will explore the Fruits of the Spirit and the lives of the Saints. Each week will include faith-filled lessons, crafts, games, and plenty of summer fun.

Cost: \$130 per week (includes a camp t-shirt). Full payment is due at the time of registration.

Camp Weeks

Week 1: *Fruits of the Spirit, June 8-11*

Week 2: *Saints, July 20-23*

To register, complete the form at [www.stmarknc.org/preschool](http://www.stmarknc.org/preschool) and bring it with payment to the Welcome Desk. If your child does not currently attend St. Mark Preschool, please also complete the Authorization for Release Form and Emergency Contact Form and email them or bring them to the Welcome Desk in the Family Center.



**Quo Vadis Days** is a vocations discernment camp for young men (ages 15-19) held at Belmont Abbey College.

Its goal is to challenge young men to ask the fundamental question “quo vadis” or “where are you going?”, while equipping them with the tools and opportunity to discern God’s will for their life.

Quo Vadis Days attempts to strike a balance between the activity of a summer camp and the quiet of a retreat. Each day of the five-day camp is structured to include Holy Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours, Eucharistic Adoration, time for personal reflection, and interaction with priests and seminarians. The program features talks by local priests, seminarians and others on the vocations to the priesthood, marriage and fatherhood. There is also time devoted to activities, games and fellowship.

**Duc In Altum** is a five-day event – part summer camp, part retreat – designed for young women in the diocese ages 16-19 to explore their relationship with Our Lord and gain a deeper understanding of their present vocation as daughter – Daughter of God, Daughter of Mary, and Daughter of the Church – through talks and time spent in prayer and worship.



**Talitha Koum** is a daylong retreat at Belmont Abbey College for young women ages 12-15 to grow in their relationship with Jesus and Mary and to spend time having fun with each other. Think of it as a “mini” Duc in Altum. Its name is inspired by Our Lord’s words to Jairus’ daughter: “Little girl, I say to you, arise!” (Mark 5:41 RSVCE). It is the hope that those who attend will be inspired by Our Lady’s desire to do the will of God and will open their hearts to do the same.

Learn more at [charlottediocese.org/vocations/woman-religious/duc-in-altum/](http://charlottediocese.org/vocations/woman-religious/duc-in-altum/)



# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

## LAMB Clay Shoot Fundraiser

When: Friday, September 25, 2026 | Arrival: 8:00 am / End time: 4:00 pm

Where: Four Branches Sporting Preserve, 425 Poplar Hill Church Road, Polkton, NC

The LAMB Foundation of NC, Inc., a recognized 501(c)(3) charity operated by the Knights of Columbus This event supports individuals with intellectual disabilities in our local community — our “Least Among My Brethren.”



### Event Details:

- **Morning Session:** Begins at 8:00 AM with check-in, registration, and breakfast. Teams are assigned to starting stations on the one-mile course. An opening speech and safety briefing will precede the 9:00 AM start.
- **Afternoon Session:** Starts at 11:30 AM with check-in, registration, and lunch. After the safety briefing, the shooting competition begins at 1:30 PM. During lunch, participants will hear from some of the charities benefiting from the fundraiser.
- Prizes are awarded to the top teams.

Teams rotate through 15 stations shooting clay targets and tracking their scores. Free shotgun loans are available with golf carts provided for transport between stations. All skill levels are welcome! Beginners will be teamed with experienced shooters.

Registration: Scan the QR code above to register and pay the \$150 entry fee.

More information: Mike Garcia, [garciam25@gmail.com](mailto:garciam25@gmail.com) or Eddie Ippolito, [edmund.ippolito@gmail.com](mailto:edmund.ippolito@gmail.com)



## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

### Danube River Cruise 2027 Information Session

When: May 17

Where: Huntersville Professional Building, 11330 Vanstory Drive and Virtually on Zoom

Join our meeting to get information on our amazing 2027 Danube River Cruise with Prague Pilgrimage! We will go through the itinerary, ship layout, answer your questions, and you can meet your fellow Pilgrims!

Doors and Zoom link will open at 1:30 pm and the meeting will begin at 2 pm.

There will be light refreshments as well for those in person!

Please RSVP at this link or scan the QR code:

[tinyurl.com/4f6d2kh4](https://tinyurl.com/4f6d2kh4)

More Information:

[WoodardLuxuryTravel.com/events-trips](https://WoodardLuxuryTravel.com/events-trips)

Contact:

Donny Woodard, 980-483-3620,

[dwoodard@WoodardLuxuryTravel.com](mailto:dwoodard@WoodardLuxuryTravel.com)



### El Camino de Santiago Pilgrimage 2026

When: Oct 27 – Nov 7 2026

Where: Spain

Hello Friends! Have you ever thought of doing a Camino walk, but didn't know where to begin? One of the most famous and sacred walking pilgrimage in the world. For over 1,000 years, millions have journeyed these ancient paths — and countless more have dreamed of it...

Well...You're warmly invited to join us on our 11 Day Camino De Santiago Pilgrimage beginning October 27, 2026! Feel free to share this invitation with your family and friends — all are welcome for this beautiful experience! We can't wait for you to join us on this exciting journey! Find the full itinerary with the QR link or website below:

More Information: [WoodardLuxuryTravel.com/events-trips](https://WoodardLuxuryTravel.com/events-trips)

Contact: Donny Woodard, 980-483-3620, [dwoodard@WoodardLuxuryTravel.com](mailto:dwoodard@WoodardLuxuryTravel.com)



Save the Date! Annual Parish Family Social

# SeptemberFest 2026

September 26, 6-9 pm

Food Trucks  
Music  
Inflatable  
Bounce Houses.  
Drinks.  
Cupcake Walk.  
Ice Cream.  
Primal Brewery.  
Game Truck.  
BINGO.  
Crafts.



## Rooted: A Women's Retreat

When: June 12; 5-8 pm;  
June 13; 8 am-4 pm

Where: Parish Hall

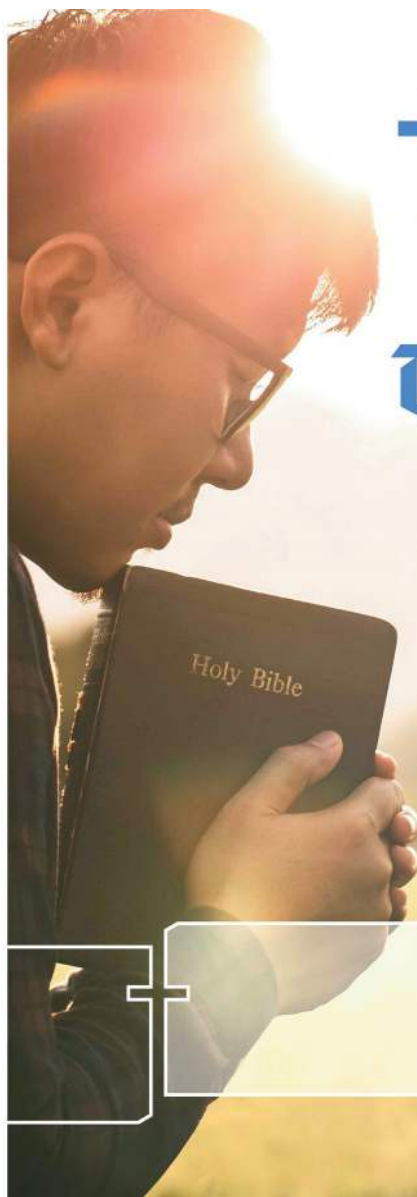
Rooted facilitates women finding freedom, restoration, and community while nourishing their souls with talks from our Catholic speakers who will inspire you to open your heart to receive spiritual nourishment.

We will begin Friday evening with heavy hors d'oeuvres and fellowship. On Saturday, breakfast and lunch will be provided, and the day will include Mass, Confession, Adoration, prayer, meaningful talks, and time for fellowship.

Our retreat is for every woman, any age, and in any season of life.

To Register:

[healedandrestored.regfox.com/rooted-womens-retreat-](http://healedandrestored.regfox.com/rooted-womens-retreat-)



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Enter your parish zip code or parish name  
Enter your name and email

FROM THE AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE



# Saint Mark Parish Directory

stmarknc.org | 14740 Stumptown Rd, Huntersville NC 28078  
Parish Office | Mon-Thur 9 am-7:30 pm, Fri 9 am-4:30 pm  
Sun 8:15 am-12:15 pm | Phone: 704-948-0231

## Pastor

Very Rev. John T. Putnam, JV

## Parochial Vicars

Rev. Kevin Martinez  
Rev. Christopher Angermeyer  
Rev. Aaron Huber (in residence)

## Deacons

Rev. Mr. Thomas Martin  
Rev. Mr. Richard McCarron  
Rev. Mr. Thomas McGahey  
Rev. Mr. Tom McMahon  
Rev. Mr. Louis Pais  
Rev. Mr. Ramon Tapia

## Director of Parish Operations

Scott Bruno  
scott.bruno@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 118

## Sacristan

Sr. Mary Agnes  
sacristan@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 211

## Liturg Coordinator/Office Manager

Emily Bixler  
emily.bixler@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 102

## Annulments, OCIA

Rev. Mr. Rich McCarron  
deacon.rich@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 113

## Sacrament Admin/Adoration

Donna Fodale  
Donna.fodale@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 104

## Director of Sacred Music

Manuel Mora  
manuel.mora@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 130

## Director of Finance

Richard Cataldo  
richard.cataldo@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 116

## Hispanic Ministry Coordinator

Emilio Gómez  
emilio.gomez@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 117

## Stewardship Coordinator

Karen Donahue  
karen.donahue@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 136

## Calendar Management

Sue Bruce  
sue.bruce@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 123

## Public Relations Coordinator

Amy Burger  
amy.burger@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 155

## Director of Marriage and Family Life

Christine Wisdom  
christine.wisdom@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231

## Faith Formation Coordinator

Maddie Torres  
elementary@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 124

## Faith Formation Admin Asst

Sharon Torczynski  
sharon.torczynski@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 103

## Middle School Youth Ministry Coordinator

Olivia DiGiovanni  
olivia.digiovanni@stmarknc.org  
704-948-1306, Ext. 105

## High School Youth Ministry Coordinator

Augustine Free  
augustine.free@stmarknc.org  
704-948-0231, Ext. 122

## Director of Preschool

Amanda Rametta  
amanda.rametta@stmarknc.org  
704-948-8015

## Tribunal Advocate

Rod Brostrom  
rnbrostrom@rcdoc.org

## Bulletin Team

bulletin@stmarknc.org

## Mass Schedule

Mon/Tue/Thu: 7, 9 am  
Wed: 7 am, 6:30 pm  
Fri: 7, 9 am  
7 pm (Spanish)  
Sat: 9 am, 5 pm Vigil  
Sun: 7:30, 9, 11 am, 1 pm (Español), 5 pm

All Masses may be watched live: [stmarknc.org/livestream](http://stmarknc.org/livestream)  
Please use Online Giving or mail in your offertory  
[stmarknc.org/Online-Giving](http://stmarknc.org/Online-Giving)

Please do not attend Mass if you are sick, have a fever or are in a high-risk group.

## Confessions

Confessions are held 45 minutes prior to the start of Mass for a 30 minute duration.

In addition, Wednesday: 6 pm – 7:15 pm and Saturday: 3 pm – 5 pm

## Rosary in the Church

Tue: 7–7:30 pm  
Wed: Immediately preceding 6:30 pm Mass  
Sat: Immediately preceding 5 pm Mass  
Sun: Immediately preceding 7:30 am Mass

## Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration

Available in the Monsignor Bellow Adoration Chapel in the Family Center. See [stmarknc.org/adoration](http://stmarknc.org/adoration) for complete details.

## Hospitalization

If you or your loved one are in an area hospital, call the Parish Office to reach one of the Priests. The Priests offer Confession, bring the Holy Eucharist to you or administer the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

## Baptisms & Weddings

The use of the Church for Baptisms, Weddings and other Sacramental events is available to active parishioners. Contact the Parish Office. (Please note that weddings and baptisms cannot be celebrated during Lent.)

## Financial Counseling

Complimentary and confidential services are available to provide financial literacy training, personal financial coaching and/or advocacy support for you and your family. Contact the Parish Office.

## Carolina Catholic Corner Gift & Book Store

Open daily in the Family Center

## Coffee & Conversation Social Gathering

Tuesdays, 9:30 am, Parish Hall.

## Cursillo

Visit [www.CharlotteCursillo.com](http://www.CharlotteCursillo.com) for information on upcoming retreat weekends, ultreyas and group reunions.

## Parishioner Assistance

### Financial:

St. Vincent De Paul Society:  
[Emily.Bixler@stmarknc.org](mailto:Emily.Bixler@stmarknc.org)

### Life Crisis: Stephen Ministry

[stmarknc.org/stephen-ministry](http://stmarknc.org/stephen-ministry)

### Food Insecurity:

Parish Office  
[stmarknc.org/assistance](http://stmarknc.org/assistance) or  
[Emily.Bixler@stmarknc.org](mailto:Emily.Bixler@stmarknc.org) or  
704-948-0231, Ext. 102

### Al-Anon

Ellen | 704-907-8555

### Alcoholics Anonymous

Tom | 704-604-7739

### Alateen program

Paul G. | 704-641-0654

### Divorce Support Group

For anyone going through separation and/or divorce. Meetings are held Monday evenings at 7 pm in Room 204. If parish offices are closed, meetings are held at Lowe's Foods, exit 23.

Contact: [divorce.support@stmarknc.org](mailto:divorce.support@stmarknc.org)

### Natural Family Planning

Joe and Kathy Hack; Sympto-Thermal Method;

704-548-1834; [hackhouse@bellsouth.net](mailto:hackhouse@bellsouth.net); [ccli.org](http://ccli.org)

Elisabeth Laskowski; Creighton Model;

[creightonmodel@gmail.com](mailto:creightonmodel@gmail.com); 484-332-9084

### Crisis Pregnancy Help

Community Pregnancy Center of Lake Norman:

704-727-0535

Catholic Charities: 704-370-3262; Birthright:

704-975-8572; Post Abortion: 1-800-5-WE CARE

Poor prenatal diagnosis? You're not alone. There is help.  
[benotafraid.net](http://benotafraid.net)

Taken Abortion Pill? It may not be too late: Abortion Pill

Reversal 877-558-0333 or [abortionpillreversal.com](http://abortionpillreversal.com)

# DEL PASTOR



Las lecturas de hoy en este cuarto domingo de Pascua nos ofrecen un vistazo al corazón de nuestro amoroso Salvador. Él es el Buen Pastor y podemos confiar en Él con confianza mientras vivimos la vida de mayordomía.

Esta entrañable imagen de Jesús como nuestro pastor, y Su amor personal por cada uno de nosotros, se describe en nuestro pasaje del Evangelio de Juan, a través de las palabras del propio Jesús. Aquí leemos la descripción que Jesús hizo de sí mismo como el "Buen Pastor". Él dice de sí mismo: "Las ovejas oyen su voz, como el pastor llama a sus propias ovejas por su nombre y las conduce fuera. Cuando ha expulsado a todos los suyos, camina delante de ellos y las ovejas le siguen, porque reconocen su voz."

Este aspecto del amor tierno y personal de nuestro Señor por cada uno de nosotros es una razón convincente para abrazar el modo de vida de la mayordomía — al ofrecerle nuestro tiempo, talento y tesoro, podemos expresarle nuestra gratitud por el amor incomprensible que Él tiene por nosotros.

Abrazar este modo de vida ciertamente requiere confianza por nuestra parte. Pero Cristo ha demostrado ser digno de nuestra confianza. Él "llevaba nuestros pecados en Su cuerpo." Se llama nuestro pastor y se ofrece como guardián de nuestras almas. No ha ocultado nada de sí mismo ni de su bondad de nosotros. Nunca nos pediría nada que pudiera hacernos daño. Nos dice: "Vine para que [vosotros] tuvierais vida y la tengáis en abundancia."

Esta temporada de Pascua, decidamos confiarle a nosotros mismos y nuestras vidas con gratitud. © Consultores de Gestión Católica, 2026

## Reflexión pastoral

Mientras continuamos nuestro tratamiento de los fundamentos de la fe y damos seguimiento a la discusión de la semana pasada sobre la convivencia, esta semana quería centrarme en la **Planificación Familiar Natural**, que algunas personas malinterpretan como **anticonceptivos católicos**.

Planificación familiar natural: El camino católico hacia la paternidad responsable

La Planificación Familiar Natural (PFN) consiste en métodos morales y científicos que ayudan a las parejas casadas a lograr o posponer el embarazo observando los signos naturales de fertilidad de la mujer—como el moco cervical y la temperatura basal del cuerpo—sin medicamentos, dispositivos ni cirugía.

La Iglesia Católica apoya plenamente la PFN porque respeta el diseño de Dios para el amor matrimonial, que es tanto **\*\*unitivo\*\*** (vínculo) como **\*\*procreativo\*\*** (abierto a la vida). A diferencia de la anticoncepción artificial, que bloquea deliberadamente la fertilidad, la NFP actúa con los ciclos naturales del cuerpo mediante la abstinencia periódica cuando es necesario.

## Enseñanza de la Iglesia

En *Humanae Vitae* (1968), el Papa San Pablo VI enseñó que las parejas pueden aprovechar los periodos de infertilidad por razones serias, siempre estando abiertos al don de los hijos. El *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica* (2370) afirma que los métodos basados en la autoobservación y los periodos infértiles son moralmente aceptables porque respetan la dignidad de los cónyuges y promueven la libertad auténtica.

La PFN no es "anticonceptivos católicos". La diferencia está en el corazón: la anticoncepción rechaza la fertilidad en el propio acto; La EFN implica discernimiento responsable y continencia periódica cuando hay razones justas (de salud, económicas, emocionales u otras circunstancias proporcionales). Las parejas deberían discernir en oración juntos, idealmente con un sacerdote o un director espiritual, evitando una mentalidad egoísta de "anticonceptivos".

La PFN también puede ayudar a las parejas a concebir identificando la ventana fértil.

## Beneficios para parejas católicas

- Fortalecen el matrimonio mediante una mejor comunicación, respeto mutuo y sacrificio compartido.
- Respetan el cuerpo y los ritmos naturales de la mujer.
- Altamente efectivo cuando se aprende y se utiliza correctamente.
- Apoya el seguimiento de la salud reproductiva.

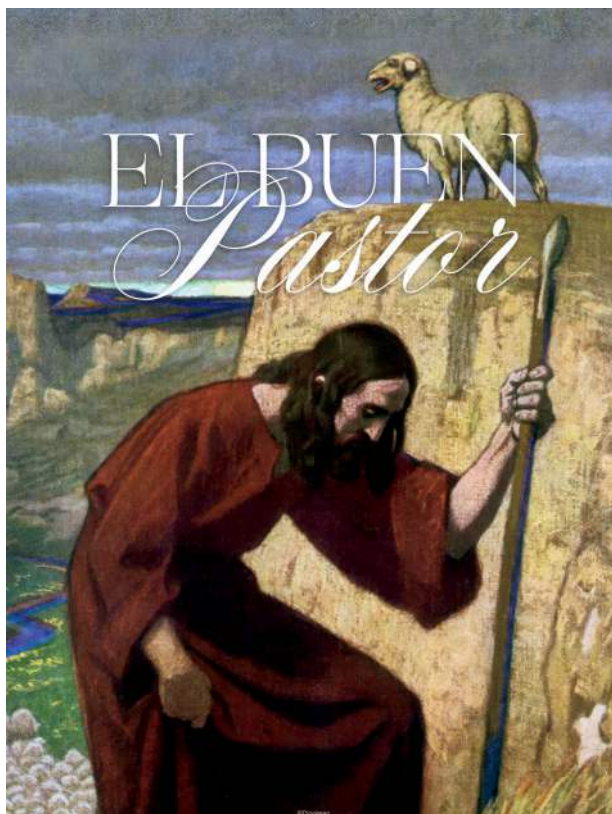
Entre los métodos aprobados por Church se encuentran el **Método Sympto-Térmico**, el **Modelo Creighton** y el **Método Marquette**. Se recomienda encarecidamente la enseñanza de un profesor certificado.

## Una invitación parroquial

Como Iglesia doméstica, las familias prosperan cuando viven el plan de Dios para el amor y la vida. Si te estás preparando para casarte, eres recién casado o buscas crecer en esta área, contacta con la Oficina de Vida Familiar diocesana o visita la página de Planificación Familiar Natural de la USCCB para obtener

recursos y clases locales.

¡Que el Señor bendiga a todas las parejas casadas mientras cooperan con Dios en la hermosa vocación de la paternidad responsable!






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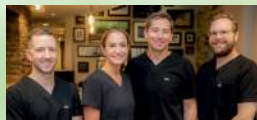
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