

# The Little Flower Messenger

Year C – FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Welcome to our Parish Community of St. Theresa of Lisieux

The Presbytery, High Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet, CM24 8LQ

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## Gospel: John 10:27-30

*'I give eternal life to the sheep that belong to me.'*

### Mass book (P. 268)

#### 1st Reading:

*Acts 13:14, 43-52*

#### Psalms 99:1-3:

*We are his people, the sheep of his flock.*

#### 2nd Reading:

*Apocalypse 7:9, 14b-17*

#### Gospel Acclamation:

*Alleluia, alleluia! I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my own sheep and my own know me. Alleluia!*

#### Communion Antiphon: (P. 270)

*The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for his sheep and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.*

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## This Week's Good News

Dear Friends,

The fourth Sunday of Easter, known as Good Shepherd Sunday, is also the “World Day of Prayer for Vocations.” Each year on this Sunday, we reflect on the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd who devotedly and kindly takes care of his flock. The title “pastor” means shepherd. A shepherd leads, feeds, nurtures, comforts, corrects, and protects his flock—responsibilities that belong to all Church leaders, parents, civil leaders, and all who oversee others.

Today's first reading describes how Paul and Barnabas opted to listen to the voice of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and follow him, and how, like their Master, they were rebuffed and rejected when they tried to share the good news of salvation. It also suggests that the sympathy of the early Christians for the Gentiles caused a rupture with Judaism. The second reading, taken from the book of Revelation, depicts Jesus as both the glorified Lamb and the Shepherd. John's vision encourages his readers with the assurance that every person who has ever followed Christ and led others to him will share everlasting life with him. The Gospel text offers us both comfort and a great challenge. The comforting message is that no one can snatch the sheep out of his Father's hands. The challenge is that pastors should be good shepherds to those entrusted to their care, while their flock of lay people should respond by being good sheep.

Introducing himself as the Good Shepherd of his flock, Jesus makes three claims in today's Gospel. He knows his sheep and his sheep hear his voice: Just as the Palestinian shepherds knew each sheep of their flock by name, and the sheep knew their shepherd and his voice, so Jesus knows each one of us, our needs, our merits, and our faults. He loves us as we are, with all our limitations, and he expects us to return his love by keeping his words. He speaks to us at every Mass, through the Bible, through our pastors, through our parents, through our friends, and through the events of our lives. “God whispers to



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us in our pleasures, He speaks to us in our consciences, and He shouts to us in our pain!” (C.S. Lewis). He gives eternal life to us, his sheep by receiving us into his sheepfold and giving us Faith through Baptism, and then he strengthens that Faith in Confirmation. He supplies food for our souls in the Holy Eucharist and in the Divine words of the Holy Bible. He makes our society holy by the Sacraments of Matrimony and the priesthood (Holy Orders). He protects his sheep by placing them in the loving hands of his Almighty Father. Without him to guide us and protect us, we are an easy prey for the spiritual wolves of this world, including Satan and his minions. In chapter ten of John’s Gospel, Jesus adds two more roles to those of the Good Shepherd. He goes in search of stray lambs and heals the sick ones. Jesus heals the wounds of our souls through the Sacrament of Reconciliation and strengthens us in illness and old age with the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Jesus dies for his sheep: Just as the shepherds of ancient days protected their sheep from wild animals and thieves by risking their own lives, so Jesus died in expiation for the sins of all people.

Through today’s Gospel, Jesus teaches one of the central aspects of the ministerial priesthood: the priest as shepherd. It means that a priest is one who, by his consecration, lives for others. The title, “Father”, like the title, “Shepherd,” expresses a relation of loving service to others in everything, from the most sacred ministries to the most trivial chores.

Today is also “World Day of Prayer for Vocations.” It is a day when Christians are invited to reflect on the meaning of God’s call and to pray that they may answer the call to dedicate their lives to serve the Church in a special way, i.e., to shepherd the Church communities, particularly as pastors in their parishes and as superiors in their religious orders or congregations. The Church presents to us in today’s Gospel the figure of Jesus the Good Shepherd that we may reflect on the meaning of the religious vocation to priesthood, diaconate, and consecrated life. Last Sunday we reflected on Our Lord’s commission and charge to Peter, saying once, “Feed my lambs,” and twice, “Feed my sheep.” In that way he made Peter a shepherd, a pastor. Our Lord continues his work of shepherding his people through Peter and his co-workers: the apostles and disciples, and through their successors: the Pope, the bishops, priests, deacons, catechists, and committed lay people. The first thing we need to remember is that every single person here has a vocation! Each person here, whatever one’s state in life, has been, and is being, called by God through the Holy Spirit to offer one’s special gifts to benefit the rest of the community. Therefore, “Vocations Sunday” is not just for a few selected for directly religious vocations, it is for all of us here. On the one hand, each one needs to reflect on what one’s particular calling is and how one can respond to it for the well-being of the whole parish community. Secondly, one needs to help others, and not be an obstacle to them as they respond to the particular calling and graces that God through his Spirit is giving one. If we will all actively respond to that call what a wonderful community, we will be! For, “We are his people, the sheep of his flock.”

Deacon Des

## Parish News

**Ukrainian Refugee Support Volunteer at Stansted Airport:** CVSU in partnership with Volunteer Uttlesford are looking for volunteers to support Ukrainian adults and children arriving at Stansted Airport, to support their onward journey or connection to relatives/host family. In addition to support them with other needs that may be identified. 4 hourly shifts, 7 days per week between 9am – 12.30am, two volunteers are needed per shift. Approx. 9 am – 1 pm, 1 – 5 pm, 5 – 9 pm, 9 pm – 12.30 am. Volunteers will be led and supported by an onsite Volunteer Co-ordinator with full induction and training provided online. Free car parking, mileage, food and drink will be provided. To find out more please contact: 01799 510525 or 510524 or email: [volunteer@volunteeruttlesford.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@volunteeruttlesford.org.uk)

**Baptism Course:** Forthcoming dates are this Wednesday (11<sup>th</sup> May), 15<sup>th</sup> June and 24<sup>th</sup> July; all on a Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. To enrol on the course, please email the Parish Office [stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org)



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**First Reconciliations and First Holy Communion:** Thank you to the Parish for the continued prayers for our First Holy Communion children Alice, Arianna, Herbie, Isabella, Jessica, Jude, Marcus, Mikolaj, Molly, Noah, Olivia, Rebecca, Roman, Trinity and Zofia.

**Rita Morson R.I.P.:** Of your charity, please pray for the repose of the soul of our dear sister Rita Morson. Please also remember David and the family in your prayers. Rita's funeral Mass will take place here at St Theresa's on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 11:00 a.m. followed by cremation at Cam Valley Crematorium at 1:00 p.m.

**The Happy Birds Te Deum Sing 'Tis Mary's Month of May:** It is a centuries-old custom of Catholics to dedicate the month of May to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The month of May is always part of the Easter season, the fifty days we celebrate in the liturgy the Resurrection of Our Lord, a time also of awaiting the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The celebration of May as a Marian month fits well with the liturgical celebrations of Easter and Pentecost as we recall Mary's great joy in her Son's victory over death as well as her presence with the apostles in the upper room prayerfully awaiting the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

At the Visitation, Elizabeth said to Mary: Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled. When we think of our Blessed Mother, we recognize that she is indeed blessed, not only because she was the Mother of Jesus, but because she believed in the Lord's words. She believed with all her heart and said "yes" to become the Mother of the Messiah and Son of God. She allowed herself to be led by God's grace throughout her life, a life rooted in a deep faith in God. She became her Son's first and most perfect disciple.

In our pilgrimage of faith, we walk always with Mary at our side. She is our model of faith and she helps us with her prayers to live by faith. She teaches us to believe as she believed.

During this month of May, we pay special honour to our Blessed Mother. In 1965, Pope Paul VI wrote a short encyclical on the month of May. He wrote that May is an occasion for a "moving tribute of faith and love which Catholics in every part of the world pay to the Queen of Heaven. During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration. In this month, too, the benefits of God's mercy come down to us from her throne in greater abundance."

During this month many churches have celebrations of the crowning of images of Our Lady. This is a beautiful custom that expresses our love for the Mother of God as our Queen, we will have our own Crowning of Our Lady later this month. Other Marian devotions are particularly fitting in the month of May. Of course, the holy rosary is always a wonderful prayer to enter more deeply into the mysteries of Christ's life with Mary. It is a Gospel prayer.

All honour that we give to Mary is ordered to, and leads to, the adoration of God. Devotion to Mary fosters within us a faithful adherence to her Son. When we crown images of Mary, we are honouring her. In honouring Mary, we are ultimately praising God for the grace He bestowed on her.

We all probably have our favourite images of Mary as well as our favourite devotions: Our Lady of Walsingham, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Lourdes, Mother of Perpetual Help, the Miraculous Medal, etc. The many images and devotions express various aspects of Our Lady's vocation and mission. They help us to know the virtues of Mary and remind us to turn to her for her intercession.

I invite you to pray with Mary during this Marian month. Let us especially commend to her our prayers for life, marriage, and religious liberty. Let us all place ourselves in the school of Mary to learn from her how to love God more fervently and to love one another as her Son has loved us.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary intercede for us and draw us closer to Christ her Son! Fr Lee



## Mass Times and Intentions

| <b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – YEAR C</b>                          |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> May                                     | Confessions: <b>5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.</b><br>Mass: <b>6:00 p.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i>  | <b>Michael Banbridge</b><br>(J. Bambridge)   |
| Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> May<br><i>Day of Prayer for Vocations</i> | Mass: <b>8:30 a.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i><br><br>Confessions: <b>9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.</b><br>Mass: <b>10:00 a.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i>  | <b>People of the Parish</b><br><br><b>Vocations to the Diaconate,<br/>Priesthood, &amp; Consecrated Life</b> |
| Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> May                                       | Confessions: <b>9:00 a.m.</b><br>Mass: <b>9:30 a.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i>  |  |
| Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> May<br><i>St Antoninus</i>              | Confessions: <b>7:15 p.m.</b><br>Mass: <b>8:00 p.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i>  | <b>Calder &amp; Family</b><br>(O. Salici)  |
| Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> May                                   | Confessions: <b>12:00 p.m.</b><br>Mass: <b>12:30 p.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i>  |  |
| Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> May<br><i>St John Houghton</i>         | Confessions: <b>9:00 a.m.</b><br>Mass: <b>9:30 a.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i>  |  |
| Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> May<br><i>St Erconwald</i>               | Confessions: <b>9:00 a.m.</b><br>Mass: <b>9:30 a.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i>  |  |
| <b>FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – YEAR C</b>                           |   |  |
| Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> May                                    | Confessions: <b>5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.</b><br>Mass: <b>6:00 p.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i>  | <b>Michael Banbridge</b><br>(J. Bambridge)   |
| Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> May<br><br><i>First Holy Communion</i>   | Mass: <b>8:30 a.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i><br><br>Confessions: <b>9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.</b><br>Mass: <b>10:00 a.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i><br><br>Mass: <b>4:00 p.m.</b><br><i>Livestreamed</i> | <b>People of the Parish</b><br><br><b>First Holy Communion Children</b>                                      |



**PLEASE TAKE THIS NEWSLETTER HOME WITH YOU AND DISPOSE OF IT RESPONSIBLY. THANK YOU.**



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