

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF
ST. PIO OF PIETRELCINA

REVEREND JEREMIAH N. MURASSO, PH.D., ED.D., PSY.D., PASTOR
REVEREND MATTHEW CHERIAN, PH.D., PAROCHIAL VICAR



4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

“This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.” - Jn 10:17

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD. ©LPI

**4th Sunday of Easter
April 21, 2024**

Mass Intentions for the Week

SATURDAY, April 20 - Vigil - 4th Sunday of Easter

4:00pm OLOP + David Hall
by Mom, Joan
4:30pm SVDP + Alphonse & Mary Camera
by Madelyn & Vincent Camera
SUNDAY, April 21 - 4th Sunday of Easter
8:00am OLOP + Marian & Charles Gayer
by Family
9:00am SB + David MacDonald
by Knights of Columbus #44
10:00am OLOP + Michael La
by Friend, Helen Nguyen
11:15am SVDP + Agnes, Frank, Francis & Marianne Cantore, Sr.
Rose Anthony (Monica Cantore) & Thomas Mauro
by Family

MONDAY, April 22 - Earth Day

8:00am OLOP + PRAYER SERVICE
8:00am SVDP + William Mayer, Sr.
by Family

TUESDAY, April 23 - St. George

8:00am OLOP + David Booher
by Family
8:00am SVDP + Dr. Mary Jane Sheehy & Charles Morrissey
by Marie & Bob Lunney

WEDNESDAY, April 24 - St. Fidelis

8:00am OLOP + Mary Sizemore
by Kathy Mauro
8:00am SVDP + Jean D'Albero
by Mary Ann

THURSDAY, April 25 - St. Mark

8:00am OLOP + Antonia Rizzo
by Daughters, Marie & Pina
8:00am ST. B + Michael & Eileen Morgillo
by Family

FRIDAY, April 26 - Arbor Day

8:00am ST. B Healing Mass for Christina DelMonaco
by Diane DelMonaco

SATURDAY, April 27 - Vigil - 5th Sunday of Easter

4:00pm OLOP + Wayne Magliulo (6th Anniversary),
Beverly Borrelli (16th Anniversary)
& Edward Borrelli, Sr. (2nd Anniversary)
by Lisa & Charlie
4:30pm SVDP + Stephanie Cooper
by Marge Ceneri & Family
SUNDAY, April 28 - 5th Sunday of Easter
8:00am OLOP + Anthony Fabrizio
by Family
9:00am SB + Jim Sisson
by Family
10:00am OLOP + Joseph & Josephine Esposito
by Linda Esposito
11:15am SVDP + Rita Genovese
by Husband, Children & Grandchildren



2024 MASSES -

The 2024 Mass Intention Book is opened.
There are many weekday Masses left.
Kindly have your requests ready when scheduling.

Payment due at time of booking.

STEWARDSHIP

April 13 & 14

Regular Collection	\$9,740.00
Utility Collection	\$4,687.00

**April 27 & 28 Second Collection:
None**

Thank you to the many of you who have been so generous and responsive in these difficult times.

SCRIPTURE READING

Sunday:	Acts 4:8-12/Ps 118: 1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29 (22)/Jn 3:1-2/Jn 10:11-18
Monday:	Acts 11:1-18/Ps 42:2-3; 43:3, 4/Jn 10:1-10
Tuesday:	Acts 11:19-26/Ps 87:1b-3, 4-5, 6-7/Jn 10:22-30
Wednesday:	Acts 12:24—13:5a/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6 and 8/Jn 12:44-50
Thursday:	1 Pt 5:5b-14/Ps 89:2-3, 6-7, 16-17/Mk 16:15-20
Friday:	Acts 13:26-33/Ps 2:6-7, 8-9, 10-11ab/Jn 14:1-6
Saturday:	Acts 13:44-52/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/Jn 14:7-14



Every Monday, immediately following morning Mass at Our Lady of Pompeii, there is one hour of **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**.

CONFESSOR SCHEDULE:

Our Lady of Pompeii: Saturday at 3:00-3:30pm

St. Vincent de Paul: Saturday at 3:30-4:00pm

SILENCE.

Please, be mindful that many parishioners arrive early prior to the start of Mass in order to sit reflectively with the LORD in prayer. Please, be mindful of the level of your voice and that voices carry from the back of the church to the front. Please, maintain a subdued tone when speaking so that other's quiet time is not disturbed.

St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish
Address: 355 Foxon Road, East Haven, CT 06513
Phone Number: (203) 469-0764

Office Hours:
Foxon Road: Mon-Thu 8:00-12:00 & 1:00-3:00;
Fri 8:00-12:00

Taylor Avenue: Mon. & Fri. 10:00-2:00

E-Mail: stpiofpietrelcina@gmail.com
Website: stpiofpietrelcinaeh.com

MINISTRY & EVENT CALENDAR

SUNDAY, APRIL 21 No Events or Activities Scheduled	SUNDAY, APRIL 28 No Events or Activities Scheduled
MONDAY, APRIL 22 Holy Hour - 8:30-9:30am in Our Lady of Pompeii Church	MONDAY, APRIL 29 Holy Hour - 8:30-9:30am in Our Lady of Pompeii Church
TUESDAY, APRIL 23 Bible Study - 7:00pm on Zoom Contact Christine Sandford at 203-469-7823 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8	TUESDAY, APRIL 30 Bible Study - 7:00pm on Zoom Contact Christine Sandford at 203-469-7823 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24 Bible Study - 6:30pm at SVDP Parish Office Contact Marie Connors at 203-468-1184 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8	WEDNESDAY, MAY 1 Bible Study - 6:30pm at SVDP Parish Office Contact Marie Connors at 203-468-1184 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8
THURSDAY, APRIL 25 Scriptural Rosary - 7:00pm at OLOP Chapel Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8	THURSDAY, MAY 2 Scriptural Rosary - 7:00pm at OLOP Chapel Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8
FRIDAY, APRIL 26 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8	FRIDAY, MAY 3 First Friday Prayer Shawl - 1:00-3:00pm at OLOP LOMR Military Whists - 5:30pm in OLOP Church Hall Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8
SATURDAY, APRIL 27 Men's Group - 7:30am-9:00am at SVDP Parish Center	SATURDAY, MAY 4 First Saturday Men's Group - 7:30am-9:00am at SVDP Parish Center

BIBLE CAMP 2024

AUGUST 5 – 9

9:00am to 12:30pm OLOP Church Grounds
Join our Adventure into the deep blue seas as we seek out the
beauty of God's Creation and the
Blessings that our Oceans provide for us.

Featuring:
**A Visit from Mystic Aquarium's Live
Creature Exhibit**

**Teen and Adult Volunteers
Needed**

Contact: Sally Mucka
saintpio.rcia@gmail.com or 203-415-2710

Thank You

THANK YOU, to the Porto Funeral Home & the DeLucia Family for their generous donation of Easter Lilies that were donated to St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish at Our Lady of Pompeii, St. Vincent de Paul & St. Bernadette, which were locally grown by the Vauiso family at the Vauiso Nursery in Branford, CT.



The Candles burn this week for these special intentions:

Our Lady of Pompeii Candles

Sanctuary Lamp (Right Side) ~ In Memory of
Billy Richmond & For All the Souls in Purgatory

Sanctuary Lamp (Left Side) ~ In Memory of
the Mauro & Elko Families

Chapel ~

Sacred Heart of Jesus ~ Bob Scussel by Wife, Carol

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Icon ~

Pascal Candle ~ Deceased Members of the Calamita, Hart,
Surprenant & Zito Families

St. Vincent de Paul Candles

Sanctuary Lamp (Right Side) ~ In Memory of
the Balzano & Avitable Families

Sanctuary Lamp (Left Side) ~ In Memory of
Ronald Paolillo

Our Lady's Altar ~

St. Joseph's Altar ~ Mario Tobia by *Children & Grandchildren*
Pascal Candle ~ Barbara & Maurice Connolly

St. Bernadette Candles

Sanctuary Lamp (Right Side) ~

Sanctuary Lamp (Left Side) ~

Pascal Candle ~ Harold Donegan

PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISH

Nick Vessicchio, Sally Ann Fallon, Lynette Ely, David T. Boyle, Richard Lucibello, Carmel Ferretti, Bryan Surprenant, Sharon Spadacenta, Marie Zambrano, Helen Langello, Brian Savo, Gerry Andrea, Alan Poirier, Connie Rasimas, Jane Pyka, Harry Clark, Lou DiNoia, Geraldine Licciardi, Joseph Anyzeski, Fran Sofo, Elizabeth Kuen, Deborah Sanning, Paula Ferrara, Tina Marie Fonia, Joseph Parise, Frank DelGrego, Moira Ferguson, Danielle Joubert, Frances Polaski, Pauline Condon, Rose Anna Izzo, Angelo DeMatteo, Patricia Aulenti, Michael Pascale, Alyce Richmond, Mark Schettino, Patty DiMilo, Rose Rogalski, Elaine Smith, Karen Rescigno, Virginia Pisano, DJ DiVincenzo, Sgt. Anthony Rybaruk, Philip & Sally DeMilo, Anna Concelmo, Anna Marie Nappi, Brian Higney, Rich Tortora, Denise Bailey, Joseph Peterson, Marion Mahl, Paula Ruddock, Pamela Willis, Laura Luzzi, Brian Wilson, Maureen Redmond, Kristianne Argentino, Shirley Perrelli, Bill Izzo, Andrew & Catherine Criscuolo, Patricia Miles, Joe Coscia, Deborah Verab, Dona Marie, Christina Meoli, Michelle Smith, Ron Mattei, Angela Riccio, Charlene Tantalo, Al Forgione, Gabriella Garrity, Beverly Fucci, W.D. Merkle, Phyllis Anastasio, Cheryl Barbara, Laura-Phyllis Esposito, Diana Vitelli O'Brien, Meghan Keeney, Gennaro Milone, Jo Vuolo, Felicia DeRoche, Mike Barnett, Richard Costanzo, Carole & Frank Casapulla, Michael Bowen, Linda Montone, Mary Diamante, Carol Esposito, Fred & Barbara Brow, Christopher Farrell, Roberta Sanders-Gray, Jeannette Winston, Marilyn Sisson, Ryder Feeley, Theodore Siwinski, Michael Enders, Nicholas Cerillo, Edwina Cinque, Rudolph Pohlman, Linda Esposito, Renee Flynn, The Cooper Family, Lynn Ely, Ethan Roche, Frances Graney, Barbara Kapusta, Megan Mastro, Rose Paula Dziedulonis, Taras Mychajlowskyj, Denise Steiner, Mary Ann Anastasio, Gloribeth R., Stacie Bouchard, Al Sappinetti, Guy Racino, Michael Polaski, Martha Catel, Eddie Villecco, Isaiah Colville, Jennie Nazzario, Joan Proto, Caitlin Rustic, Michael Filion, John Torello, Mauro Antonio Bezanilla, Matteo Criscuolo, Robert Filion, Lucy Carbone, Dorene Izzo, Lucille Palange, Carmine Riccitelli, Sr., Louise Amato, Mark Houston, Avery Bye, Alex Bernaitis, Vincent Pisano, Barbara Bellucci, Michael Bulger, Joseph Bonie, Mary Katherine Hart, Billy Carr, Andrea Pepe, Anna Sabatino, Audrey Elder, Theresa Polio, Mike Liso, John Mongillo, Sr., Bill Morrison, Juan & Family, Vern Kelly, Terrence King, Monica Cantore, Fr. Lawrence Boch, Antoinette Comiskey, Diane DiLungo, Frances 'Jean' Massimino, Luca Small, Vincent Savo, Louis Cinque, Alex Dugatto, Kim Vincent-Foschini, Dawn Quarriano Ferraro, Sal DeCola

Please send prayer requests to stpiofpietrelcina@gmail.com so that our parishioners and friends can be remembered in our prayers.

**Midnight Run
Taylor Avenue Campus**

The Midnight Run for **May** is the **2nd Monday**, which is **May 13th**. Donations of brown bag lunches, water, juice boxes and toiletries are appreciated. These donations can be dropped off to Sue Stacey's home, 82 Forbes Place, up until 7pm on **Monday, May 13th**. Any questions, please contact Sue at 203-214-1762. Thank you and God bless you for all donations. Stay safe & well.

**Midnight Run
Foxon Road Campus**

On the last Monday of each month, we bring 75 bagged lunches to the Columbus House Overflow Shelter.

Donations Needed:

ShopRite Gift Cards or

Gallon Size Ziploc Bags

Quart Size Ziploc Bags

Peanut Butter & Jelly

Juice Pouches

Raisin Boxes

Fruit Cups & Pudding Cups

Granola Bars

Individual Packaged Cookies, Crackers or Chips

We are also looking for small amounts or full skeins of yarn, it will be used to make hats and scarves for the midnight run. Please leave your donations at any entrance of Our Lady of Pompeii church **ONLY**. Thank you.

Midnight Run is the **LAST** Monday of **EVERY** month from Our Lady of Pompeii Church from 6-7 pm. Thank-you for being so generous!



St. Bernadette Food Pantry located at the East Shore Senior Center is open every Saturday from 10:00am-11:00am. We are always in need of non-perishable foods. Top choices are, canned: tomatoes, tomato sauce, vegetables, tuna fish, soups and fruits. Pasta, mac & cheese and peanut butter. Consumption guidelines provided to us from the CT Food Bank: Expiration/Code Date Extensions past expiration: high acid foods (i.e. tomatoes) 12-18 months. Low acid foods (canned meat, most vegetables) 2-5 years. Food in jars, 12 months past expiration, dry cereal 6-12 months, rice/pasta (dry) 1 year. Questions, please contact Deb or Rico at 203-468-7489



THE EAST HAVEN FOOD PANTRY is asking for soups, pasta and sauce for the month of April. Please leave your donations of food at the church entrances.

The Food Pantry will be open from 9:00am-11:00am on Saturdays & Tuesdays for East Haven residents.

For more info call Christine Sandford 203-469-7823

From the Pastor's Pen

Reverend Jeremiah N. Murasso, PhD, EdD, PsyD

Good Shepherd Sunday

St. John 10:1-18

This fourth Sunday of Easter is known as *Good Shepherd Sunday*. According to St. John, Jesus refers to himself as the *Good Shepherd*. In Greek, there are two words to describe “good” or “goodness.” The first word is *agathos* and the second word is *kalos*.



The word, *agathos* describes the moral qualities of an individual, while *kalos* describes not only the moral qualities but also describes an inherent charisma; an *intrinsic integrity* devoid of guile, pretentiousness, or hidden agendas.

The word *kalos* is used to describe an individual who demonstrates and exudes integrity, honesty, truthfulness and respect. Such an individual commands reverence and is esteemed. Such an individual engenders admiration, not so much for what he does, but for who he is. Such an individual tends to treat everyone with the same level of respect and unconditional esteem.

We have heard the expressions: “*the good doctor*” or “*the good father*” (referring to a member of the clergy). The above expressions are *not* descriptive of the manner in which each carries out the responsibilities of his profession. Rather, the expressions speak to the individual’s integrity as an empathetic, caring human being. Words like friendliness, approachability, gentleness, wholesomeness as well as overall respectability describe the image that comes to mind and is associated with the Greek word *kalos*.

As you might guess, the word *kalos* is used by St. John in reference to Jesus as the *Good Shepherd*. In other words, Jesus is not only a capable teacher and learned Rabbi, he embodies a deep-rooted compassion for others. He is characterized as *Genuine Goodness Personified*.

The word *kalos* also describes a kind of *child-like innocence*. It evokes the same kind of openness and love that a little child has for others: openness, sincerity and acceptance of others, free of prejudice and hidden agendas.

In his description of the faithful and unfaithful disciple, St. Matthew uses the image of fruit-bearing trees in which he uses the Greek words *kalos* and *agathos*. St. Matthew says the following:

“*Declare a tree good (kalos) and its fruit good (kalos), or declare a tree rotten and its fruit rotten, one or the other, for you can tell a tree by its fruit*” (12:33).

The use of good (*kalos*) does not describe the appearance of the tree, i.e. nice-looking leaves, strong bark, etc. Rather, a good (*kalos*) tree is one that produces good fruit. The example of the tree is an obvious metaphor meant by Jesus to refer to the disciple. A good (*kalos*) disciple is not one who dresses in the latest fashions, uses impressive words or necessarily performs good deeds for the benefit of spectators. Rather, the good (*kalos*) disciple is one whose heart is pure, and who lives his life with integrity.



The goodness of Jesus is contrasted with the dishonest motives of the Pharisees. In speaking of the behaviors of the Pharisees, Matthew quotes Jesus saying: “*You brood of vipers, how can you say good (agathos) things when you are evil*” (12:34)? The use of the word “good” here refers to pleasant sounding or *politically correct* words, which are not spoken necessarily as a result of personal conviction, but merely as a way to *appear* either concerned or convincing to the public.

Jesus is the *Ideal or Model Shepherd*. He is the *Perfect Shepherd*. Jesus is *Life* and he gives *Life*. He is *Light*. He is *Living Water*. Among the many images that have been attributed to Jesus that of the *Good Shepherd* is the best known. The image of the *Good Shepherd* is an image that had been etched into the minds of both Christians and Jews. This image can be seen throughout the Old Testament.

“*The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me besides still waters, he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name sake*” (Psalms 23:1-3).

“*See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep*” (Isaiah 40:10-11).

It is no accident that St. John places the account of the *Good Shepherd* immediately after the healing of the blind man, which we hear read during the *Lenten Season* (John 9:1-41). The theme of the *Good Shepherd* emerges as a result of the blind man’s expulsion from the synagogue by the Pharisees; thus, the Pharisees are described by John as the antitheses of the *Good Shepherd*. It is immediately after this dialogue with the Scribes and the Pharisees that Jesus begins to speak of himself as the *Good Shepherd*, who is the true *model* for shepherding and for guiding faithful followers. Those who are counted among the *sheep*, not only *know* the *Shepherd*, they *follow* him because they *hear* his voice.

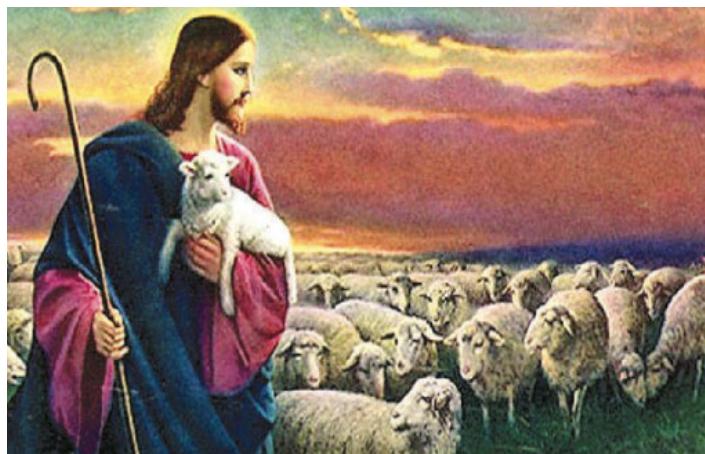


The Scribes and the Pharisees are not followers of Jesus because they neither know Jesus nor are they willing to follow him. Therefore, while they claim to be *sighted*, they have unknowingly demonstrated their blindness because they *see* things as they want to *see* them instead of *seeing* things as they are. Sometimes you and I can be accused of the same.

Jesus' Audience

Many of those to whom Jesus spoke were farmers and shepherds. Knowing the Old Testament passages that describe the *Good Shepherd*, they understood the intimate and personal bond about which Jesus spoke when he said, "*I know my sheep and mine know me*" (10:14). It was not uncommon for a shepherd to be familiar with his sheep, its history, age, defects, temper and its tastes.

This is not unlike anyone who has a pet. Does not the pet owner know all about his/her dog or cat? Such was the case with the shepherds who would often spend months alone in the fields leading, watching and protecting their flock. Having knowledge and love for their sheep, the farmers who listened to Jesus as he spoke of the *Good Shepherd* and his relationship with his sheep began to understand their own relationship with God. This teaching of the *Good Shepherd* was new and radical, as its message deviated from that of the Old Testament image of a stern and often times angry God.



Just as the shepherd would risk his life protecting his flock, so it is with Jesus. Jesus says:

"And for these sheep, I lay down my life because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. Nobody has taken it from me, rather, I lay it down of my own accord" (10:15-18).

The above-cited verses indicate yet, another characteristic of the *Model Shepherd* in contrast to the Pharisees and Scribes who are the imitators and wolves. The *Good Shepherd* will not only risk his life for his sheep, he will even *lose* his life for them. The *Good Shepherd* does so to give Life back to them. The *Good Shepherd* gives not just Life, he gives *Eternal Life*.

Choosing a Leader

The above passages describe two important instructions for choosing a leader. The first example of *laying down one's life*, not only indicates the depth of God's love for His faithful, it also indicates what characteristics the disciple should look for when deciding who to follow.

Unlike the Pharisees who seek their own self-aggrandizements and prestigious positions at the expense of their flock, the true shepherd seeks the betterment of those he is sent to lead. The *Good Shepherd* sacrifices and puts aside his desires and needs so that his flock may flourish.

In the second teaching, we see a parallel between the actual shepherd and his flock, and Jesus and his disciples. Just as the shepherd wants the best for his flock and takes every possible measure to ensure the flock's safety and health, so it is with Jesus who freely gives his life so others may *have* Life.

The parallel continues, as John tells the reader that Jesus indicated that the same relationship between sheep and shepherd also exists between himself and the Father.

"I am the Good Shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father" (10:14-15).

In other words, the source of Jesus' relationship with his faithful followers stems *from* and is nourished *by* his relationship with the Father.

Twenty-first Century Christians

What does this mean for present-day Christians? As men and women of faith, we must never lose sight of the fact that having received God's *Spirit* through Baptism, we have become uniquely *configured* to the Risen Christ. As such, we possess Jesus' life within our souls; thus, should seek Gospel truths and incorporate these truths into our lives.

We who strive for Gospel truths in our daily lives can hear and respond to the voice of the *Good Shepherd*. It is, however, during those times when we become *distracted* by the *wolves* in the world that we sin; mistaking the voice of the world to be that of Jesus, the *Good Shepherd*. When man mistakes God's voice, he makes poor choices. This leads to the loss of one's way; stumbling as a result of spiritual blindness.



Cultivating and maintaining a relationship with Jesus is the answer. It is indispensable for the mental and spiritual health of the mind, body, and soul. Establishing an intimate and personal relationship with Jesus assures man that he will not lose his way. It also brings him closer to the experience of *God's Kingdom* in the present.

The implementation of a prayerful relationship with Jesus keeps us focused on the *Good Shepherd* so that when the storm clouds move in, as they often do, we can overcome and persevere and endure. **JNM**

Additional Note: Although sensitive to gender-related language; he/she, him/her, it is often necessary to refer to the generic, "man" when reference is made to the essence of human nature.

A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE



In the Gospel for this weekend, Jesus tells his disciples that he is the *Good Shepherd; as well as the gate through whom all must pass*, and that not only does he know his sheep, they also know him (John 10:1-8). In our impersonal world, it is rather comforting to realize that Jesus knows each of us. How well do we know Jesus is the real question? And do we take time to know him better each day?

This is a powerful teaching for all of us who live during these difficult times. It is also an important teaching for family life in the 21st century. Families are so very busy, each member going his/her way day after day. Parents work all day, some even have two jobs to provide for their families. Afternoons and evenings, children are chauffeured to and from after-school events: basketball and football games, gymnastics, sleepovers, and a host of other extra-curricular activities.

Jesus' words are a reminder to you and me that as busy as we all are, there needs to be *quality time* spent with *God*. Families are invited to make time for FAMILY PRAYER, GRACE BEFORE MEALS, SUNDAY MASS, AND SOME FORM OF SPIRITUAL DEVOTION. Each of us needs to be spiritually energized by God's grace so we can be effective in all aspects of our day-to-day activities. As you begin your busy day, remember to take Jesus along for the ride. Make room for the Lord in your busy lives. You will be blessed and so will your children.

**STOP WORRYING
ABOUT WHAT CAN
GO WRONG, AND
GET EXCITED
ABOUT WHAT CAN
GO RIGHT.**

"Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?" (Matthew 6:27)

Last weekend, we listened and we watched as Jesus appeared to his disciples saying to them: "Peace be with you, my peace I give you" (Luke 24:35). How that must have helped to remove all the worries and fears from the disciples. Walk in the peace of Christ and your life will change forever.

In our hectic world where plates are filled beyond their capacity, begin every day resolved to change those aspects of your life that you have *absolute* control over. Leave the rest to prayer! Studies continue to indicate that stress is the number one contributor to heart failure; people permit the trials and tribulations, the *twists of fate*, and the existential curved balls to send blood pressure skyrocketing.

The key to winning the war on stress is understanding how to manage it. Several ways to identify and manage stress:

1. Recognize that stress is inevitable given our daily responsibilities. Be aware of your "*hot buttons*" and those individuals in your life who know how to "*push*" them. Why relinquish control to that "*other*" in your life who delights in *pushing* your buttons?

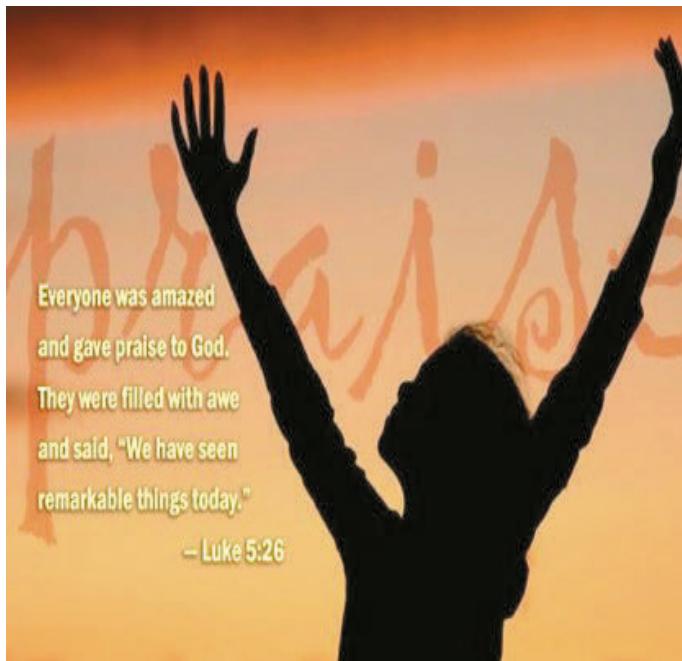
2. Take at least ten minutes every night to organize the tasks that need to be accomplished the next day. *Do not* make your list too long or too ambiguous. Be practical in what you can accomplish in one day. In other words, be realistic and distinguish between what *must* get done from those things that can wait another day or two.

3. Begin each day with a moment or two in prayer. Prayer does not have to be elaborate or eloquent. Thank God for another day in which you are healthy enough to put your feet on the floor. Ask the Good Lord to bless all your endeavors and all those you will come into contact with.

4. Begin your day with the quiet confidence that God has heard your prayer and He will grant you the strength and grace to accomplish all that you NEED to accomplish. That which we NEED to accomplish may be in conflict with that which we DESIRE to accomplish. The former is in compliance with God's will, while the latter is imposing my will onto God's plan for me. Learn HUMILITY. Your life will be a lot less complicated! And a lot happier.

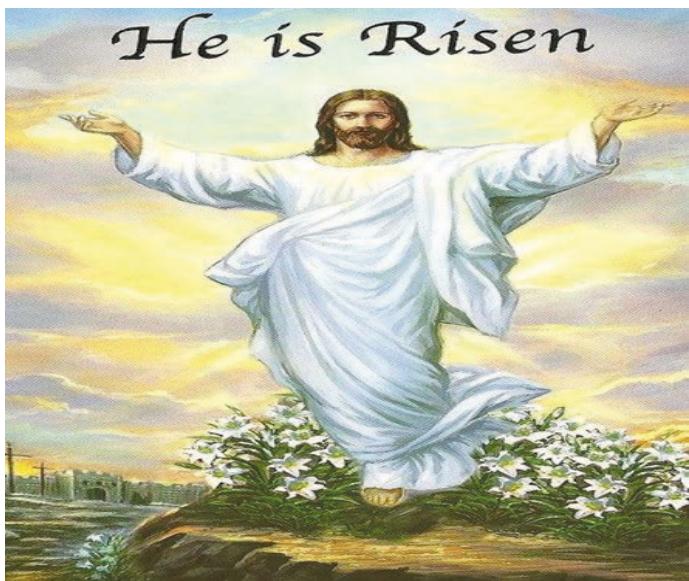
5. Don't stress the small stuff! Proceed through your day with confidence and humility. Be proactive and set little goals hour by hour, getting them accomplished **and then setting new goals. Proceed one step at a time.** And stop playing the victim! Your life may be difficult...but whose life isn't? Stop obsessing on: "*should have*," "*would have*," "*could have*." This turns people off. It sends family and friends fleeing from you!

6. Find time to think nice thoughts, read a line or two from scripture or read your favorite poem, think of a loved one who may now be with God and ask him/her to send an extra angel or two your way, gaze at a blue sky, the falling rain, the budding crocuses, a little child, and laugh at yourself at least once each hour for taking yourself more seriously than you have a right to be taken. Above all, make every day a blessed and happy event and strive to discover new meaning in every breath that you take, and in every day that you are alive....and above all...**PRAISE GOD! JNM**



From The Pastor's Pen
Reverend Jeremiah N. Murasso, Ph.D., Ed.D., Psy.D.

Keep Easter Joy in Every Day



"May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

Despite what we as a nation and as a world are experiencing, this time of the year brings with it, a special joy. Or at least, it should! As Christians, it is hard *not* to respond as we reflect upon the *Holy Week* services and experience once again, the last week of Jesus' life on earth.

There is something electric about reflecting upon Jesus' final meal with his apostles; men with whom he had spent the last three years and whom he had grown to love. We watched and listened to the response of Peter as Jesus made his way around the table to wash the feet of his apostles, only to be apprehended moments later by the soldiers in the garden and then taken to the Jewish authorities where his trials and tribulations would climax.

As Christians, we mourn the death of Jesus on Good Friday and then experience new life, which Jesus' resurrection brings to the Church and to our personal lives on Easter Sunday; even if this Easter Sunday "new life" is defined in a different way. Perhaps, this year the miracle of Easter will provide men and women of faith with an opportunity to discover or *re*-discover meaning in those aspects of their individual lives that having been given to them by God have too often been taken for granted or viewed as something merited such as: health, financial security, freedom, family and friends.

Too often, however, the joy of Easter fades quicker than the Easter lilies that decorate the altars of our churches. The *challenge* to each of us is to keep the joy of Easter *alive* throughout the entire year! How can we do this? The answer lies in the three virtues of our Catholic faith: Faith, Hope, and Love; and the greatest of these is Love as Saint Paul tells us.



Easter does not end on Easter Sunday. Rather, it begins at the Easter Vigil and continues for 50 days until the feast of Pentecost. In other words, every Sunday is like a *little Easter* because we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Remembering this is a great way to increase our faith and retain Easter joy beyond Easter Sunday and beyond the feast of Pentecost.

MASS ATTENDANCE ON SUNDAY

Start a new tradition by striving to attend Mass every week. *Re*-discover meaning in your faith that will *drive* you to a desire to celebrate your faith weekly in church, at Mass with others, who want to celebrate their faith with you and with your family. What a great way to prepare for a brand-new week!

As busy as we all are or would like to be, we *do* make time to engage in those activities that we find meaningful and enjoyable. *Re*-discover meaning in those behaviors and activities that have value for living a productive life; choices made that will inevitably become a permanent source of nourishment in your lives and in the lives of your children. This will lead to permanent happiness even when personal freedoms are curtailed through no fault of our own.

Keep Easter Joy alive in your hearts by learning what these few weeks in the Easter Season might have taught each of us about making time for things that matter.

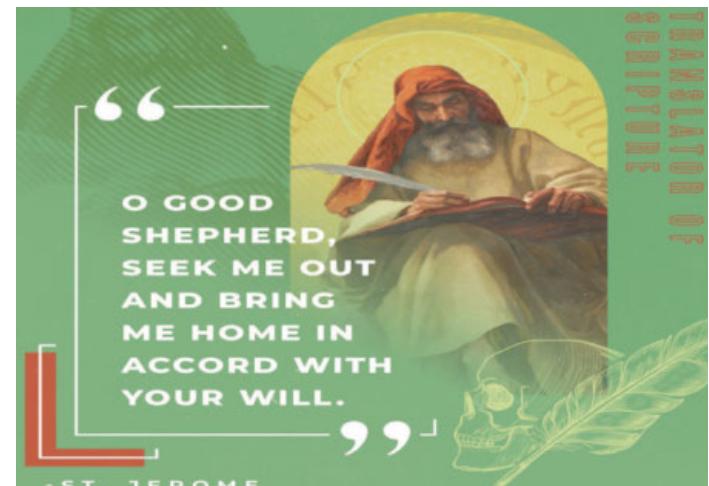
PRACTICE FAITH AS A FAMILY

As difficult as it is with busy schedules, take the time to worship and pray as a family. Start with the basics: *Grace* before meals. This is so very important, particularly for children. Encourage children of all ages to remember their prayers before bed and upon raising the next morning. Parents should pray with their little ones, reminding them how much Jesus loves them.



Make time to attend Mass as a family. Reflect together on the readings or the homily over the supper table. Discuss how your experience at weekend Mass can help you as a family deepen your faith in God, view minor setbacks with less anxiety, and maintain a level of joy and even peace despite the many responsibilities on your plate.

Strive to keep the *Easter Message* of the *empty tomb* alive in your heart as you face your day-to-day obligations and in doing so, you will keep Jesus at the center of your lives. Happy Easter! JNM





From the Pen of the Parish Nurse
Kimberly Petrillo, R.N.

Self-Care

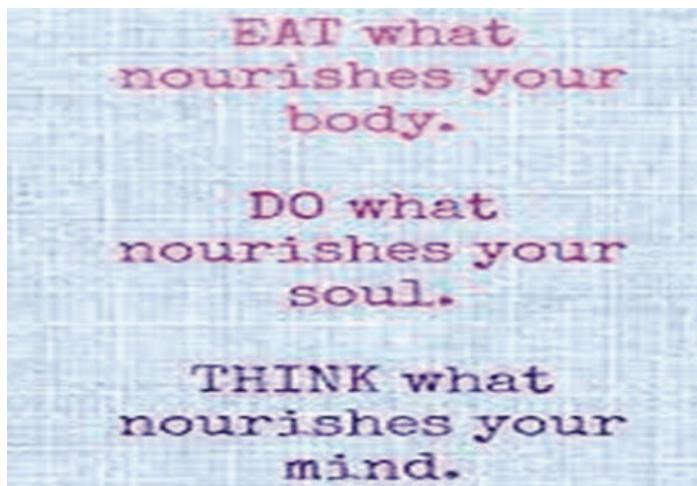
Self-Care & Health Benefits

I was stirred to write about this topic this week as I watched the news and heard about the shootings that continue to occur across our nation. It seems that our nation has gotten no reprieve from its epidemic of mass shootings as man's inhumanity toward his fellow man continues.

Some of these shootings occur in public places, bringing terror to the spaces that Americans pass through every day. Others happen behind closed doors. Some seem to be motivated by personal grievances, while others are terrifyingly random. Some shootings capture widespread attention, while others are barely noticed outside of the local area.



The United States is experiencing a mental health crisis that has manifested itself through violent attacks on innocent people who have senselessly lost their lives. The world has become an extremely stressful place to live in. The news, the media, and the economy all have in some way added to the daily stressors of life. Therefore, it is vital to take care of yourself, which is something we can commit to do. We cannot stop the violence or the crime in our society; however, we can decide how we will respond to it. Find peace amid the chaos around us!



Each of us should be committed to caring for his/her soul in the same way that we care for the body. To attain wellness of the body, mind, and spirit, one must become aware of how to attain wellness. A few years ago, I attended a nursing conference and the topic was about self-care. I must admit that at the time, I had no idea what self-care meant. Like most people, I was busy working, taking care of children, and running a household. I had little time for myself. The demand of caring for others in my professional and personal life was draining and it was depleting my spirit as well as my physical being.



After attending the nursing conference and realizing what I was missing, I continued to practice some form of self-care every day. It has been and continues to be the way that I choose to care for the health of the body, mind and spirit. It has made a big difference in my life; thus, I would like to share my experience and to share some thoughts about just how achievable and necessary self-care is.

**Self-Care is a priority and necessity
- not a luxury -
in the work that we do.**

Self-care can be defined as, a *"multidimensional, multifaceted process of purposeful engagement in strategies that promote healthy functioning and enhance well-being."* The term, self-care describes a conscious act that a person takes to promote his/her own physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health (Journal of Counseling Psychology.2017.).

Many people view self-care as a luxury, rather than a priority. Self-care is *not* about finding a way to relax or slow down. It is about taking care of the *needs* of the whole body and restoring balance. It is natural for the body to strive to maintain homeostasis.

Homeostasis, a Greek word for *"same and steady,"* means that the body automatically and innately seeks a state of tranquility; a process that allows the body to reach and maintain a state of equilibrium. When the body is in a state of equilibrium, optimal health is *usually* sustained.

Tailor Your Self-Care

Self-care involves a specific strategy that is tailored to one's life and one's individual needs. Self-care differs from person to person. It includes a *plan of action* that is created to place attention on the needs of the individual.

If you find yourself constantly trying to prove your worth to someone, you have already forgotten your value.

Self-care means that I make myself a *priority* even when my daily schedule becomes overwhelming and inundated with tasks to be completed and demands to be met.

The Importance of Self-Care

Having an effective self-care routine has been shown to have several important health benefits that include the following:

- Reducing anxiety and depression.
- Reducing stress and improving resilience.
- Improving happiness.
- Increasing energy.
- Reducing burnout.
- Building stronger interpersonal relationships.

"If you do not make time for your wellness, you will be forced to make time for your illness."

Specific forms of self-care have been linked to different health and wellness benefits; exercise, finding a sense of purpose in life, and sleep, have all been connected to an increased lifespan (JAMA,2019).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), self-care is important because it can help promote well-being, prevent disease and help people better cope with illness. Self-care means taking the time to do things that help one live well and improve both physical health and mental health. When it comes to mental health, self-care can reduce stress, lower the risk of illness, and increase energy. Small acts of self-care can have a big impact on daily life and health.

Self-Care Tips

- Eat healthy, which includes eating regular meals and staying hydrated is significant for good self-care. The gut health can have a significant impact on health, well-being, and feelings of vitality. The type of foods that we eat impacts the bacteria that live in the stomach, resulting in a cascade of either positive or negative outcomes.
- Walking 30 minutes every day can help boost mood and improve cardiovascular health. Small amounts of exercise add up so do not get discouraged if you cannot do 30 minutes all at one time.
- Drinking plenty of water and limiting caffeinated soft drinks and coffee is very important. Caffeine does not hydrate the body.
- Make sleep a priority. Stick to a schedule. Reduce blue light exposure from cell phone or computer before bedtime. Aim to sleep 7 to 8 hours each night. The body needs quality sleep to maintain health. Make sure the bedroom is the place to get good REM sleep.
- Practice gratitude. Be mindful of things that you are grateful for. Be specific. Write these things down or replay them in the mind *often*. Never stop showing gratitude to yourself or to others.
- Focus on being positive. Having a positive attitude helps to reduce stress and promotes balance in the body. Being happy with yourself is just as important as tending to another's happiness.
- Learning to say "No" is hard; many of us feel obligated to say "Yes" when someone asks for our time or energy. With a little practice, saying "No" politely means, more time for self-care.

• Most people these days do not take the time to make themselves meals, preferring instead, to stop for fast food or popping a pre-made meal in the microwave. Fast food meals are not giving the body the kinds of calories and nutrients needed for good health. Even if it is once a week, consider making a healthy meal for yourself or the family.

• Try a relaxing activity: explore meditation, muscle relaxation or breathing exercises. Read a book of interest. Listen to quiet music. Get a massage. Attend the theatre or any other activity that you find enjoyable.

• Be still. Turn off the cell phone, computer, radio and TV. Allow time to be silent and still. It can be a time of tranquility. Spend a moment to be thankful for the gift of life and the simple blessings that are often overlooked and/or are taken for granted.

• Schedule your self-care time and guard it with your all. It can be difficult to find extra time for self-care. But it is a gift to give to yourself. The more you can work self-care into your schedule, the better you will be able to grow, enjoy life and thrive.

• Stay socially connected. Engage with family members or friends. Meaningful time spent with family/friends that you care about can promote happiness and fulfillment.

• Be kind to yourself. Embrace and accept all of you; both the strengths and the flaws. No one is perfect. Strive to do and be the best you can each day, for yourself and others.



Self-care is different for each person and it is important to discover what each individual needs and enjoys. It may take trial and error to discover what works best. Practicing self-care regularly can improve the quality of life and provide meaning for each day. Self-care enhances the ability to live fully, vibrantly and efficaciously.

Self-care is imperative to maintain a healthy relationship with yourself. It means engaging in things that care for the body, mind, and soul. It should not be viewed as a luxury but should be a priority! To regularly include in your life a little bit of love and attention for the body, mind and soul will be the best gift you can give to yourself and to others! KP

Parish nurse can be contacted via email at kimp51@comcast.net or mobile at 203-980-0931. Health counseling is available by appointment.



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**SOMETHING TO PONDER
On Good Shepherd Sunday**



Are you a lost sheep?

"The complexities of life can never be untangled by man; like a sheep without a shepherd, we have been self-programmed for destruction" (Psalm 23:1).

A lost sheep needs a shepherd to find the way. The individual who does *not* believe that he/she is a lost sheep is a person who feels the need to control both situations and people. Such an individual believes that without the exertion of control, someone else will acquire more or arrive at the finish line before him/her.

Such a person never seems to be content with what he/she has and always measures his/her lack of accomplishments by the perceived successes of others. Consequently, he/she looks at life and others through a lens of envy and resentment, even bitterness.

Sadly, such an individual will never really find his/her way in life unless he/she can discover contentment in his/her skin. Therein, lies the secret of real inner peace and lasting joy for life and for living. Truly something to ponder! JNM

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena
Starts on May 1 @ 7 pm**



Join us as we celebrate the 30th annual novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help for 9 Wednesdays, beginning on May 1 and concluding on June 26.

On the first night, May 1, the novena prayers will take place in the context of the Mass beginning at 7:00 pm at Our Lady of Pompeii Church.

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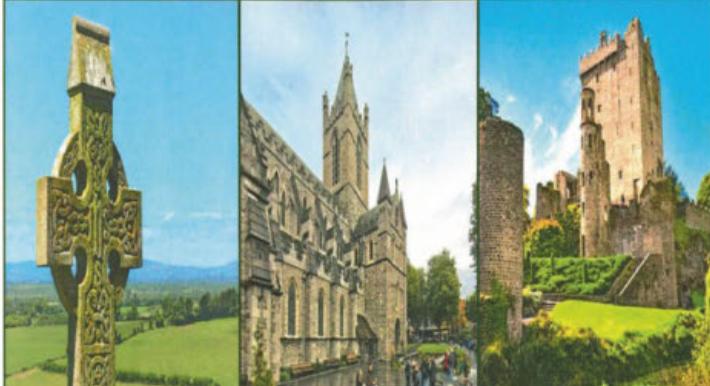
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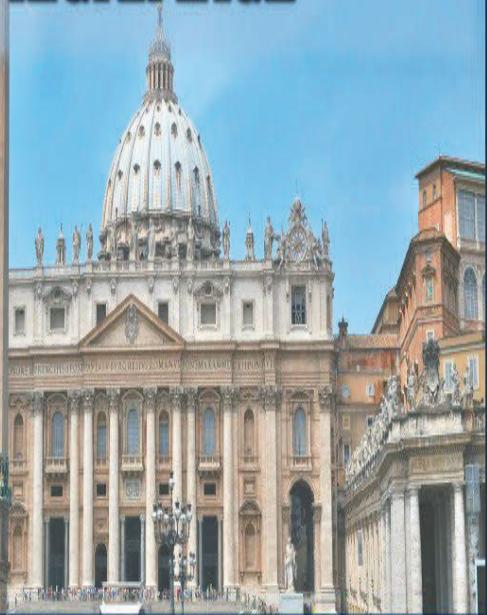
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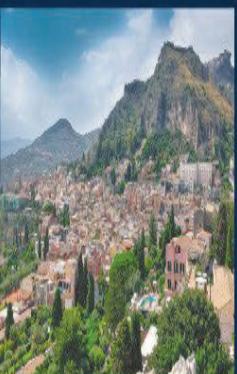
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Grocery Shopping cards in any denomination to any of the local supermarkets would help me help members of our parish family, who are need of assistance for the purchase of food. These gift/shopping cards can be dropped into the collection basket or brought to the parish office. Whatever you can do, is greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance. JNM



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GOOD SHEPHERD

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I lack.
In green pastures he makes me lie down;
to still waters he leads me;
he restores my soul.
He guides me along right paths
for the sake of his name.
Even though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff comfort me.
You set a table before me
in front of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Indeed, goodness and mercy
will pursue me
all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of the Lord
for endless days.

—Psalm 23



The Eucharist is the sacrament
of love: it signifies love,
it produces love

- ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

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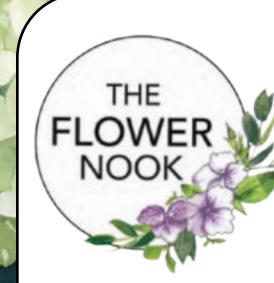
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