

Saint Matthew Catholic Church



April 25, 2021 — 4th Sunday of Easter

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. 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 hosts, 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.

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Lord Jesus, increase the faith life of our parish and strengthen our families. Bless our parish with vocations to the priesthood. Call forth young men to great challenges and heroic deeds. We pray that they hear your voice and listen to your call. Give them courage, Lord, to follow in your footsteps and become priests for the salvation of souls. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Welcome to the Catholic Church of Saint Matthew. Whether you are celebrating with us for the first time, visiting our community or have decided to make this your parish home, the Saint Matthew parish family welcomes you!

120 Church Avenue

P.O. Box 9216, Forestville CT 06011-9216

Phone: 860-583-1833 • Fax: 860-582-6152

Email: rectory@stmatthewrcc.com

Web: www.stmatthewrcc.com

Office Hours: Monday through Friday: 9:00a.m.-4p.m.

Father John Dietrich, **Pastor**

Deacon Brian Armstrong

Sonia Shavel, **Parish Secretary**

R. Greg Romans, Mary Pat Caputo, **Parish Trustees**

MASS SCHEDULE

Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m.

Saturday: 8:30 a.m.; Saturday Vigil, 4p.m.

Sunday 7 a.m.; 8:30 a.m.; 10 a.m.; 11:30 a.m.; 5 p.m.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Confession):

Saturday 3:00 – 3:45 p.m. (* please remember to wear a mask) or by appointment. Call the Parish Office.

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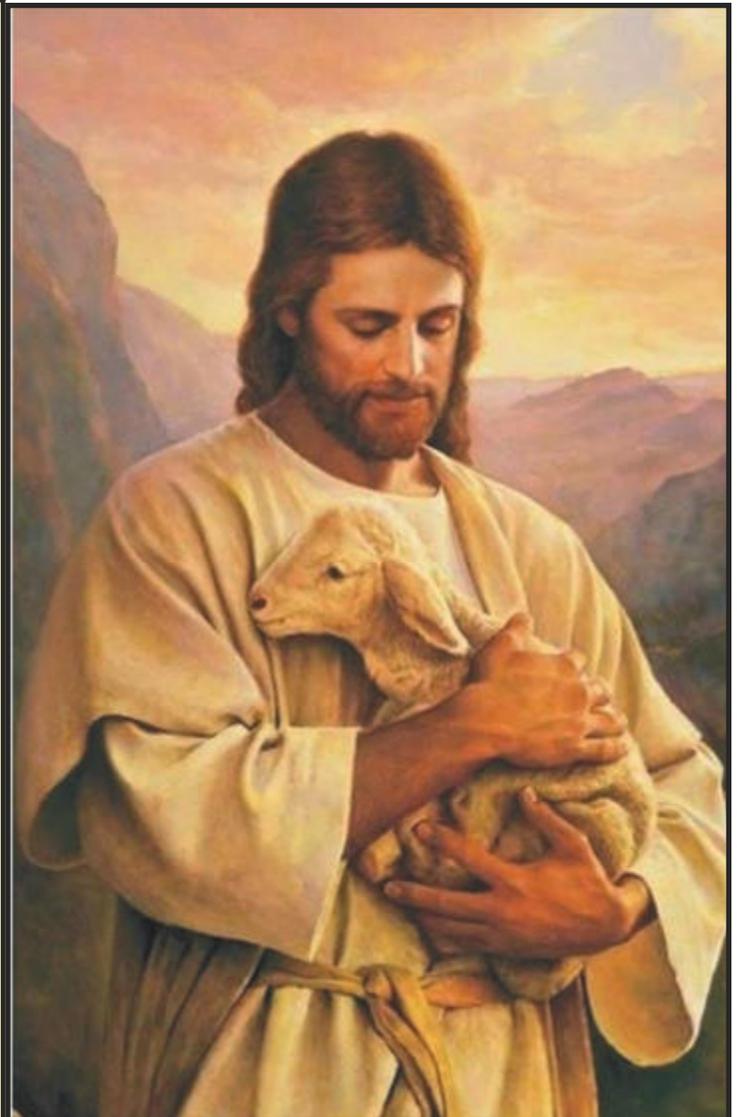
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Perhaps the most frequently mentioned animal in the New Testament is the sheep. Since the time of Abraham, there have always been sheep in the land of Israel. In the Book of Job, the oldest book of the Bible, Job has fourteen thousand sheep. Much later, when King Solomon dedicated the first Temple, in celebration he sacrificed at least 120 thousand sheep. In fact, sheep—especially young lambs—were always essential to Israel’s life and worship.

Still, it would have been understandable that farmers would have rather worked with any animal other than sheep. Sheep are difficult to raise in that they are utterly defenseless and so are easy prey for predators and thieves. Therefore a flock without the protective watch of a shepherd was always in great danger. Such vulnerability is the reason sheep are completely dependent upon their shepherds. As such, sheep are also tender and affectionate animals, which explains the close relationship that shepherds have with their flock, even calling them by name (John 10:1-5). Each evening the shepherd would stand by the sheepfold’s entrance gate and call out to his flock to enter.

No wonder this dependence of sheep upon their shepherds is a major theme in the New Testament. Jesus frequently spoke of people as sheep; that is people who were tired and lost, without a true shepherd: **“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd”** (Matthew 9:36). In fact, when a sheep becomes lost, it often falls helpless to the ground. That’s the reason shepherds cannot wait until a stray sheep returns to the flock but must go out and find it. And when he finds it, since the animal is too distressed to get up and follow, the shepherd hoists the sheep over his shoulders and carries the animal back to the flock.

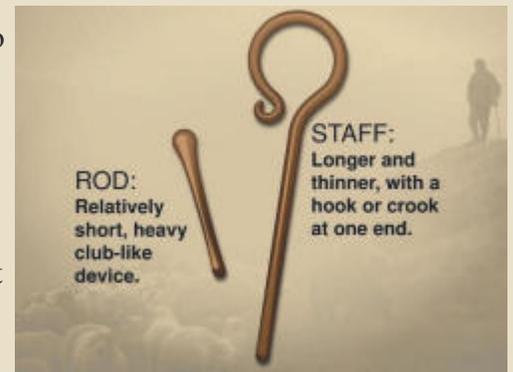
Thus Jesus spoke of His followers as sheep, pointing out their need for help and His willingness to help them: **“I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep”** (John 10:15). Of course, it is only an analogy, for Jesus always insisted that people are much more valuable than sheep: **“He said to them, ‘What man of you, if he has one sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep’”** (Matthew 12:12)!

Meanwhile the life of a shepherd was harsh, living outdoors in all kinds of weather. To sustain themselves shepherds usually ate raisins, bread, cheese and olives carried in a leather pouch. The life also demanded bravery, for there were many dangers to both sheep and shepherd: wolves, lions, bears, and panthers. To defend the sheep and themselves, shepherds used an oak rod or club with a knob on one end which sometimes had nails driven through it. It was very useful to protect against such threats, and no shepherd would be without it.

The curved end of the staff that is often associated with shepherds was used for herding sheep. Some shepherds also carried slings, which could fling stones some 90 miles an hour, or be used to direct sheep by hurling a stone and dropping it close to where a sheep was lagging behind, to startle it into coming along with the rest of the flock.

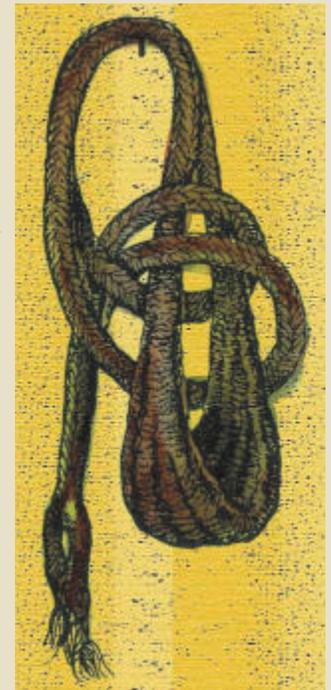
Over time, given their extraordinary fortitude and courage, some Jews considered shepherds to be the “backbone” of the nation. Others, especially those living in Jerusalem and more densely populated areas, tended to look down upon them as dirty and faithless because they could not keep the law as well as “city folk,” with the need for frequent washing of hands and utensils.

On this Good Shepherd Sunday, we give thanks to Jesus Who not only feeds us but defends us, and ultimately lays down His life for His sheep.



ROD:
Relatively short, heavy club-like device.

STAFF:
Longer and thinner, with a hook or crook at one end.



Shepherd’s sling

4th Sunday of Easter

First Reading: Acts 4:8-12

“Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said: “Leaders of the people and elders: If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved, then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; in his name this man stands before you healed. He is *the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone*. There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved.”

Responsorial Psalm: 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29

R. Alleluia.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

R. Alleluia.

I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me and have been my savior. The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. By the LORD has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes.

R. Alleluia.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD; we bless you from the house of the LORD. I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me and have been my savior. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his kindness endures forever.

R. Alleluia.

Second Reading: Jn 10:14

“Beloved: See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

Alleluia: Cf. Lk 24:32

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my sheep, and mine know me.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel: Jn 10:11-18

“Jesus said: “I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father.”

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.





**Rite of Christian Initiation
for Adults**

Have you been thinking about becoming a Catholic?

If you or someone you know may be interested, here is an opportunity to ask questions about all things Catholic, including what Catholics believe and do. Issues that are on people's minds and hearts that relate to the faith are also discussed. There is plenty of information with no commitment.

For example . . .

- *those who have never been baptized can investigate what it means to be a Christian;
- *those baptized in another Christian tradition can explore the process to come into full communion with the Catholic Church;
- *and those baptized Catholic as infants but were not raised as Catholic can learn about being Confirmed and receiving the Eucharist.

The RCIA program at St. Matthew's will be holding two inquiry meetings for questions about Catholicism and how to become a Catholic. The meetings are **Wednesday, September 22nd**, 6:00 p.m. and **Wednesday, October 6th**, 6:00 p.m. Both meetings are in the Fr. Blaney Room.

There is no obligation to continue after these initial inquiry meetings, which are for adults 18 and older. More information may be found on our website, www.st.matthewrcc.com, or by calling, 860-583-1833 or e-mailing the parish rectory, rectory@st.matthewrcc.com.

A recent survey of those who joined an RCIA program shows that many wanted to fill the need for family and security in their life. For them, becoming Catholic was a means to find what was missing in their spiritual life.

Almost all RCIA enrollees were invited by a co-worker, friend, or family member. A simple and sincere invitation is often all

that is needed. If you know someone who may be looking for the peace that comes through faith, please extend the invitation to come and see and learn!



2021 Archbishop's Annual Appeal Reaching Out, Healing Together



Thank you to the **338** parish families who have made a gift or pledge commitment to the 2021 Archbishop's Annual Appeal. Our parish has already raised **\$67,901.21** out of our initial goal of \$92,000 . If you have not yet had the opportunity, please consider prayerfully supporting the many Good Works of the Archdiocese. Every gift will be gratefully received and sincerely appreciated.

COVID VACCINE CLINIC



SUNDAY, APRIL 25 | 11:00 AM-5:00 PM
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The City of Bristol is partnering with the State of Connecticut Department of Health and Griffin Health to bring a mobile vaccine clinic to Bristol.

Two Griffin Health vans will be deployed to Bristol and will be located at the at First Congregational Church on Federal Hill and at Asbury Methodist Church in Forestville from 11 am to 5 pm each day. Each van will have between 100-125 Moderna vaccines for a total of approximately 250 vaccines per day that they will be able to administer.

Open to all Bristol residents who are 18 years or older. No appointments are necessary!

The clinics will be staffed by Griffin Health personnel and the National Guard. The Moderna vaccine will be administered by Griffin Health nurses. Those who receive a vaccine will be given assistance with scheduling a second vaccine appointment – either at a second clinic in Bristol when the vans return on Sunday, May 23 or at a site that is convenient three weeks later. For more information, please contact the Mayor's Office at mayorsoffice@bristolct.gov or call 860-584-6250 or visit the Mayor's Office Facebook page to view the event and for updates.



**St. Matthew Church
Bereavement Support Group
“New Day/New Life”**

Our Parish offers a bereavement ministry to help those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Past participants in our bereavement ministry have told us how beneficial it was to them. Our 10-week bereavement group program entitled “**New Day/New Life**” is a combination of prayer, reflection and sharing. It will begin on **Wednesday, April 28th from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Center.**

For more information and to register, please call Rita Lagasse at 860-583-6674.

The program is free and open to all. Please extend this invitation to members of your family who might benefit from our bereavement ministry.



**St. Matthew Church
Holy Hour in honor of the
Blessed Mother
Wednesday, May 12, 2021
6:00 p.m.**

- ◆ All day exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (starting after 7:30 a.m. Mass)
- ◆ Holy Rosary—joyful mysteries of the rosary with meditations
- ◆ Hymns —sung between decades
- ◆ Benediction

**St. Matthew’s
Weekly Offertory Collection**

We are very grateful for our parishioners who continue to make their weekly contribution to St. Matthew’s. Your generosity is vital to meet our expenses and serve our parishioners. Thank you very much for your faithful support during this difficult time!

**St. Matthew Parish
and School Raffle
Update:**



Thank you to all who made a contribution toward our raffle program.

The committee is in their final stages of organizing the details.

We hope to have tickets ready for distribution in May.

Any questions feel free to contact Marcia Curtin at 860.877.8240 or email at mcurtin131@gmail.com

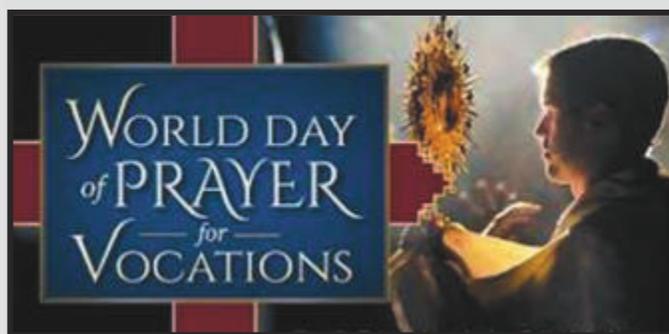


The IHM Companions in Prayer Group will meet on Saturday, **May 1, 2021** after **8:30 a.m. Mass** in the Fr. Blaney Room.



St. Matthew Bereavement Support Group will meet on **Monday, May 3, 2021 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. in the Fr. Blaney Room.** Please call Rita Lagasse at 860-583-6674 to register.

Sunday, April 25, 2021



God gave His people commandments to follow, a way of life, thus imparting His wisdom to the simple. Moreover, He so loved the world that He gave us His Son so that all might have eternal life. Are you following God’s way? Is He calling you to proclaim the Good News as a priest or deacon, or in religious life?

Dear Parishioners:

If you would like to have the name of a loved one included in our **prayer list**, please, call the parish office during business hours.

The prayer list is updated weekly.



Jill Synnott, Rita Lagasse, Ann Conroy, Kim Romano, Blanche Adamczyk, Ada Zoccoli, Donald Theriault, Nancy Palmisano, Frank Baldino, Bob Mikulak, Diane Bouchard, Barbara Morgan Young, Paul D'Aprile, Paul Berard and Frank Cammariere.

**Family Chalice For Vocations
10:00 a.m.**

The **Serwinski family** will receive the Family Chalice for Vocations and pray for Vocations during the next week. If you would like to sign up to receive the Family Chalice for Vocations please contact Rich and Donna Slusz at (860) 589-4318.



April 25—April 24

The seven-day candle before the statue of the **St. Joseph** is lit as a prayerful vigil for **Henry Krystofolski Sr.** requested by his wife, Rose and son, Bob.

The seven-day candle before the statue of the **Blessed Mother** is lit as a prayerful vigil for **Domenica Spinelli** requested by Gloria DePietro.

Daily Mass Readings

26 Monday —
Acts 11:1-18 Ps 42:2-3, 43:3-4 Jn 10:1-10

27 Tuesday—
Acts 11:19-26 Ps 87:1b-7 Jn 10:22-30

28 Wednesday — St. Peter Chanel
Acts 12:24—13:5a Ps 67:2-3, 5-6, 8 Jn 12:44-50

29 Thursday— St. Catherine of Siena
Acts 13:13-25 Ps 89:2-3, 21-22, 25, 27

30 Friday— St. Pius V
Acts 13:26-33 Ps 2:6-11b Jn 14:1-6

May 1— St. Joseph the Worker
Acts 13:44-52 Ps 98:1-4 Jn 14:7-14

Mass Intentions



- Saturday April 24th**
8:30 a.m. † Paul Thibodeau by family
4:00 p.m. † Armand Bechard (11th anniversary) by Judy Ackley
- Sunday April 25th* 4th Sunday of Easter**
7:00 a.m. † Bruce Alexander (Anniversary Remembrance) by his wife, Anne
8:30 a.m. † Roger Albert by his wife, Therese Albert
10:00 a.m. † Kathie and Irene Felice by family
11:30 a.m. † Ryan Buckman by his mom, Donna and sister, Michelle
5:00 p.m. † Conrad (Bill) Pinette (birthday remembrance) and Joshua Jarry by his wife and mémère
- Monday April 26th**
7:30 a.m. † Frank Pepe by his brother Ed and friend John
- Tuesday April 27th**
7:30 a.m. † Robert and Loretta Gibson by family
- Wednesday April 28th**
7:30 a.m. All living and deceased members of St. Matthew Church
- Thursday April 29th**
7:30 a.m. All living and deceased members of St. Matthew Church
- Friday April 30th**
7:30 a.m. † James Barrante by Sharon Adkins
9:30 a.m. Diane Bouchard (Living) by her daughter, Liza Morgan
- Saturday May 1st**
8:30 a.m. Theresa Letizia Darby (healing Mass) by Mom and Dad
4:00 p.m. † Angela Liburdi (15th anniversary) by family
- Sunday May 2nd* 5th Sunday of Easter**
7:00 a.m. † Jeff Merrow by wife, Nancy Merrow
8:30 a.m. † Edith Corbin and Albert Pelletier (birthday remembrance) by Catherine Pelletier
10:00 a.m. † Donna Dube by her husband, Jude
11:30 a.m. † Leenora Oliver (19th anniversary) by her daughters: Alison, Amanda and Amy and husband, Gordon



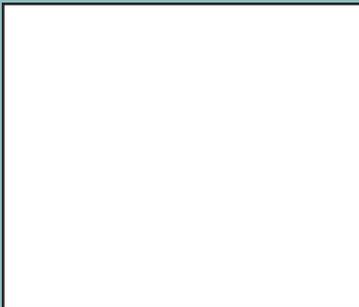
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