

WEEKLY MEDITATION — Fourth Sunday of Easter

"My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

Jesus the Good Shepherd of the Father's flock is one of the most touching descriptions we have of him, and we owe this loving image to Jesus himself. He described himself and his mission as a shepherd caring for his flock.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. His sheep belong to him, and he is ready to lay his life down for them, for us. Jesus made the most wonderful promises to those who belong to him.

He said that none of them would ever be lost, and he will lead them to the pastures of eternal life.

Obviously this relationship between the Lord and his followers has to be a two-way street. The followers have to cooperate by choosing to follow him in what they say and how they live. This doesn't mean that belonging to Jesus will guarantee us an easy life here on earth. The opposite is more like to be the case, but those who remain faithful through their trials will share in his

glory in heaven. Trials and suffering are an opportunity to prove one's faith and obedience to the Lord.

The flock is an image of community. Even on a human level we have a deep need for community. Jesus knew this. That's why he wanted his followers to live and worship as a community. Belonging to the Good Shepherd makes us members of his flock.

We have to respond to his love. We have to get to know the Lord, listen to his word and live according to it.

WISDOM'S CORNER

Who Knows the Shepherd?

One of the best known prayers in the Bible is Psalm 23, "The Lord is my Shepherd".

The story is told that two men were asked to recite it in a church. The first was a Shakespearean actor, but a non-believer. He did a magnificent job. Every word was clearly and perfectly enunciated and expressed. All who heard him were keenly impressed.

Then the second man, a believer, got up. His delivery was poor, and so was his diction. He used mostly the same tone throughout and made some errors. In short, he was an amateur, but he had one powerful thing going for him—he spoke sincerely from the heart. He meant every word he said. The result was that his listeners were deeply moved.

Later the actor came up to him and said, "Congratulations! You did a wonderful job."

The man responded saying, "I think I did a terrible job, but I really believe those words. It's you who did a wonderful job."

"Believe me, you did a much better job than I did," the actor assured the man. "I know the Psalm, but you know the Shepherd!"

Speaking from personal faith makes all the difference.

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

"Great opportunities to serve God are rare;
little opportunities happen every day."

The Sacrament of Confirmation happens this weekend in our Parish

Have you unwrapped your gifts from the Holy Spirit?

When you were baptized, made your First Communion, or were confirmed, the Holy Spirit gave you gifts to help you grow in your Catholic faith. Have you "unwrapped" them yet?

Our parishioners who are being confirmed this weekend will have *in a fuller way* seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit they received into their hearts at the time of their baptisms. The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit are:

Wisdom...helps us stay focused on God's will and his plan for us.

Understanding...lets us grasp holy truths. It means seeing with the heart, not just the mind.

Counsel...also called "right judgment", which invites us to weigh options as God desires, in order to make the morally right choice.

Fortitude...gives us the courage to remain firm in our Faith against all worldly pressures.

Knowledge...permits a person to see more than one dimension of an issue in order to grasp the right path, the path of Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Piety...helps us think of ourselves as children of God and be eager to serve him.

Fear of the Lord...also called "wonder and awe", inspires and encourages us to respect him and all his creations.

Thank you, Bishop Gustavo, and congratulations to our newly confirmed!

Two adults and 55 younger parishioners of St. Jerome's were confirmed this weekend by our Bishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, M.Sp.S., at the 5:30 p.m. Saturday Mass.

This is both a beginning and an end.

It's an end to the process of receiving the initial sacraments.

It's a beginning of life as a fully initiated member of the Roman Catholic faith. Hopefully, it's the beginning of lives that, with God's help, will mature ever more deeply in Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Truly following Jesus is the way that leads to a fully satisfying life on earth and to Eternal Life in heaven.

We wish to express our gratitude to the teachers and administrators of our Parish School and our Religious Education Program for their dedicated service in preparing our newly confirmed, who are as follows:

**Leslie Alba
Jonathan Arndt
Maria Babich
Denis Bajic
Angelina Bergthold
Joseph Bertucci
Steven Beyer
Richard Bielski
Angelina Brcic
Maja Broekl
Amanda Busljeta
Christopher Busljeta
Alyssa Dengler
Cromm Fallon
Karli Ferro
Anthony Grassano
Irvan Grepo
Taylor Gusich
James Hillock
Michael Hillock
Daniela Hrvojevic
Kristina Hrvojevic
Nolan Judycki
Armando Juresic
Jakov Juric
Vincent Kenny
Mariana Kikas
Tomislav Kikas
Davor Kovacevic**

**Renata Kovacevic
Ante Kraljevic
Berislav Kristo
Danijela Krizanac
Christopher Lisenby
Joshua Lisenby
Gianna LoCoco
Lea Markovic
Selena Olague
Margaret Palacios
Madeline Perseghin
Robert Pervan
Alberto Pimentel
Thomas Platt
Peter Puljic
Antonio Quintero
Angelica Rangel
Lauren Rubio
Juan Sanchez
Rebecca Sarkauskas
Tomislav Spehar
Dominick Sperando
Miroslav Tomic
Tanja Valentic
Dominick Vivirito
Alex Von Keudell
Lidia Zgela
Hrvoje Zolo**

Coming soon: Friday, May 11, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the 2007 "Croatian American Day on Daley Plaza." There will be a musical cultural program, as well as Croatian arts and crafts. Stop by the many booths. And pray for no rain — though performances can be moved indoors.

Congratulations to our 2nd Graders who received their First Confessions this past Tuesday. Next weekend, on May 6, is their First Communion, which will occur at a special Mass Sunday afternoon at 1:30.

A hearty thank you to every one of the following **St. Jerome Youth Service Corps** workers who helped make sandwiches for the needy as part of their Lenten projects:

Lizzy Johnston	Lauren Rubio
Sara McCall	Davorka Toromanović
Dominick Sperando	Michaelina Kufolo
Lena DiCaro	John Caruso
Madeline Perseghin	Therese Caruso
Brianna Babich	Karen Fratto
Maria Babich	Rita Perisin
Ozana Paraga	Vicky Czuprynski
Dario Paraga	Dave Czuprynski
Izabela Paraga	Janel Sedevic
Taylor Geisich	Anna Marie Vasilj
Rebecca Insalaco	Youth Service Coordinator:
Cindy Accetturo	Ivanka Paraga

Save the Date:

Tuesday, June 19, 7 p.m., our second **"St. Jerome Night" at Sox Park.** The 2005 World Series champs take on 2003's champions, the Florida Marlins. *Tickets will soon arrive in the rectory. More information will be forthcoming.*

RICOBENE'S NIGHT

FIGHTING BREAST CANCER:

Please join us at Ricobene's, Wednesday, May 9, from 5 - 8 pm as we raise money to fight breast cancer. Get a night out of the kitchen & come chat with us. Carry out and Delivery count too! Just mention RACE TO EMPOWER when placing your order. All proceeds go to: Race To Empower, Mothers Day at Grant Park.

Join our team "Cure Couture" as we walk on May 13 to help ensure that no one faces breast cancer alone.

For more information, call Jan Ferro 312-225-9751, Julie Pesce Marcus 312-218-3787, or Chris Pesce 773-847-6914.

Flyers are in the back of the church.