

In 1963 Pope Paul VI designated Good Shepherd Sunday as *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*. Christ Jesus, the Good Shepherd, knows us well and gives his life for us. In the name of Christ Jesus we rejoice in the Good Shepherd who leads us into fullness of life.

As we celebrate this feast we pray for fidelity to our vocation. The Church invites us to honor the vocation of all Christians given at baptism. Through the vocation of marriage, priesthood, diaconate, consecrated life, and the single life may we further the reign of God. May those who are discerning their life vocation listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd to guide them.

Serra U.S.A. has produced this resource for the celebration of *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*. There are many other vocation resources that are available to enhance vocation awareness in your parish, religious community, or other church groups. (www.serraus.org)



**World Day of Prayer
for Vocations
April 22, 2018**

Year B

Fourth Sunday of Easter

- Acts of the Apostles 4:8–12
- Psalm 118
- I John 3:1–2
- John 10:11–18

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**World Day of Prayer
for Vocations
April 22, 2018**

**LITURGY PREPARATION GUIDE
Year B**

Introductory Rites

- Processional Hymn* ___ *I Know That My Redeemer Lives*, DUKE STREET, WLP, GIA, OCP
___ *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*, OLD ONE HUNDREDTH,
WLP, GIA, OCP
___ *Gather Us In*, Marty Haugen, GIA
___ *Come, Worship the Lord*, John Michael Talbot,
Birdwing Music/Cherry Lane Music Publishing Co., Inc.
Administered by EMI Christian Music, found in OCP
-

Penitential Rite A sprinkling rite is recommended.

Gloria

- Sprinkling Rite* ___ *Waters of Life*, Laura Kutscher, WLP
___ *All You Who Are Thirsty*, Michael Connolly, GIA
___ *Come to the River*, Bob Hurd, OCP
-

Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading Acts 4:8–12

- Psalm Response* Psalm 118
___ *This Is the Day*, Alan J. Hommerding, WLP
___ *Let Us Rejoice*, Marty Haugen, GIA
___ *This Is the Day*, Scott Soper, OCP
-

Second Reading 1 John 3:1–2

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel John 10:11–18

Homily See *Homily Notes*

General Intercessions See *General Intercessions*



**World Day of Prayer
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HOMILY NOTES

Fourth Sunday of Easter + Year B

Today, the fourth Sunday of Easter, is also known as “Good Shepherd” Sunday. Though most of us in the United States are not directly connected with shepherds by trade, we know about them. The Church uses this metaphor when referring to our bishops and other Church leaders. Jesus is the central “Good Shepherd” who shows us the way to care for God’s people. On this day we also celebrate *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*. The Church invites us to reflect on our individual call to respond to God’s voice. Let us take a look at the life of a person who responded to the call to follow the “Good Shepherd” and to be one also—St. Francis.

St. Francis of Assisi is beloved by many Christians and non-Christians in the world today. He is admired as a holy man, a man of prayer and a man of peace. Images of Francis and statues abound. He is often depicted nurturing animals or in ecstasy receiving the wounds of Christ.

His life story is well known, however, his early life is rarely a focus of its telling. The beauty of Francis’ conversion and the power of God working through him in his later years are more exciting and inspiring aspects of his story.

Francis’ life in his younger days resembled in some ways that of an American of today. If you remove the technological advances from our day and age you would find that we have much in common with him. As the son of a successful cloth merchant, he was comfortable in life. He possessed nice clothes, money in his pocket, and friends to spend time with. If he had stayed within the family business it is possible, at the end of his life, people would have thought fondly of him. “A good man,” they might have spoken of him after a long life of comfort.

God called Francis to be so much more than a comfortable cloth merchant. By answering this call to a different life, God greatly impacted his Church, and the faith of many people through him. At a critical point in his life, Francis heard the call to be something more and answered that call. By God’s grace Francis detached himself, let go of his comfortable surroundings, his material comforts, and his family and friends.

Today, Francis is a hero of faith for being able to do so. Francis is a heroic inspiration, because deep down we realize that God calls each of us to be something more. Together all men and women of every vocation – married, single, religious and priest – are being beckoned by God to a depth of discipleship that most likely exceeds what our peers would find as “comfortable.” Maybe we hedge our response. We dare not allow ourselves to be challenged to the depth of what God has planned for us.

Statues and paintings of the mundane are not often in demand. Rather, we desire inspiring and heroic figures to adorn our walls and rest on our shelves. Would Francis be a standing sentinel in so many gardens around the world today if he had remained a cloth merchant's son?

God is calling heroes forth in every vocation today. Especially new shepherds of heroic faith, heroic virtue and heroic zeal are being invited to be so much more than we realize we can be.

[Homilist may insert a local story or his favorite story of a hero's answer to God's call to serve as a priest, religious sister or brother. A Chicago example: Fr. John Smyth, all-American basketball player at Notre Dame. He turned down an NBA career to answer the call to priesthood. Through Mercy Boys and Girls home and, now, Notre Dame High School, like St. Francis, he has made a large impact on the lives of many people.]

On this Good Shepherd Sunday we celebrate *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*, a day dedicated around the universal Church to pray for an increase in vocations to the religious life and the priesthood. It is also a day to celebrate the call of each baptized Christian including single and married persons.

In prayer we often communicate to God our hopes, dreams and aspirations. As in any communication, after we speak, we also listen. If we listen to God's voice in prayer over time, then we can begin to know God's hopes, dreams and aspirations for us. In daily, dedicated prayer we come to know Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, who increases our self-knowledge and reveals our vocation to us.

Pray this day with your heart. Communicate to God everything that resides within your heart. Then listen with your heart. Listen quietly, peacefully to what stirs within it. *"If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts."* If today God calls you beyond your comfort zone, then trust He will give you what you need to answer. If, in the future, God calls you to detach from a comfortable way of life, because he has something more for you, then have courage, be confident and answer.

John Paul II exhorted us to, "Be not afraid." The Church in every age stands on the shoulders of heroic men and women of every vocation. In light of recent struggles within the priesthood and religious life, God is calling heroes from among us to religious life and the priesthood. He is calling shepherds for His people. God asked Francis to "rebuild my Church." God is calling forth men and women today to help do the same.

Pray for young people to hear their vocational call and to courageously answer it. Pray that parents and families will encourage their children to be open to a possible call to the religious life and priesthood. Pray for men and women answering the call, that they may be joyful in answering and have supportive family and friends. Pray for those being called to religious life and priesthood. Pray, like Francis, that they answer the call to be shepherds for us today. If you are being called to something more, answer. Who will be the next Francis if not you?





**World Day of Prayer
for Vocations
April 22, 2018**

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

Presider: Trusting in the love of God,
we offer our needs and petitions:

Reader: After each prayer, please respond: Gracious God, hear us.

- For world and Church leaders,
May God give them vision and make them instruments of peace, we pray:
- For this faith community of (*N. name the parish*)
May God bless us so that we may be people committed to Christian living, we pray:
- For those who are discerning their Christian vocation,
May God inspire them to be open to his call, we pray:
- For the sick and suffering people of the world,
May they find hope and healing, we pray:
- For those who have died (especially . . .)
May God grant them eternal life and may those who grieve their loss be comforted,
we pray:
- For the intentions we hold in our hearts (pause)
May God hear our prayers and strengthen us with your Spirit, we pray:

Presider: Gracious God, we thank you for Christ Jesus, our Good Shepherd.
Listen to your people who lift their hearts up to you
in the hope of receiving your blessing.
Be with us now and forever. Amen.

Music Selections

- *Hymn of Joy*, HYMN TO JOY, WLP
- *Lord, You Give the Great Commission*, ABBOT'S LEIGH, WLP, GIA, OCP
- *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian*, African–American tune, WLP, GIA
- *The Living God My Shepherd Is*, BROTHER JAMES' AIR, OCP

Psalmody

Select a sung or spoken version of one or two psalms.
(Suggestions: Psalms 16, 23, 100, 139)

Reading (Choose one)

Select an appropriate reading from Fourth Sunday of Easter,
Acts 4:8-12, 1 John 3:1-2, John 10:11-18, Mark 8:34-35,
Philippians 3:7-11, 2 Timothy 1:6-11

Reflection

Invite a married couple, a single person, or a priest, brother, sister, or deacon to share how their Christian vocation both blesses and challenges them.

Commitment Blessing

Offer individual blessing—bless each person with sign of the cross on forehead and/or hands, with or without oil or water. Individual crosses or ribbons may be given to each person.

Instrumental/meditative music may enhance time of blessing.

General Intercessions

See *General Intercessions*

The USA Council of Serra International Vocations Committee is able to prepare and provide this planning kit to dioceses, parishes, schools, religious congregations, and Serra clubs at no cost through a generous grant from the Bishop Britt Vocation Fund. Should you want to insure our ability to continue this program at no cost please consider a gift to the Bishop Britt Vocation Fund. For more information please contact the USA Council of Serra International 1-888-777-6681 or email. ©2015 USA Council of Serra International



**World Day of Prayer
for Vocations
April 22, 2018**

**Fourth Sunday of Easter
Year B**

Prayer Service



Call to Prayer

Leader: We gather “In the name of the Father + . . .”
Love and peace in Jesus Christ, our Shepherd!
All: Thanks be to God!

Song

Opening Prayer

Leader: Gracious God,
All: With grateful hearts we welcome the presence
of Christ Jesus, our Good Shepherd.
We accept the mission of Christ
to bring good news to the world
by our baptismal commitment to gospel living.

Bless us with discerning hearts.
May we have the courage to give our lives
in loving service through married life, the single life,
the consecrated life, and ordained life.

Inspire men and women to respond generously
and embrace the gift of a religious vocation.

We unite our prayers with the whole Church,
with the communion of saints, with Christ and the Spirit
in praise and thanksgiving now and forever. Amen.

Psalmody

Reading

Reflection

Commitment Blessing

Leader: By our baptism, we are called to give our lives to the
mission of Christ. As you are blessed with the sign of
the cross may you deepen your Christian commitment.
(Individual blessings)

General Intercessions

The Lord’s Prayer

Sign of Peace

Sending Forth

Leader: May God, the Source of Life,
stir within you a deep passion for the gospel.
All: Amen!

Leader: May Jesus, the Good Shepherd,
guide and protect you
as you give yourselves to following him.
All: Amen!

Leader: May the Holy Spirit, the Advocate,
strengthen you in your Christian vocation.
All: Amen!

Leader: May God bless you,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
All: Amen!

Leader: Go now in peace and love.
All: Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

Concluding Song





Prayer for Vocations

Gracious God,
With grateful hearts we welcome the presence
of Jesus, our Good Shepherd.
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www.serraus.org



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BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

For use Sunday, April 15, 2018

Next Sunday, April 26, the Fourth Sunday of Easter is also known as Good Shepherd Sunday. In 1963 Pope Paul VI designated this day as *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*. Our parish will join with the universal church to ask for God's blessings that we may be strengthened in our Christian vocation. (*Add details about your parish observance.*)

For use Sunday, April 22, 2018

Today, the Fourth Sunday of Easter: Good Shepherd Sunday is a special celebration of *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*. The world-wide Church honors all Christian vocations. Christ Jesus gives his life for us that we might know fullness of life. We pray for openness to God's call and to accept the gift of our Christian vocation. Christ Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is with us to guide and protect us on our life journey. You are invited to participate in our parish celebration. (*Add details about your parish observance.*)







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Come join us!

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FAMILY TAKE-HOME PAGE

Family Vocation Candle(s)

Materials needed: Plain clear glass tea light candleholder, tea light candle, colored tissue paper cut into small pieces, paint brush, Mod Podge (*available at craft stores*), permanent marker & magazines (*optional*). *Each person may wish to create a candleholder.*

1. Start by putting Mod Podge on a section of the glass.
2. Place a piece of tissue in this space and smooth it onto the glass with your brush.
3. Apply a thin layer of Mod Podge on top of tissue.
4. Take another piece of tissue and overlay on an edge of the piece that is already there.
5. Continue steps 1–4 until holder is covered with tissue. Let dry for about 10 minutes.
6. You may wish to cut words or picture from magazine or write words with marker to add to the candleholder.
7. Apply another thin coat of Mod Podge and let dry.
8. Create a prayer space and place the candle there with a Bible, plant, cross, piece of material.

Create a Family Vocation Prayer

Talk together about what a vocation is. Every Christian person has a vocation that is the living out of the baptismal promises. Jot down words that you may wish to include in your prayer.

The following is a simple pattern of prayer that could help you write your prayer:

Begin by addressing God and giving God praise. (*Glory*)

Next tell God what you are thankful for. (*Story*)

Ask for God's help. (*Worry*)

End by praising God again (*Glory*)

Glory, Story, Worry, Glory is an easy way to remember a pattern for prayer. This is the same pattern as the Our Father.

Put your prayer into writing. Keep it where you will remember to pray it often. You may wish to print it out on special paper or decorate it and laminate it.

Family Prayer Service

Gather in a comfortable space. Choose a song. Light your vocation candle.

Call to Prayer (Leader) As we gather, let us remember:

The light of Christ surrounds us.
The love of Christ enfolds us.
The power of Christ protects us.
The presence of Christ watches over us.
And wherever we are, God is with us.
And all is well!

Reading 1 John 3:1–2 (*Take from the feast of the Good Shepherd*)

Reflect and Share What does it mean to you to be a “Child of God?”

Blessing (*Bless each other with the sign of the cross on the forehead.*)

Prayers of Intercession (*Offer personal prayers*)

Our Father and/or Family Vocation Prayer

Conversation Starters

Take time to share with your family about the Christian vocation. These open-ended sentences can be used as conversation starters.

- A person I really admire is. . .because. . .
- My baptism means a lot to me because. . .
- Married couples live a Christian vocation by. . .
- Single people make a difference in the Church by. . .
- If God calls me to be a (priest, brother, sister, deacon) I would. . .

Called by Name

There is a Catholic custom for parents to choose a religious name for their child/ren. Sometimes people also choose a Biblical or saint’s name for confirmation. Take time to find out about the saints after whom family members are named. Check on the internet and/or in books with the lives of saints. Talk about how the saint’s lives give witness to the Christian vocation. What qualities of that person do you want to live out also?

Personal Contacts

Invite your parish priest, sister, brother, deacon to dinner and talk about his/her vocation choice.

Write a letter of appreciation to someone (priest, sister, brother, deacon, youth minister, parents, neighbor, teacher), thanking him/her for being a witness of Jesus.

Visit to a Religious Community or Seminary

Check out what religious communities and seminaries are present within your diocese.

Look in your diocesan paper to see if there are open houses/vocation fairs.

Go on the web to learn more about them.

If possible, call and see if you could visit them.

Vocation Word Scramble

Unscramble these words that are related to Christian vocations. Find out what they mean.

- | | | | |
|----------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. mmtrinao | 4. vsereic | 7. bmpiaat | 10. rbthore |
| 2. swvo | 5. ptsrei | 8. ngsiel | 11. llca |
| 3. lyho rorsed | 6. sstire | 9. nocaed | 12. ryrpae |

Mark your Calendars!

World & National Annual Events	2018 Year B	2019 Year C	2020 Year A
World Day for Consecrated Life*	February 4	February 3	February 2
World Day of Prayer for Vocations**	April 22	May 12	May 3
National Vocation Awareness Week	November 4-10	November 3-9	November 1-7

*The US Bishops observe WDCL on February 2 when that date falls on a Sunday; if not it is observed on the Sunday after February 2.

**The Holy Father issues a pastoral letter each year for the celebration of World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Download it at <http://www.vatican.va>.



USA Council of Serra International
Our mission is to foster and affirm vocations to the
priesthood and vowed religious life.

Pray! Invite! Encourage! Affirm! Vocations

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