



Forming lives ready to face the future

FAMILY PRAYER SHEET

Fourth Week of Easter



Dear NPCAT Families

This prayer sheet aims to help families pray together now that we cannot go to Mass, particularly over this celebration of Easter. We hope that you will be able to use the activities to help our children and adults grow in faith at this time. We have tried to include activities that use resources that you might already have at home. If you don't have access to all of these resources, we hope that the activities give you inspiration to do something to explore the gospel and themes.

God Bless.

Angela O'Brien, Lead Lay Chaplain



Reading the Gospel from this Sunday's Mass

A reading from the Gospel according to John 10:1-10

I am the gate of the sheepfold

Jesus said:

'I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them.

So Jesus spoke to them again:

'I tell you most solemnly,
I am the gate of the sheepfold.
All others who have come
are thieves and brigands;
but the sheep took no notice of them.
I am the gate.
Anyone who enters through me will be safe:
he will go freely in and out
and be sure of finding pasture.
The thief comes
only to steal and kill and destroy.
I have come
so that they may have life and have it to the full.'

Some ways to tell the story to younger children:

A short cartoon retelling: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ar732X9uO3I>

In song: Baa baa (He's the good shepherd) song
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGPOX3vQtU8>

Reflection

This week is Good Shepherd Sunday so the gospel for this week reflects the idea of Christ as a shepherd. Jesus' listeners would have had no problems in understanding this reference to a shepherd. Everyone knew that this meant someone who looks after the sheep with no regard to what the personal cost to themselves would be. In this way we can understand that Jesus is like a shepherd as he gave up his life on the cross so that we could be saved. Just as a shepherd would work to save a sheep from harm.

Discussion Points

- Whom do you think the sheep and the gatekeeper represent?
- In this passage Jesus speaks of being both the gate and the shepherd. What do you think these images represent?
- Who do you suppose are Jesus' sheep?
- Where do people hear Jesus' voice today?
- How do a person's attitudes and actions reveal that he or she follows Jesus?
- What are some qualities of a good shepherd?
- Are you one of Jesus' sheep?

Questions taken from "Exploring the Sunday Lectionary: a Teenagers guide to the readings cycle A" by Sandy Rigby and Steve Mason.

Activities

Good shepherd story stones

You will need: stones and paints

Make a set of stones to help tell the story of the good shepherd.



Activity taken from: <http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com>

Make a sheep

You will need: things such as a paper plate, cotton wool balls, card, or pompom maker and wool



Make a sheep to remind us that we are the sheep and Jesus is our shepherd. You could do this using a paper plate with cotton wool stuck on it and then the sheep's head or make a pompom sheet using white wool.



Sheep trail

You will need: toy sheep or sheep images

Can the shepherd find his sheep? Hide the sheep around the house and garden and get the children to find them. Just like the good shepherd who will go looking for his sheep if they go missing.



What can you do for others?

- Spend time playing with your pet
- Make someone laugh

Prayers

Christ the good shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep, draw you and all who hear this voice, to be one flock within one fold, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

Taken from: <http://www.allageworshipresources.org>

Thank you God that Jesus is a good shepherd, who loves us, leads us, feeds us and protects us. Help us always to stay close to him and to follow him. In Jesus' name. Amen

Taken from: <https://www.sundaychildrensfocus.com>

An Act of Spiritual Communion

Introduction

You might find it helpful to have a space as a focus for their prayer. This might include a crucifix, icon or other holy image, and a lighted candle.

Sign of the Cross: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Examen: Before listening to the Word of God take a moment to reflect.

For what am I grateful to God for today?

Where did I stray from God: through words, actions or things I did not do.

How might I do better tomorrow?

What grace do I ask from God in order to live more closely in his love?

You may wish to conclude by saying: Lord Jesus, you have revealed yourself as the way to the Father: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. You have poured out on your people the Spirit of truth: Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. You are the Good Shepherd, leading us to eternal life: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

The Word of God: The readings for the Mass of the Day can be found in a People's Missal or online Universalis [<https://universalis.com/mass.htm>]. Either read all the texts or choose just to read the Gospel of the Day. Or use the gospel reading that is on this sheet.

Silent reflection: Pause for a moment of silent reflection.

Prayers & Intercessions:

Pray for family and loved ones so that they may be held in God's compassionate care.

Pray for other countries who are struggling with the effects of the COVID 19 virus. If the following intentions are said in a family or other group you may wish to conclude each one with the response: Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer

For those in authority: may they offer advice with care and integrity, may they seek to protect the poor and vulnerable.

For all who work in healthcare: give strength to all who look after the sick so that they may bring comfort and relief to the suffering.

For the Church: may she offer prayers and consolation for all those affected.

For our local community and all for those in need: may those who are isolated know the support and service of their neighbours.

Lord's Prayer: Our Father...

Spiritual Communion: Prayer of St Alphonsus

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now

receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Conclusion: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Additional Prayers

Pope Francis' prayer to the Virgin for protection

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith. Your, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need. We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father's will and to do what Jesus tells us: He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen. We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our pleas — we who are put to the test — and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

Prayer for the Household

Hear us, Lord, and send your angel from heaven to visit and protect, to comfort and defend all who live in this house. Amen

Taken from "When Mass cannot be celebrated publicly"
<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/03/No-Mass-A4.pdf>

Blessed Nicholas Postgate, Pray For Us

