



OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH In NEW MILTON

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

15 Mount Ave, New Milton. BH25 6NT

Parish priest: Father George Ngwa

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Our parish live streaming: <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton>

Website: www.nfwp.org.uk Church opening hours 7am to 7pm.

4th Sunday of Easter

Year A

7th May 2017

Jesus The Good Shepherd



Today is known as GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY because, in each year of the liturgical cycle on this 4th Sunday, the Gospel is always taken from the 10th chapter of John where Jesus speaks of himself as the "good shepherd". In today's Gospel reading, Jesus emphasises the self-sacrificing element in his own life: "The good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep." He contrasts the good shepherd

who owns the sheep to someone who is simply hired to look after them. The hired man thinks primarily of his own welfare and, if he sees a wolf coming, he takes off, leaving the sheep to be attacked and scattered in fear and terror. Jesus, on the other hand, will not be like a hired person: "I lay down my life for my sheep." Perhaps he contrasts himself with those mercenary religious leaders among his own people and found in every religious grouping in the world today, who do just what is expected of them but have no real commitment or sense of responsibility to those in their charge.

He knows his sheep: Secondly, the good shepherd knows his sheep and they know him. There is a mutual bond of love and intimacy. That love is compared to the deep mutual relationship that exists between Jesus and his Father. "My own know me just as the Father knows me." Again the hired man or the self-interested leader will not have such a relationship with his charges. The Second Reading speaks in similar terms when the author says, "Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children, and that is what we are."

One shepherd and one flock: Thirdly, the good shepherd deeply desires that many other sheep should come to identify themselves with him. "There are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and these I have to lead as well." The ultimate goal is that "there will be only one flock, and one shepherd", that the whole world will be united together with its God and Lord. This is the meaning of the Kingdom which is at the heart of the Gospel message.

This is a goal which preoccupies us still today. There are still so many millions of people who have not yet heard the message of a loving God, a God who sent his only Son to die for them. They seek meaning and happiness in their lives by pursuing all kinds of other goals which inevitably turn to ashes: material abundance, status in the eyes of others, power over others, mistaking pleasure and hedonism for happiness... In so doing, they reject Jesus

the Good Shepherd. "Because the world refused to acknowledge him, therefore it does not acknowledge us." This is something we must learn to accept as a fact, even if it is hard to understand and even harder to take. No matter how closely we follow in the footsteps of our Shepherd, in fact, the more closely we follow him, the more likely it is that we will be rejected and even attacked. More tragic still, however, there are so many people who claim Christ as Lord, many of them very good and sincere people, who are often divided, even bitterly divided among themselves. Here, more than anywhere is there a need for all to follow one Shepherd and form one flock. Otherwise how can we give witness to the love of Christ if that love is lacking among the servants of Jesus?

Lastly, there are those who, though incorporated through baptism into the Body of Christ, consistently behave in a way which totally distorts people's understanding of Christ and his call to discipleship, fulfilment and happiness. Probably, most of us have at one time or another failed in our call to give witness to the truth and love that is to be found in Christ.

Giving life willingly: Jesus emphasises that, in giving his life for his sheep, he is doing so of his own will. It is not just by force of circumstances. His death is to be the living proof that "the greatest love a person can show is to give one's life for one's friends". This is the proof that Jesus truly is a Good Shepherd. On the face of it and looked at with purely secular eyes, the life and mission of Jesus seemed an utter failure. Even Jesus' friends and admirers must have shaken their heads in sorrow as they saw him die on the cross. Jesus himself said "It is finished." But, for him, the words had a completely different meaning.

As Peter tells the assembled Jews in the Temple in today's First Reading, "This is the stone rejected by you the builders, but which has proved to be the keystone. For of all the names in the world given to men, this is the only one by which we can be saved."

As Jesus himself says in the Gospel today, "I lay down my life of my own free will, and as it is in my power to lay it down, so it is in my power to take it up again." And so it was.

Vocation: Lastly, all of this is intimately linked with the second theme of this Sunday. Not only is it Good Shepherd Sunday, it is also "Vocations Sunday". On this day we are especially asked first of all to pray that the Church may be provided with the leaders needed to do its work of spreading the Gospel. We know that at the present time there is a critical shortage of such leaders, at least in the traditional sense – priests and religious. But, while we may earnestly pray that our Church be supplied with the leaders it needs, there can be a tendency among us to pray that OTHERS may answer that call. We do not see ourselves as included. We may pray earnestly for more young people to offer themselves as priests and religious but clearly exclude our own children. But the problem is a wider one. We have for too long given a much too narrow meaning to the word 'vocation'. We tend to limit it to a calling to be a priest or a member of a religious institute. But, in fact, every single one of us has a vocation. For most of us, probably, it is what we are now doing be it as spouses, parents, teachers, doctors, civil servants, running a business, salespersons... or whatever.

Nevertheless, each one of us should be asking ourselves today: Is what I am spending my energies on every day my real vocation? Is this what God wants me to be doing with my life? How is what I am doing giving witness to my Christian faith? What contribution am I offering to making this world a better place for people to live in? To what extent am I a spreader of truth, of love, of justice, of freedom, of tolerance and acceptance...? And, if I am in a position which would be difficult to change (as a spouse or parent or holding a particular job), how, within that situation, is God calling me to greater service of my Church and my community? Am I giving something through my life or am I just using society (and even the Church) to get what I want? God is calling every single one of us to work for the Gospel. For a small number it may be as a priest or religious – and that call can come at any time in one's life. But there are hundreds of other ways of serving the Church and helping to build up the Christian community. Where is God calling me to make my own unique contribution based on the particular talents God has given me? If every single one of us were to answer that question sincerely and to act upon it, I am confident that our Church would have all the leadership it needs. *Gleaned from the spiritual writings of [Good Shepherd Sunday/Vocation Sunday]*

Fr. George Ngwa

After Masses this weekend there is a talk by the Catenian Association about their Bursary Award Scheme and there is a second collection for the Clergy Training Fund.

GLASS DOORS. The plan is to have a display which covers 2 consecutive weekends, the last one in May and 1st in June. Let the office know you are doing a display so space is allowed. Please be

careful of copyright if you download anything from the internet. Many thanks.

We desperately need altar servers- male and female- for our weekday masses. Approx. every 4 weeks. Training given. Contact Fr George Ngwa, Tony or Manuel. Thank you.

Attention all Readers (and anyone interested in becoming a reader at the Saturday Vigil Mass or Sunday Mass- I have a few names already, Thank you. Father George would like to meet with all readers and potential readers on Thursday 1st June 2017 at 7pm in the Hall before the new rota starts in July. Thank you.

From the Diocese - Urgent Appeal sent on behalf of Fr John Lee

Write to your MP now

The UK government had committed to **resettling 20,000 Syrian refugees and 3,000 at risk children by 2020**. Because this commitment was made until the end of the current Parliament, it is now under threat.

We need to make sure it appears in all parties' manifestos - as an explicit commitment extended until the end of the next Parliament in 2022.

We can't let this lifeline for the most vulnerable refugees from the region be closed.

Write to your MP and ask them to make this commitment in their party manifesto.

Fr John Lee

Diocesan Refugee Response Working Group

FANNING THE FLAME. An annual, week long Summer camp for young people aged 10-25 in Hampshire 21-25 August. Run at the Convent of the Dominican Sisters at Sway. Adults or young people, all are welcome! For more information and booking forms: fanningtheflame.co.uk or fff1995@gmail.com

Last week before he went to Egypt Pope Francis spoke to the delegation for Catholic Action.

The Holy Father took the floor and indicated the mission of the association for today, insisting that: "The charism of Catholic Action is the charism of the Church, deeply incarnated in the present and in the environment of every diocesan church." He, therefore, praised the International Forum of Catholic Action for having "decidedly adopted *Evangelii Gaudium* as its charter."

This choice derives from the fact that "the mission is not a task of Catholic Action among many others; it is **the** task. Catholic Action has the charism for exercising the Church's pastoral ministry;" and, in order to do this, it is necessary to "rethink your formation plans, your forms of apostolate, and even your prayer, so that they may be essentially, and not occasionally, missionary." (Pope Francis Vatican Newsite)

IFCA was established by the Catholic Action movements of Argentina, Spain, Austria, Malta, Mexico and Italy, following the 1987 Synod on the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church and in the world, and the publication of the Postsynodal Apostolic Exhortation

Christifideles Laici. They felt the need to create a structure to enable associations and movements belonging to Catholic Action to meet, exchange and show solidarity, in terms of the new evangelisation. On 29 June 1995 the Pontifical Council for the Laity decreed recognition of the International Forum of Catholic Action as an international organisation of Pontifical Right. (The Pontifical Council for the Laity is now the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life- due to a reform made by Pope Francis in 2016)

For your information. IFCA sets out to enable associations and federations of Catholic Action movements in different countries to get to know each other; to promote initiatives to support and develop the specific service that they are called to provide consistently with their identity, with all the variety of different forms they take due to their cultural, social and ecclesial contexts; to deepen the study of issues affecting the life and the mission of the Church at the universal, continental or regional levels; to establish forms of dialogue and cooperation with all the lay apostolate organisations at the international level; to represent the associations and federations of Catholic Action movements belonging to the Forum before the Holy See and civil international organisations. (IFCA website)

Sun 7 th May	Fourth Sunday of Easter	6pm Vigil Mass 10.00 Holy Mass- Missa Pro Populo 1pm Baptism- Ivy and Emma Perring	Coffee and tea in Hall after Mass
Mon 8 th May	Weekday of Easter	No Mass	5.45- 6.15 Living Rosary Group meeting
Tues 9 th May	Weekday of Easter	18.00 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for adoration followed by Rosary and Benediction 19.00 Holy Mass-	
Wed 10 th May	St John of Avila, priest, Doctor of the Church, optional memorial	9.00 Exposition, 9.30 Rosary, 9.50 Benediction, 10.00 Holy Mass- Paul Butler Thanksgiving 80th Birthday	Rosary intentions for the sick of the Parish.
Thur 11 th May	Weekday of Easter	9.00 Exposition, 9.30 Rosary, 9.50 Benediction, 10.00 Holy Mass – Paul Munro RIP recently	Rosary intentions for Peace in the world Choir practice after Mass
Fri 12 th May	St Nereus and St Achilleus, martyrs or St Pancras Martyr, optional memorials	NO EXPOSITION TODAY 10.00 Holy Mass- Holy Souls	Coffee morning after Mass in Hall 10.45-11.30 Holy Communion Classes at 5pm in hall
Sat 13 th May	Our Lady of Fatima	9.30 Divine Mercy Chaplet and veneration of the relic of Sister Faustina 10.00 Holy Mass- Cathy Pickles for Healing 6pm Vigil Mass of 4 th Sunday of Easter– in thanksgiving for blessings received (Yon family)	.
Sun 14 th May	4th Sunday of Easter	10.00 Holy Mass-	Coffee and tea in hall after Mass

Sacrament of Reconciliation

After Wednesday and Saturday morning Mass and before Sat Vigil Mass at 5.45pm and on request

The Indian Community Mass of the Syro Malabar rite is now continuing as the 1st Wednesday as there have been some problems changing the timings. The church

is in use from 4pm onwards on that day and the hall is usually in use.

COLLECTIONS for 30th April 2017 Loose £335.19 Gift aid envelopes £219.50. There will be second collection this week for the Clergy Training fund. Thank you very much for your continued support.

For enquires about Baptisms please contact the office for forms, and for funerals please discuss dates first with the funeral directors and meet the parish priest with a date. Enquiries about weddings please email the office with your details.

Readers 6/7 May

Sat: B Coyne, T Gearey
Sun: P Caffyn C Barrett
EMHC

Sat: B Dempster K Dempster T Gearey
Sun: A Joseph J Nichols G Mambo

Readers 13/14th May

Sat: A Nash, P Thorpe
Sun: C Fradd, H Fawcett
EMofHC

Sat: F Fallon, B Petts, Mor R Yon
Sun: S Salinger, A caneda, P Clarke

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OFFICE HOURS: Weds and Fri 10.45-12.00
Please leave any messages on answerphone or email.
Thank you.
Safeguarding: Katherine Dempster Tel. 01425 611643
Health and Safety: Lorenzo Bandonill
Hall Booking: via Parish Office

