



Catholic Parish of King's Lynn

Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation

London Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk. PE30 5HQ

Holy Family Church

Field Lane, Gaywood, King's Lynn, Norfolk. PE30 4AY

DEACON SHAUN MORRISON'S WEEKLY BULLETIN

Sunday — April 21, 2024

Dear Friends,

Today is the 4th Sunday of Easter.

"I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my own sheep and my own know me"

The YouTube link for the livestream of the 11.30am Mass is:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/J-rsEB-gQIQ?si=YUqHU46JNKVQr2rk>

Today is also the World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

From the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales:

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/vocations-sunday/>

In 1964, Pope Paul VI, launched Vocations Sunday, which we celebrate on the fourth Sunday of Easter, also called Good Shepherd Sunday. This year it is on the 21 April 2024, which marks the 61st Anniversary of World Day of Prayer for Vocations. As Catholics and people of God we all know that God is calling us and has a plan for each of us. He called each of us by name through our Baptism to holiness. He continues to call and cry out to us each day to be his disciples, some to the married life, some to the priesthood, some to religious life or to live as kind single people. Everybody is called! What is God calling you to? Along with the whole Church, let us pray for vocations today. Let us take time to stir the hearts and minds of the people around us to think about the topic of Vocation. The National Office for Vocation (NOV) invites you to talk and encourage children, young people, grandchildren, students, family members to respond generously to the calling of the Lord.

Prayer for Vocations Sunday:

God our Loving Father, you called each of us by

name through the Sacrament of Baptism to holiness.

Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, you made us the temples of the Holy Spirit.

Help us to listen to the cry of our Lord Jesus from the Holy Cross 'I thirst' and respond to the call 'Go out to the whole world and proclaim the good news to all the nations'.

Guide us in every step we take in life and lead us in every decision we make in responding to your call.

Make us and mould us into the living images of Christ your Son, who was always close to those in need.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.

From the Office of Readings for the 4th Sunday of Easter:

A reading from the homilies of Pope St Gregory the Great on the Gospels

Christ the good shepherd

I am the good shepherd. I know my own – by which I mean, I love them – and my own know me. In plain words: those who love me are willing to follow me, for anyone who does not love the truth has not yet come to know it.

My dear brethren, you have heard the test we pastors have to undergo. Turn now to consider how these words of our Lord imply a test for yourselves also. Ask yourselves whether you belong to his flock, whether you know him, whether the light of his truth shines in your minds. I assure you that it is not by faith that you will come to know him, but by love; not by mere conviction, but by action. John the evangelist is my authority for this statement. He tells

us that *anyone who claims to know God without keeping his commandments is a liar.*

Consequently, the Lord immediately adds: *As the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep.* Clearly he means that laying down his life for his sheep gives evidence of his knowledge of the Father and the Father's knowledge of him. In other words, by the love with which he dies for his sheep he shows how greatly he loves his Father.

Again he says: *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them; they follow me, and I give them eternal life.* Shortly before this he had declared: *If anyone enters the sheepfold through me he shall be saved; he shall go freely in and out and shall find good pasture.* He will enter into a life of faith; from faith he will go out to vision, from belief to contemplation, and will graze in the good pastures of everlasting life.

So our Lord's sheep will finally reach their grazing ground where all who follow him in simplicity of heart will feed on the green pastures of eternity. These pastures are the spiritual joys of heaven. There the elect look upon the face of God with unclouded vision and feast at the banquet of life for ever more. Beloved brothers, let us set out for these pastures where we shall keep joyful festival with so many of our fellow citizens. May the thought of their happiness urge us on! Let us stir up our hearts, rekindle our faith, and long eagerly for what heaven has in store for us. To love thus is to be already on our way. No matter what obstacles we encounter, we must not allow them to turn us aside from the joy of that heavenly feast. Anyone who is determined to reach his destination is not deterred by the roughness of the road that leads to it. Nor must we allow the charm of success to seduce us, or we shall be like a foolish traveller who is so distracted by the pleasant meadows through which he is passing that he forgets where he is going.

Responsory

- ℟. The good shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep, is risen from the dead:* for the sake of his flock, he was willing to endure death, alleluia.
- ℣. Christ has been sacrificed for us, our paschal victim:* for the sake of his flock, he was willing to endure death, alleluia.

Tuesday **23rd April** is the Solemnity of St. George, Martyr. Patron of England.



A reading from the sermons of Saint Peter Damian, Bishop.

His defence was the invincible banner of the cross

Our joy in today's feast is heightened by our joy in the glory of Easter, just as the splendour of a precious jewel enhances the beauty of its gold setting.

Saint George was a man who abandoned one army for another: he gave up the rank of tribune to enlist as a soldier for Christ. Eager to encounter the enemy, he first stripped away his worldly wealth by giving all he had to the poor. Then, free and unencumbered, bearing the shield of faith, he plunged into the thick of the battle, an ardent soldier for Christ.

Clearly what he did serves to teach us a valuable lesson: if we are afraid to strip ourselves of our worldly possessions, then we are unfit to make a strong defence of the faith.

As for Saint George, he was consumed with the fire of the Holy Spirit. Armed with the invincible standard of the cross, he did battle with an evil king and acquitted himself so well that, in vanquishing the king, he overcame the prince of all wicked spirits, and encouraged other soldiers of Christ to perform

brave deeds in his cause.

Of course, the supreme invisible arbiter was there, who sometimes permits evil men to prevail so that his will may be accomplished. And although he surrendered the body of his martyr into the hands of murderers, yet he continued to take care of his soul, which was supported by the unshakeable defence of its faith.

Dear brothers, let us not only admire the courage of this fighter in heaven's army but follow his example. Let us be inspired to strive for the reward of heavenly glory, keeping in mind his example, so that we will not be swayed from our path, though the world seduce us with its smiles or try to terrify us with naked threats of its trials and tribulations.

We must now cleanse ourselves, as Saint Paul tells us, from all defilement of body and spirit, so that one day we too may deserve to enter that temple of blessedness to which we now aspire.

Anyone who wishes to offer himself to God in the tent of Christ, which is the Church, must first bathe in the spring of holy baptism; then he must put on the various garments of the virtues. As it says in the Scriptures: Let your priests be clothed in justice. He who is reborn in baptism is a new man. He may no longer wear the things that signify mortality. He has discarded the old self and must put on the new. He must live continually renewed in his commitment to a holy sojourn in this world.

Truly we must be cleansed of the stains of our past sins and be resplendent in the virtue of our new way of life. Then we can be confident of celebrating Easter worthily and of truly following the example of the blessed martyrs.

Responsory

- ℟. Fearless in the sight of wicked men, this saint died in defence of the law of God,* for he was built on rock, alleluia.
- ℣. This is he who rejected the life of this world and gained the kingdom of heaven,* for he was built on rock, alleluia.

From Butler's Lives of the Saints book:

We are told that St George was a Christian Knight and that he was born in Cappadocia. It chanced, however, that he was riding one day in the province of Lybia, and there he came upon a city called Sylene, near which was marshy swamp. In this lived a dragon. The people had mustered together to

attack and kill it, but its breath was so terrible that all had fled. To prevent its coming nearer they supplied it every day with two sheep, but when the sheep grew scarce, a human victim had to be substituted. This victim was selected by lot, and the lot had just fallen on the king's own daughter. No one was willing to take her place, and the maiden had gone forth dressed as a bride to meet her doom. Then St. George, coming upon the scene, attacked the dragon and transfixed it with his lance. Further; he borrowed the maiden's girdle, fastened it round the dragon's neck, and with this led the monster captive into the city. The people in mortal terror were about to take flight, but St George told them to have no fear. If only they would believe in Jesus Christ and be baptised, he would slay the dragon. The king and all his subjects gladly assented. The dragon was killed and four ox-carts were needed to carry the carcass to safe distance. It should be noted, however that the story of the dragon, though given so much prominence, was a later accretion, of which we have no sure traces before the twelfth century.

There is every reason to believe that St George was a real martyr who suffered at Diospolis (i.e. Lydda) in Palestine, probably before the time of Constantine. Beyond this there seems to be nothing which can be affirmed with any confidence. The cult is certainly early.

It is not quite clear how St George came to be specially chosen as the patron saint of England. His fame had certainly travelled to the British Isles long before the Norman Conquest. The Felire of Oengus, under April 23, speaks of George, a son of victories with thirty great thousands, while Abbot Aelfric tells the whole extravagant story in metrical homily. William of Malmesbury states that Saints George and Demetrius, the martyr knights, were seen assisting the Franks at the battle of Antioch in 1098, and it seems likely that the crusaders, notably King Richard I, came back from the East with a great idea of the power of St George's intercession. At the national synod of Oxford in 1222 St George's Day was included among the lesser holidays, and in 1415 the constitution of Archbishop Chichele made it one of the chief feasts of the year. In the Interval King Edward III had founded the order of the Garter, of which St George has always been the patron. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (till 1778) his feast was a holiday of obligation for English Catholics, and Pope Benedict XIV

recognised him as the Protector of the Kingdom.

Thursday **25th April** is the Feast of St. Mark, Evangelist.

St. Mark was a cousin of St. Barnabas. He accompanied St. Paul the Apostle on his first missionary journey and later followed him to Rome. He was a disciple of St. Peter and reproduced his teaching in his Gospel. He is said to have founded the Church of Alexandria.

The lion symbolizes the resurrection of Christ the King. We look upon the lion as the king of beasts and as courageous. As Christians we too are called upon to be courageous and to spread the good news of Christ.



The link to our YouTube channel is:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8V030I7usRZiKoTlrwBAKq>

And the link to our Parish Website:

<http://www.catholicparish-kingslynn.org.uk/>

God bless

Shaun

Deacon Shaun Morrison
