

May 8, 2011

"Your Parish Family for Life"



St. Thomas More Catholic Church

1200 N. Indiana Street Phone (317) 831-4142
Mooresville, Indiana 46158 Fax (317) 834-2947
Web site: www.stm-church.org

Fr. Mark Gottemoeller Pastor

Kathy Phillips Executive Administrative Assistant
KPhillips@stm-church.org

Gail Smith Bookkeeper
GSmith@stm-church.org

Dan & Janet Rendon Building and Grounds

Marianne Hawkins Coordinator of Faith Formation
MHawkins@stm-church.org and Youth Ministry

Maureen Shea Coordinator of Music/Liturgy
MShea@stm-church.org Bulletin Editor

Sandy McQueen & Janet Rendon Preschool

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00-4:00
Parish Office (Fax) 834-2947 831-4142
Priest Residence 834-4249
Emergency Calls **ONL Y** 532-7352

Mass Schedule
Saturday Anticipation 5:00 pm
Sunday 8:00 am, 10:45 am, 7:00 pm
Weekday: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 am
Wednesday Evening 6:00 pm
Holy Days: Please call the office

Perpetual Exposition & Adoration
24 hours a day. Call the office to sign up for an hour.

ST. THOMAS MORE (1478-1535)

His belief that no lay ruler has jurisdiction over the Church of Christ caused him to be beheaded. He was a scholar, chancellor, lawyer, father and gentleman. One of his most well known prayers is:

"Pray for me as I will for thee that we may merrily meet in heaven."

✠ Parish Mission Statement ✠

Christ-centered people living as a family in God, we are inspired by our patron Saint Thomas More and his life's work being called upon to become "defenders of the faith". Collectively rich in the blessings bestowed on us, we are committed to our communities near and far to:

- ◆ Give Praise and Love to God as we have been shown by his Son Jesus Christ,
- ◆ Be good stewards of the gifts we have been entrusted with and rejoice in them,
- ◆ Embrace, Love and Affirm our sisters and brothers in Christ in the ministry of our Savior, Serve God and man, teach and learn in our community, renew ourselves in spiritual growth and sacramental grace and celebrate the liturgy and the Mass in the respect of the Roman Catholic way.

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, May 9
8:30 am-Jim Jones
Tuesday, May 10
8:30 am- Mary Gilbert
Wednesday, May 11-Golden Agers mass
11:30 am-Jeannette Bowling
Thursday, May 12
8:30 am-Melinda Rito
Friday, May 13
8:30 am-Les Schubert
Saturday, May 14
5:00 pm-Jim Jones
Sunday, May 15
8:00 am-Heim, Mayer, Rihm families
10:45 am-Margaret Bowen
7:00 pm-Parishioners of St. Thomas More

Ministry Schedule for May 14& 15, 2011

Ushers

Sat. 5 pm-Anita Baran, Rose Warthen
8:00 am-Kathy & John Phillips, Mary Jane Burns
10:45 am-Jeff & Cheryl Niemeier
7:00 pm-

Lectors

Sat. 5 pm-Kathy Mayo
8:00 am-Carol Pikosz
10:45 am-Ron Nagel
7:00 pm-Ruth Viles

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Sat. 5 pm-Larry Sutton, Sally Yates, Lauri Griffin
8:00 am-Larry & Ruth Rudolf
10:45 am-
7:00 pm-

Altar Servers

Sat. 5 pm-Michael Ronan
8:00 am- Sara Cassidy
10:45 am-Olivia & Julia Rito, Tyler Wise

Mass Coordinators

Sat. 5 pm-Sally Yates
Sun. 8 am-
10:45 am-

ADORATION CHAPEL Need Adorers:

Mon. 5-6 am, noon-1 pm; Wed. 3-4 am, 4-5 am,
Wed. 10-11 pm; Thurs. 3-4 am;
Fri. 11 am-noon, 4-5 pm, 5-6 pm, 6-7 pm,
7-8 pm; Sat. 12-1 am, 1-2 am, 4-5 am,
11-12 am, 3-4 pm, 7-8 pm; Sun. 2-3 am,
3-4 am, 10-11 am, 2-3 pm, 3-4 pm,
4-5 pm, every/other Sun. 11-12 pm;
Can you help? Call Rose, 831-0782 or
Maureen 490-2383

SACRAMENT AND COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Sacrament of Marriage

Engaged couples should contact the office at least six months in advance to allow for Marriage Preparation Program and meeting with Priest.

Sacrament of Baptism

Infant baptisms are celebrated the 3rd Sunday. Parents must attend the Baptismal Preparation Class. Call office during pregnancy. 831-4142.

Sacrament of Holy Orders

Those considering the Priesthood or a Religious Vocation, Contact Fr. Mark or the Archdiocesan Vocation Office-236-1490

Parish Pre-school

Please call the Parish Office for information at 831-4142

Religious Education

Pre K, Kindergarten-during 10:45 am mass,
Grades 1-8, H.S.-Sunday, 9:15 am-10:30 am Call Marianne, 831-4142

Pastoral Care

Annulments, Marriage Preparation, Faith Formation, Questions and Concerns, Emergencies: Contact Fr. Mark

New Parishioners

Welcome to our parish family! Please contact the office for registration forms and information. 831-4142

Reconciliation

Saturday 4:15-4:45 pm, Wednesday 5:30-5:55 pm, or by appointment

Sacrament of the Sick

In an emergency, contact the Parish Office any time. The hospitalized, those confined to home, and nursing home residents should contact the Parish Office to receive the Eucharist and/ or Anointing. 831-4142.

Interested in the Faith

Inquiry sessions as part of the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)
Call Maureen at 490-2383 or the office at 831-4142

ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMITTEES

Administrative/Finance: Mike Noth, 821-4965

Adoration Chapel: Rose Warthen, 831-0782, Maureen Shea, 490-2383

Applefest: 831-4142

Beggars for the Poor: Cheryl Hildenbrand, 996-4635

Bereavement Committee: 831-4142

Bible Study: 831-4142

Board of Education: Ron Nagel, 834-5034

Christ Renews His Parish: Dana Noel, 831-4142

CYO Sports: 831-4142

Knights of Columbus: Dave Allen, 839-5902

Liturgy: Maureen Shea, 490-2383

Moms Day Out: 831-4142

Parish Life: 831-4142

Parish Nurse: Cathy Gray, 831-9991

Parish Council: Wes Fry, 831-5946

Project Rachel: 236-1569, 800-382-9836 Abortion Healing

Respect for Life Committee: Kim Barnett, 417-2521

RCIA: Maureen Shea, 490-2383

Returning Home: 831-4142

St. Thomas More Free Clinic: 831-1697

St. Thomas More Social Hall: 834-4251

St. Vincent dePaul: Dennis Love: 831-6256

St. Vincent de Paul Pantry: 834-4252

Stewardship: 831-4142

Sunshine Club: Brian Petersson, 856-6668

Technology Committee: 831-4142

Vocation Promotion: 831-4142

Welcoming Committee: 831-4142

Women's Club: Carolyn Clements, 996-3755, Judy Lentz, 831-5219

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DAILY

8:30 am Mass,-Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri.

WEEKLY

Mon. 6:15 pm-Adult Choir-Church

Tues. 9:15-11:00 am-Bible Study, Library

Tues. 6:30 pm-RCIA, Library, Sept.-Easter

Wed. 11:30 am- Rosary at Meadow Lakes

Wed. 6:00 pm-Mass, Reconciliation, 5:30 pm

Sat. 5:00 pm-Mass, Reconciliation, 4:15 pm

Sun. Masses-8:00 am, 10:45 am, 7:00 pm

No eve Mass 2nd Wednesday

MONTHLY

2nd Mon.- Liturgy Mtg., 6:30 pm, Parish Center

1st Mon.-Board of Ed, 6:30 pm, Classroom area

1st Wed.-Adult Catechism class, 6:30-8:00 pm

1st Fri.-Women's Club, after 8:30 am Mass

2nd Wed.-11:30 am-Mass, lunch & activity for Senior Citizens

2nd Sat.- K of C Paper Drive, Big O, Mooresville

3rd Sun.- Baptisms, after 8:00 am Mass

3rd Mon.- Admin. Board, 6:30 pm, Parish Center

3rd Wed.-Pastoral Council-6:30 pm, Library

3rd Mon.- St. Vincent de Paul, 7:00 pm

3rd Thurs.-Bereavement group, 6:30 pm-Library

3rd Fri.- Churches in Mission, 9 am-noon

3rd Sat.-Beggars of the Poor

Year To Date Financial Report thru 4/25/11

	Budgeted Amt	Actual Amt
Sunday Collection 4/24/11		
	7,019.23	8,101.07
Total Sunday Collections		
	301,826.89	298,879.56
Building Fund 2010-2011		45,668.00
ADLF 2010-2011		20,536.78
Savings prior to July 1, 2010		21,746.28
Total Savings		87,951.06

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Thanks to them we receive our

bulletins at no charge:

**JIM WHITNEY/
RAY SKILLMAN**

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SERIOUSLY ILL MEMBERS

Samantha Bartlett	Wilma Hunt	Don Wewe	Mike Viles
Terrin Krawczyk	Sandra Hall	Jim Musters	
Bob Medsker	Mary Lou Schlagen	Bill O'Neal	Don Trusty
Jack Moon	David Minardo	Mary Gilbert	Toni Grieser
Bill Biltz	Donna Knuckles	George Mountain	Mary Ann Rihm
Terry Saucerman	Larry Stipe		Mary Beth Brown

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR CHRONICALLY ILL PARISHIONERS

Gene Bednarek	Clara Taylor	Vaden & Jan Brizendine
Caitlyn Brown	Tricia Rausch	Barry Catt
Steve Denning	Carolina Trischler	Marge Engelbert
Caleb Llewellyn	Ryan Long	Matthew Gregg
Stephanie Lamoureux	Nancy McKinney	Nicola Morgan
Laura Jasinsky	Marjorie Wagoner	Peg Palmer
Brittany Wells	Lyla Tomaszewski	Jennifer Denney
Kathryn Sappington	Beth Somers	Katie Wells
Nancy Sutton	Connie Tomaczewski	Melinda Rito
Kathy Webb	Julie Wiser	Kim Wright
Nancy Wells	David Miller	Shamus & Pamela Light

PLEASE PRAY FOR SICK FAMILY & FRIENDS:

Julie Fulkerson	Margaret Anderson	Rosemary Antonelli
Genevieve Ardencyk	Kyle Askey	Madeline Baar
Debbie Baker	Diane Ball	Ronald Barr
Traci Baugh	Joseph Beber	Donna Becktel
Michael Begley	Nick Bell	Beth Bednarek
Patrick Bell	Mike Bennett	Rev. James Bennett
Donna Blackman	John Murphy	Mike Boyd
Kathy Brown	Kay Leonard	Angel Ablog
Kevin Bryan	Stephanie Cassidy	
Marcia Byrnes	Charles Costa	
Margie Collins	Mike Dowling	Linda Cap
Dodie Crawford	John Creed	
Don Davis	Amy Stone	Doug Debruhl
Flo Drewenski	Ron Gall	Don Drewinski
Ruby Farley	Rick Gall	Connie Fernedz
Judy Grannan	Linnie Shellberg	Rudy Gagliardi
Earl Gaston	Jerry Funk	Doris Gatheridge
Nicole Gibson	Steve Funk	Glenda Graber
Curtis Grannan	Donald Grannan	
Tina Grannan	Laura Leis	Dymple Green
Jim Martin	Dorothy Grady	Angela Hoffman
Sharla Hackney	Dorothy Hardin	
Katelyn Gehl	Tom Frentz	Janet McDevitt
Rita Holt	Jennifer Reed	Denney Kelli White
Wilma Hutch	Jim Hutchinson	
Laurie Jerin	Virginia Eskew	Tom Johnson
Brandon Winegar	Judy Kerr	
Rosemary Kinman	Rita Kluemper	
Kyle Leis	Leopold Guerra	Ann Kendall
Geraldine Liffick	Mary Lindop	
George Llewellyn	Betty Lollar	
Martha Lozano-Morony	Irma Marion	
Shirley Martin	J. R. Parsley	
Linda Massie	Terry Lee Smith	Jeanne Mathews
Jack McCardle	Charles Guerriero	
Ardith Mauck	George McMannis	
Tammy Minardo	Bret Neylon	
Glenda Norris	Becky Oaldon	
Phyllis O' Neal	Rebecca Orloff	
Joseph Palmer Sr.	Megan Patterson	
Elmer Price	Sue Miller	Crissy Quinn
Ruth Ramey	Mona & Armando Mendieta	
Andres Linsey & baby	Matthew Reynolds	
Shirley Richman	Christopher Rizzuto	
Jennifer Robins	Darla Sanders	
Mimi Schoon	Rose Schroedle	
Noni Schumaker	Aaron Scott	
Alexis Sherrow	Jean Broadstreet	
Patricia Simanton	Judy Siner	
Kelsey Smith	Ed Rotella	
Rhonda Stagner	Lee Stigger	
Robert Svendsen	Becky Thomas	
Grace Tucker	Bob Turner	
Vanessa Unterreiner	Jinnie Vonder Wal	
Linda Cap	Kathy Webb	
Thomas Wellspring	Jackie Wheeler	
Anna Whited	Donna Witt	
Mike Witt	Mike Witt II	
Lisa Zabst	Freida Terrell	Jennifer Eaton
Lucy Ann Muniz	Oycie Henderson	
Nicholas, Michael & Andrea	Stockman	
		Kendra Springs
		Abby Baugh
		Norman Bell
		Paul Casey
		Jim Martin
		Allan Bryant
		Russell Chastain
		Dorothy Cottrell
		Brenda Dailey
		Jeannie Douglas
		Bailee Dunnigan
		Scott Frye
		Barb Garrett
		Jim Gibbs
		Anthony Grannan
		Michael Grannan
		Vernon Green
		Mary Gunnell
		Dennis Hedinger
		Cameron Holt
		Jon Hughey
		Bob Jacobs
		Al & Millie Grannan
		Teddy Kwansy
		Shirley Lambert
		Jose Ojeda
		Ellen Llewellyn
		Leo Mays
		Bill Martin
		Scott Mason
		Tom Mays
		Kevin Grannan
		Logan McPeak
		Michelle Scott
		Belinda Shelton
		Diane Plotz
		Lisa Caldwell
		James Ragsdale
		Jack Ferguson
		Tiffany Rhew
		Shelia Robert
		Barbara Schmidtke
		Carol Schulteis
		Doris & Earl Sharp
		Sydney Crane
		Sherry Schlagen
		Ron Smith
		Christopher Sutton
		Sherry Thompson
		Amy Unger
		Kelly Moon
		Robert Richey
		Larry White
		Jim Witt
		Lisa Wuertz
		JoAnna Desmeul
		Laura Pierce
		Darryl Becctal

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PASTOR

Homily for Easter Sunday, April 24, 2011

Dear People of St. Thomas More,

On this Easter Sunday, I would like you to take home 3 symbols. All three are from the Triduum, the 3 days of the Easter celebration.

The first is the bread and wine of Holy Thursday. Jesus is celebrating the Passover with his disciples. He is radically reinterpreting the celebration, describing the bread and wine as His Body and Blood, and as food for the journey of life, our exodus journey towards the eternal promised land. So take from here the symbol of the bread and wine, the Body and Blood of Jesus as food for our journey through life.

The second symbol comes from the gospel of John used on Good Friday. Jesus identifies himself as "I AM." The gospel writer knows that that is the name God tells Moses when He answers Moses' question, "What is your name?" The name of God is "I AM," it is the 'personal' name of God and in John's Passion account, Jesus is "I AM." So the symbol of Jesus, "I AM" on the cross is the second symbol. "I AM" knows about suffering and we need to remember that, because when we are suffering, we feel most alone, abandoned. The 22nd psalm has voiced that feeling for almost 3000 years.

"My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?" "I AM" on the cross means that God knows suffering as we suffer. He is there even if we don't feel that He is there.

The third symbol is the Easter candle or Paschal candle; that tall candle we bring into the darkened church on Holy Saturday. The paschal candle represents the Risen Christ. He is the light in the darkness. In the face of death, that all of us will face, Christ risen from the dead is Hope, Light. The Resurrection is God's Surprise—the unexpected ending. Jesus' enemies did their worst to Jesus —and God turned it around. The message of this candle is that God will turn around our own deaths; that's the first level. The second level is that even in the small life situations, God at times can turn small, rough situations into totally new, different and better situations.

This Easter, keep in mind the three symbols—the "bread and wine," the cross with "I Am" on it, and the Paschal candle.

May God Bless,

Fr. Mark

Mail to the military

RPSN Long, Ryan, W
Office of Base Chaplain
MCB Camp Pendleton
PO Box 555024
Camp Pendleton, Ca 92055

Harold Llewellyn
712 C Broadway Ct.
Eielson, AFB, Alaska 99702

Airman Matthews, Kurt
567 Outer Dr.
P.O. Box 391
McChord AFB
Washington 98438



SGT. Benjamin R. Lindsay
CMR 411 Box # 2797
APO AE 09112

STM CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale: 2009 Chevy Aveo hatchback, 5 speed manual trans., a/c, c/c, am/fm/cd, onstar capability, under 6500 miles, economical car, fun to drive, 5 star front, 4 star side crash rating, \$9475.00, call 831-5219

Available: Babysitting in my home in Mooresville-Waverly area, for more info, call Christine at 317-831-4960

For Sale: Used upright piano, excellent condition, approx. 15 yrs old, \$900.00, 834-3371

For Sale: Cut glass punch bowl w/ 17 cups, \$10.00, call Cheryl 996-4635

Daycare Openings: College educated Christian mom has openings in her in-home daycare. Call Debbie 539-5430

For Sale: Discovery Toys. Terri Harris, www.discoverytoyslink.com/terriharris, 317-319-3535, harriste@rocketmail.com

Work wanted: college student looking for summer work. Can do yard work, mow grass, house sit, has truck/can haul. Please call Shelby-317-750-4679

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Hearing Voices

One of the first sounds we learn to recognize is the voice of our parents. Eventually we can recognize other family members and friends. We can even tell who's calling on the phone by the voice we hear. So maybe we can understand how Jesus says the sheep recognize the voice of their shepherd.

So if Jesus is the shepherd, who are his sheep? He says they will not follow a stranger. What about us? Don't we get distracted by other voices than that of Jesus? We tell lies when a voice inside tells us that the truth will get us in trouble. A young girl has an abortion because her friends tell her she can't raise a child by herself. People have no money to give to the poor because they hear the voices of advertisers telling them to buy things for themselves. There are many voices in the world competing with the voice of Jesus.

In the gospel, Jesus is saying that his followers listen to him rather than the Pharisees because they recognize Jesus as being from God. It seems that many of the religious leaders of the time were more interested in the prestige of having followers than in leading those followers to God. They taught a brand of holiness that was based on ritual actions rather than on a relationship with the Lord. Some even used people's generosity to make themselves wealthy. These are the ones Jesus refers to as the "thieves." Jesus came not to take from his followers, but to give them life in abundance.

But like the sheep, we must learn to recognize the voice of Jesus. We do that by getting to know him more deeply. By using prayer, the scriptures, and the sacraments, we become more and more familiar with the voice of Jesus. We hear his voice in the advice of a trustworthy friend, the counsel of a priest, the discipline of a parent or the urging of our conscience. And as we follow Jesus more and more, we too can become voices that lead others to him.



COMING SOON TO ST. THOMAS MORE

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

For those who have lost children through miscarriage, stillbirth, infant, childhood and adult death. 3rd Thursday each month, 6:30-8:30 pm, St. Thomas More Library
Light refreshment will be served Contact Katie Chamness at 317-616-8318 or email katiechamness@yahoo.com

St. Thomas More Preschool
 Now Enrolling
 Ages 3-5 (potty trained 2 1/2s)
 Call the office 831-4142

Needed for Beggars for the Poor
Men's items: Pants, t-shirts, sweaters, sweatshirts, shoes, socks, blankets, sleeping bags, blue jeans, gym bags, shorts, short sleeved dress shirts.
Please leave items in the social hall. These items are given to the homeless in Indy
Call Cheryl at 996-4635

3 Leisure Tours, LLC Presents
July 10, 2011 Church Basement Ladies Show & Dinner at Beef and Boards Dinner Theatre

Enjoy front row seats and dinner at Beef & Boards. Last year the event sold out early. This musical comedy offers a sweet showing of life in one church basement kitchen. It could be any church in Monrovia, Mooresville, or Martinsville. Price includes transportation, show and dinner. Price \$75.00 per person.

Mt. Rushmore, the Badlands, Black Hills of S. D.

Sept. 24-Oct. 2 Price \$729.00 each (dbl Occ.)
 Price includes transportation, 8 nights lodging, 14 meals, visit to Crazy Horse Memorial, Admission to Journey Museum, tour of Wildlife Loop Rd. at Custard State Park, guided tour of Deadwood, a spectacular tour of Badlands National Park, a visit to the unbelievable Mt. Rushmore National Memorial and a trip to the Corn Palace. Put this trip on your "Bucket List." Contact Brenda Mattingly at www.3LLeisuretours.com or call 317-831-3974 or 437-5991

Plainfield Family Adventure Race June 4, 2011

Plainfield Recreation Center

Looking for a fun family event to start off the summer? Check out the 1st Plainfield Family Adventure Race. Your team of 2 or 3 members will race on bike and foot from the Plainfield Recreation Center through the Plainfield trails and parks. You will follow maps and clues to find your locations. The race will be from 9am-12pm. Registration is \$40 per team. All proceeds go to the Plainfield Relay for Life for the American Cancer Society. Find more information about this event at www.plainfieldfamilyar.com or call Brian Petersson at 317-374-0481

APPLEFEST BIG O TIRES CARDS

Use a Big O Card when you have service or tires at Big O and Applefest receives a percentage. Cards will be in pews.

Faith Formation Calendar

May 15-Last day of Faith Formation
 VBS Registration

22-Elementary catechists' meeting-noon

June 2-K of C baseball at Victory Field

12-Graduation mass 10:45 am

20-24-Pandamonia VBS

July 16-Canoe trip to Turkey Run

27-King's Island



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The Knights of Columbus is an organization of Catholic men dedicated to promoting Families, Concepts of Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. If you're 18 or older and want to know more about the Knights, contact Les at 831-4015 or Dave at 831-1935 Here is the activity schedule:

- ** Business Mtg, 2nd Mon., 7 pm, Library
- **Social Mtg, 4th Mon., 7 pm, Social Hall
- **Paper Drive, 2nd Sat., Mooresville
- **Breakfast, 3rd Sunday after 8 am mass-
- Oct.-May
- **Ministry at 1st Saturday, 5 pm mass

FAITH FORMATION ATTENDANCE
MAY 1, 2011

Kindergarten	4/8=50%
1st grade	17/24=71%
2nd grade	17/18=94% WINNER!
3rd grade	11/13=83%
4th grade	8/16=50%
5th grade	9/15=60%
6th grade	19/22=86%
7th grade	7/13=54%
8th grade	8/14=57%
9th grade	24/28=86%
Post conf.	9/14=64%

Music for May 7 & 8 piano or organ
Music for May 14 & 15 piano or organ

ADULT CATECHISM CLASS
1st Wed. of every month 6:30-8:00 pm
next class May 4
Working on Chapter 6. If you haven't
been yet, it's not too late.
Texts available for \$17.00.
Free child care available on request.
Call 831-4142

VIRTUS TRAINING MONDAY, MAY 23, 7-9 PM
Anyone dealing with children 18 & under **MUST**
Take this training to be in compliance with arch
diocesan guidelines. Register www.virtusonline.org

MAY CROWNING
MAY 15, 9:15 AM
ALL ARE WELCOME!!!



Today we celebrate “Good Shepherd” Sunday, where we reflect on Jesus’ care and love of us and hear his words. “I came so that they may have life and have it more abundantly.”

St. Vincent de Paul Pantry Needs
chef Boyardee meals, Tuna, canned meat, pancake syrup, crackers, cereal, laundry soap, dish soap. Thank you for your continued generosity to St. Vincent de Paul.



PANDAMANIA VBS NEEDS

Bamboo, black plastic/paper, white sheets, star sunglasses, toy pandas, green fabric/ paper, silk leaves, feather boas, paper lanterns/umbrellas, stars, stickers/glow in dark, red/blue/green streamers, electric campfire, shop vac, appliance box, party poppers, pea gravel, pvc poles-3 or 4 ft., old wrapping paper/ribbon, plastic rain ponchos, siphon, animal print cloth

SHEPHERDING

If you’ve never lived on a farm, it is easy to have a rather romantic image of a shepherd. A shepherd’s duties, however, demand much more than holding a beautifully carved staff and calmly watching the flock. The shepherd must ensure a supply of fresh grass and hay in the winter, assist births, treat illnesses, and guard the sheep from attacks by predators. The shepherd must keep the flock together, build and take down temporary shelters, remove manure from holding pens, and move the sheep to new pastures when necessary. Scorched by the sun or chilled by bitter cold, the shepherd can never leave the sheep untended without risking injury to the flock. Sheep were first domesticated around ten thousand years ago in the Middle East. They continue to provide human communities with wool, meat, and milk today. Among Jewish people in ancient times, wealth was measured in terms of livestock: sheep, goats, and cattle. Sheep—especially lambs—were the favored animal of sacrifice to God. It is no wonder, then, that the scriptures are woven through and through with references to sheep and shepherds, culminating in the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, who cares for even the least of his flock, and as the Lamb sacrificed for our sins. In our Church today, some of us are irritated by the thought of ourselves as sheep and disappointed in or even angry with those who are our appointed shepherds, namely our bishops, priests, and deacons. Here are two things to consider: How much better would we be as Jesus’ “little flock” if we stuck together and followed the Good Shepherd, and how much stronger would our clergy shepherds be if we not only showed our support for their efforts, but also helped them to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit in the flock that they guide?

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