



ST MICHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Sunday, May 3, 2020 | Fourth Sunday of Easter

Special Shelter in Place Edition: Week 6



Whoever enters through the gate
is the shepherd of the sheep.

John 10:2

Mass Livestreamed

Monday—Saturday

8:00 am in English
12:30 pm in Spanish
5:30 pm in English

Sunday Mass

6:45 am in English
9:30 am in English
12:30 pm in Spanish
5:00 pm in English

Drive Up Communion

Monday-Saturday

8:45 am—9:30 am
1:15 pm—2:00 pm
6:15 pm—7:00 pm

Sunday

7:45 am—8:45 am
10:30 am—11:30 am
1:30 pm—2:30 pm
6:00—7:00 pm

Drive Up Confession

Monday—Saturday

11:00 am—12:00 pm (Bilingual)
3:00 pm—4:00 pm (English)

Celebrate the Sacraments, Grow Disciples, Bring Christ to People

A Message from Fr Carl

St. Michael Family,

I hope all of you are having a wonderful Easter season, enjoying the blessing of time to spend with loved ones at home. Sometimes in the face of challenges come an abundance of blessings. I hope you are finding this to be true.

On March 16, we were ordered to shelter in place. Since then, we've had two additional extensions, the most recent through the end of May. I hope that during this time you've been able to take advantage of St Michael's livestream Masses, Drive Up devotions and Confessions in the Courtyard. We have now added even more livestream Masses every day and launched a new Drive Up Holy Communion. See page 5 for details. We priests and our staff are doing all we can to be present for you during this challenging and unprecedented time, and we continue to appreciate all of your prayers.

Now in our 7th week with no public Masses, my leadership team and I have had to make some very difficult decisions. We've had to take a step back to review all our operating expenses, which include both program and staffing. Through much discernment and prayer, we unfortunately have had to make a reduction in our workforce effective April 30. These layoffs were not easy to make, but these uncertain times call us to make tough decisions. Please keep the following people in

your prayers as they leave employment at St Michael's and enter a new chapter of their lives: Joseph Garcia, Youth Minister; Marjorie Melendez, RCIA Coordinator; Rodrigo Morales, Church Custodian.

In addition, since we are still sheltering in place without the ability to have public Masses, JaNet Hancock, Director of Music, will be on furlough effective April 30.

Moving forward, Priscilla Stutzman, Director of Religious Education will oversee and manage the day to day responsibilities of our Youth Ministry & Confirmation program and will continue to be supported by Aimee Gonzalez.

In addition to the above staffing adjustments, I want to welcome Fr John Pietruszka as our new Parochial Vicar here at St Michael Parish. Fr John was recently ordained in May 2019. He will be a wonderful addition to our ministry team. He will be responsible for RCIA in English and Spanish, and will help me with our liturgical planning and leading our Hispanic community.

Unfortunately, with a new Parochial Vicar, comes Fr Alfonso's transition to St Edward's Parish in Newark, where he will be the Parochial Vicar for that community. We wish Fr. Alfonso well, and I would like to thank him for his pastoral ministry here at St Michael the past three years.



Beyond the staffing adjustments that were made, our team led by our Business Manager, Eric Hom, are working with all departments to eliminate, suspend or reduce other operational expenses at this time to balance the shortfall in our collections. Our clergy and remaining staff have also committed to making a contribution of their salary of 10%-20% back to the parish during this time. I have personally committed to contributing back to St Michael Parish 30% of my salary as we work together for the good of our community.

These are challenging times. I already have heard from some of you about job losses or salary reductions. Know that your St Michael Community, clergy and staff are here for you during this time. May God continue to bless you and your families, and may He bless our wonderful parish.

With abundant blessings,

Fr. Carl
Pastor
St. Michael Parish

Meet Fr John

Dear Parishioners,

My name is Father John Pietruszka, and I am happy to have been appointed Parochial Vicar at St. Michael Parish, effective May 1st. Father Carl asked me to offer some words here as a brief introduction. Born and raised in Fall River, Massachusetts, believe it or not I resided most of my years on Oakland Street; now I serve the Oakland Diocese. God certainly has an interesting sense of humor! I lived there until four years ago, when I entered St. Patrick's Seminary to complete my studies towards priesthood. Believe it or not, Saint Michael Parish was one of the parishes that I visited back in December 2015 during my "Come and See" week before applying to study as a seminarian for the Oakland Diocese. I remember meeting a few of the staff who were working at the parish then.

I first felt called to priesthood when I was seven years old. The vocation was inspired largely by my paternal grandmother and my then pastor at Holy Cross Church, an elderly conventual Franciscan Friar. Growing up, I attended the local public schools. After graduating from high school in 2004, I attended the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, graduating in 2008 with a Bachelor of Arts in history and a minor in religious studies. From 2008 until 2012, I attended Saint John's Seminary for the Fall River Diocese. It was at this time that I met our bishop, then Father Michael Barber, SJ, who was

working as the Director of Spiritual Formation at St. John's. In 2012, needing more time for discernment, I withdrew from seminary formation. During those years that I was out of formation, Father Barber continued to encourage me to 'stay close to the Lord.' He regularly encouraged me to continue to consider the priestly vocation.

For the next few years, I worked several secular jobs. The first couple of years I worked at Battleship Cove, a museum comprising several historic naval ships. In my time away from priestly formation, I also worked as the sacristan, director of faith formation and middle school religion teacher at Holy Name Parish in Fall River. Eventually, the seed of a vocation that God had planted in my heart as a little boy continued to 'nag' at my heart. As much as I was trying to 'run from' the vocation, I realized that I could do so no longer. I remember saying to Bishop Barber that I felt God was calling me not only to the priesthood, but to mission and Hispanic ministry. I have been blessed to gain a fluency in conversational Spanish because of my experiences visiting a dear family in Southern Mexico. Soon after telling Bishop Barber this, he invited me to this Diocese for a "come and see" week. I had never been to California until that winter of 2015. Following my visit, I applied to the seminary for the Diocese of Oakland and was accepted. From August 2016 until May of 2018 I studied at St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park, where



I was awarded a Master of Divinity degree and a Bachelor of Sacred Theology.

From August 2018 when I was ordained a transitional deacon, through my priestly ordination last May, I have served at St. Edward Parish in Newark. I am incredibly happy to have been assigned to St. Michael Parish, and look forward to working with you. I am particularly excited to serve our Hispanic Community, to use God's gift of affinity for the Spanish language and my love of Mexican culture. I am also eager to get to know our adult catechumens and candidates to shepherd them as they prepare for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion.

Please pray for me as I take up my priestly ministry in a new parish; pray also that God continues to touch the hearts of more men and women to consider the call to priesthood and consecrated life.

Yours in Christ,

Fr John
Parochial Vicar,
St Michael Parish

A Message from Fr Alfonso

Dear St. Michael Parishioners,

Bishop Barber has appointed me as parochial vicar of Saint Edward Parish in Newark, CA effective May 1st, 2020. So, I will be moving to my new assignment between April 28th-30th. Due to shelter in place, I will not be able to have a farewell gathering, but know that I will treasure my time with you all in this

wonderful parish. I am grateful for the opportunity that the Lord has given me to serve at St Michael's these past three years. I will miss you and will continue to keep you in my prayers. Thank you for praying for me as I begin my ministry in a new parish.

God bless.

Fr Alfonso Borgen



Prayer of Farewell

For the members of our staff who are leaving.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

Amen

Send Thank You Cards to Fr Alfonso:

St Edward Catholic Church, 5788 Thornton Ave
Newark, CA 94560



What is a Parochial Vicar?

Code of Canon Law defines the office as follows: "Parochial vicars are priests who render their services in pastoral ministry as co-workers with the pastor in common counsel and endeavor with him and also under his authority" (545.1).





Livestream Mass Drive Up Confession Drive Up Communion

Monday - Saturday

- 8:00 am
Livestream Mass in English
- 8:45 am - 9:30 am
Drive Up Holy Communion in the Courtyard (see guidelines)
- 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
Drive Up Confessions and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (Bilingual)
- 12:30 pm
Livestream Mass in Spanish
- 1:15 pm- 2:00 pm
Drive up Holy Communion in the Courtyard (see guidelines)
- 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Drive Up Confessions and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (English)
- 5:30 pm
Livestream Mass in English
- 6:15 pm - 7:00 pm
Drive Up Holy Communion in the Courtyard (see guidelines)

Sunday

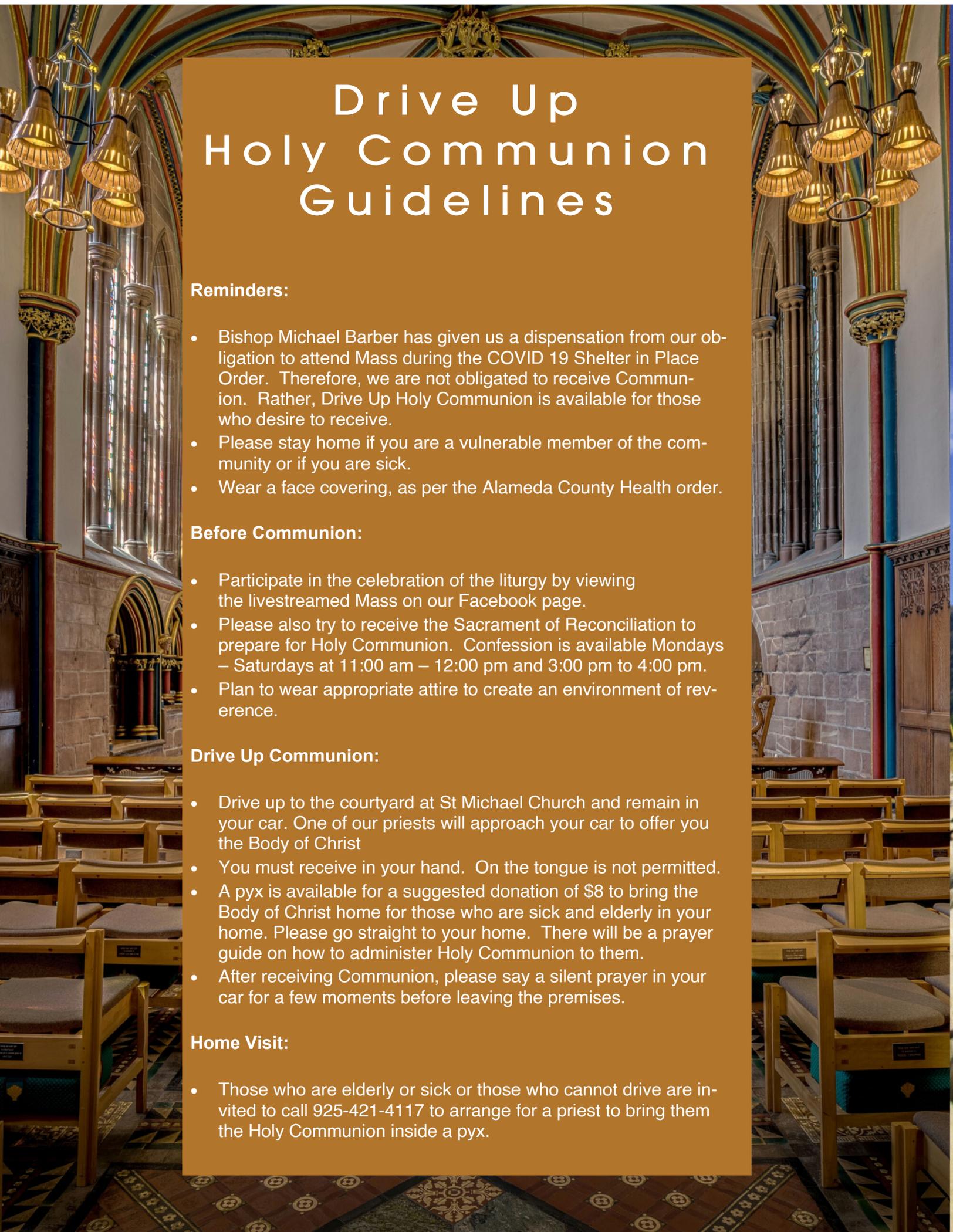
- 6:45 am
Livestream Mass in English
- 7:45 am - 8:45 am
Drive Up Holy Communion in the Courtyard (see guidelines)
- 9:30 am
Livestream Mass in English
- 10:30 am - 11:30 am
Drive Up Holy Communion in the Courtyard (see guidelines)
- 12:30 pm
Livestream Mass in Spanish
- 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm
Drive Up Holy Communion in the Courtyard (see guidelines)
- 5:00 pm
Livestream Mass in English
- 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Drive Up Holy Communion in the Courtyard (see guidelines)

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 [YouTube.com/StMichaelLivermore](https://www.youtube.com/StMichaelLivermore)

 Pastoral emergencies:
925-521-4117

 Live Chat:
[StMichaelLivermore.com](https://www.StMichaelLivermore.com)

The background image shows the interior of a Gothic-style church. The architecture features high, pointed arches supported by tall, slender columns. The ceiling is decorated with colorful, multi-colored ribs. Large, ornate chandeliers with multiple glass shades hang from the ceiling. The floor is covered with a patterned carpet. In the foreground, rows of wooden pews with grey cushions are visible. The central text is overlaid on a semi-transparent orange rectangle.

Drive Up Holy Communion Guidelines

Reminders:

- Bishop Michael Barber has given us a dispensation from our obligation to attend Mass during the COVID 19 Shelter in Place Order. Therefore, we are not obligated to receive Communion. Rather, Drive Up Holy Communion is available for those who desire to receive.
- Please stay home if you are a vulnerable member of the community or if you are sick.
- Wear a face covering, as per the Alameda County Health order.

Before Communion:

- Participate in the celebration of the liturgy by viewing the livestreamed Mass on our Facebook page.
- Please also try to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation to prepare for Holy Communion. Confession is available Mondays – Saturdays at 11:00 am – 12:00 pm and 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm.
- Plan to wear appropriate attire to create an environment of reverence.

Drive Up Communion:

- Drive up to the courtyard at St Michael Church and remain in your car. One of our priests will approach your car to offer you the Body of Christ
- You must receive in your hand. On the tongue is not permitted.
- A pyx is available for a suggested donation of \$8 to bring the Body of Christ home for those who are sick and elderly in your home. Please go straight to your home. There will be a prayer guide on how to administer Holy Communion to them.
- After receiving Communion, please say a silent prayer in your car for a few moments before leaving the premises.

Home Visit:

- Those who are elderly or sick or those who cannot drive are invited to call 925-421-4117 to arrange for a priest to bring them the Holy Communion inside a pyx.

Opening the Word



We like the idea of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, but we seldom like the idea of being sheep—people who blindly follow anyone or anything. However, that's not what sheep and shepherds are like in real life. In

cultures where sheep are still herded by individuals, a deep bond and trust exist between the shepherd and his flock. The sheep know and trust their shepherd so intimately that all he has to do is call them by name. And he knows each of his sheep so well that he has given them individual names! That's the kind of relationship Jesus is talking about in today's Gospel... a deep bond of love that enables us to trust that Jesus is leading us on the path that leads to abundant life. He tells us it is through listening to him and his voice that we can truly find the green pasture and still water that we all desire to have.

But how are we to know and hear our shepherd's voice? The only way we can hear him is by finding some quiet time away from all the noise of life so that we can concentrate on prayer. This doesn't necessarily mean the formal reciting of words, but simply being in the presence of the One who loves us. We need to silence ourselves in order that we can begin to discern the small, still whisper in our hearts. It is only when we take that time that we are able to enter into the kind of relationship with God that gives us abundant life here, and in the next world to come.



FIRST READING

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

REFLECTION

Peter announces to his audience, "Let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." In that phrase is fulfilled Jesus's command that his gift of salvation be preached first in Jerusalem. Peter, as his vicar on earth, now takes up that concern and will extend it in what will be an ever-widening sphere of proclamation "throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Peter's directness seems to work: he doesn't mince words as to the complicity of his audience in the Crucifixion, yet they respond with contrition. Peter's intrepidity in announcing both the fault and favor that Jesus's death brings is a clear sign of God's work. Peter had denied even an association with Jesus the night of Jesus's arrest and trial. Now, here's Peter crying out, welcoming such a connection between himself and Jesus, before the whole assembly of Israel. Only grace could do that! The same grace that's at work *in* Peter seems to be at work *through* Peter, whose courageous proclamation of the Gospel draws thousands of souls into that grace.



SECOND READING

-1 Peter 2:20b-25-

REFLECTION

This reading reminds us that the Resurrection can't be a promise of life without Jesus's passage through death. By virtue of our Baptism, we participate in the same dynamic spiritual process as Jesus. We pass, by grace, through death to life. "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps." Peter suggests an approach to suffering which is opposite to the first impulse in our nature.

We often want to tell ourselves that when we suffer, God doesn't will our pain. We want to tell ourselves, and others, that suffering doesn't matter so much in the long run. God didn't will suffering and death; sin brought that into the world. Peter doesn't say suffering is unimportant in comparison with the good that will come, but he says, "It was for this you have been called." He reminds us that Jesus didn't just suffer—he embraced suffering. Only love can transform the way we look at suffering, and Jesus is Love Incarnate. Jesus teaches us to embrace what we cannot change and that embrace transforms pain into the path to life.

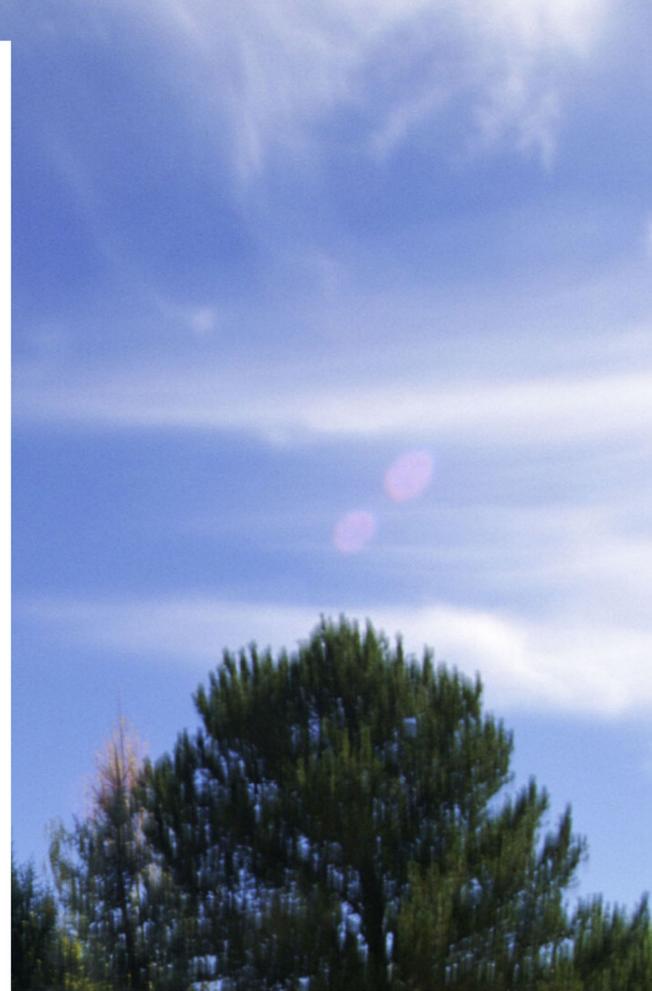
GOSPEL

-John 10:1-10-

REFLECTION

The way of the Lord Jesus isn't simply a path but a way to a place: the Church. He doesn't say, "Live anywhere you want," but rather, "Whoever enters through me will be saved." The implication is that elsewhere one may not be saved. Sheep need protection. Jesus invites us to see ourselves in that role of utter dependence on him; he invites us to enter in and be kept safe by him, the Good Shepherd. He invites us to the humble realization that we're like sheep who, without him, are subject to those who would "steal and slaughter and destroy."

Those who don't want to follow the Shepherd, who don't like the sound of his voice when he tells us we're like sheep, demonstrate by that very fact that they're not his. Only those who recognize themselves in his description of his sheep have really heard his voice. Those who don't hear his voice are likely to say something like, "I resent the implication that I'm no more than a sheep," or "You people are nothing but sheep." To which we sheep might respond, "Yes, 'The sheep hear his voice as the shepherd calls his own... by name.'"



How Will You Connect?

Zoom



Google Skype



Facetime



Phone



Reflect with a Friend

Watch the short *Opening the Word* video available at FORMED.org. Then connect with a friend to pray together and reflect on this Sunday's Mass readings.

Reflection Question #1

When we began our study today, we talked about what our culture thinks it means to be called a "sheep."

What do you think that Jesus meant when he said he was our shepherd?

Reflection Question #2

What does the presenter say is essential if we are to hear God's voice?

Have you ever had a time when you sensed God's voice— maybe not an audible voice, but you sensed him speaking to you in your soul? Share a bit about that experience with a friend.

DIGGING DEEPER SCRIPTURAL SHEPHERDS



Many of the great figures of Scripture were shepherds, including Abraham, Jacob, Moses, King David, and the prophet Amos. In the New Testament, angels first announced the birth of Jesus to shepherds in the fields. Throughout the Scriptures, the image of a shepherd tenderly caring for his flocks is an image of God's care for his people.



In today's Gospel, we hear Jesus saying, "The shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out." Let's reflect for a moment on what that means to us.

PRAYER:

Imagine you are with the disciples as Jesus begins to talk. He looks directly at you and says, "Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep." What does this mean to you? Do you see yourself as one of Jesus's sheep? How is he your gate? Now hear him say to you, "Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture." What kind of pasture does your soul long for?

RESOLUTION:

Set aside some time this week and turn off your computer, your cell phone, and any other electronic devices. Go into a private place where you can meditate on what it means to have Jesus as your shepherd.

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