

FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**



Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On this fourth Sunday in Eastertide, as we continue rejoicing in our Lord's Resurrection, many treasured celebrations converge. Within the month of May, we especially pay homage to our Blessed Mother who we venerated last Sunday at the Parish Coronation. Interfacing the Marian theme is today's honoring of *Mother's Day* since we have Mothers or been mothered in some way. In addition, Holy Mother Church observes *Vocation Sunday* this weekend which encourages us all to pray that God's call is answered within both the religious and natural realm, that all listen interiorly to God's plan for us. At length, our Gospel readings

weave all of our celebrations together into *Good Shepherd Sunday* since our Lord and Savior will not rest content until there be but one flock encompassing all peoples.

Today's First Reading describes how Paul and Barnabas resolutely opted to follow the voice of the Good Shepherd, and how, like their Master, they were rebuffed and rejected when they tried to share the good news of salvation. Yet, they continued to spread the message with joy. In the Second Reading, St. John envisions Jesus as both the glorified Lamb *and* the Shepherd. With clear reference in this passage to the saints, St. John's vision assures us that every person who follows Christ, leading others to Him, will abide with Him forever.

The comforting message in our Gospel is that no one can snatch the sheep out of His Father's hands! The commission is that pastors and lay people alike should be *good shepherds* to those entrusted to our care. The title "pastor" means "feeder of the sheep." A shepherd leads, feeds, nurtures, comforts, corrects, directs and protects his flock — responsibilities that belong to me in this parish and to every leader.

This weekend, the Church makes the clarion call to pastors, parents, teachers, doctors, nurses, government officials, etc., to fulfill our role as *good shepherds*. By loving those entrusted to us, praying for them, spending our time and talents for their welfare, and guarding them from physical and spiritual dangers, we can realize that 'feeder of the sheep' service. He is ever striving to make us more perfect members of His flock as we acknowledge the voice of the shepherd in the liturgy of the Word and in the Magisterium.

On a personal note, mothers can 'go' where no one else dares to go...the special bond between Priests and their mothers mirrors the Wedding at Cana when our Lady said, 'Do whatever He tells you!'

Happy Sunday!