

ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PARISH



CONVENT STATION, NEW JERSEY › 973-267-5330 › WWW.STMNJ.ORG

MAY 7, 2017

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

The LORD is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.

In green pastures
he gives me repose;
he refreshes
my soul.

Even though
I walk through
the valley of
death, no evil
will I fear; for
you are at
my side
with your
rod and
staff
that give
me
courage.



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Morristown, NJ 07960

973-267-5330

Weekly Eucharists

Saturday 5 pm
Sunday, 9 am, 11 am, 7 pm
Monday - Saturday: 8:15 am
Reconciliation
Saturday 3:30 pm or by appt.
Holy Days
8:15 am, 12:10 pm, 7 pm

Parish Office Hours
Mon. - Wed, 9:30-2 pm

*Other times & days,
call to see if office
is open.*

www.stmnj.org

What's Happening?

Sunday
Religious Ed



Next Sunday
Mother's Day
Diocesan May Crowning
Queen of Peace, Branchville, 3 pm

Every Sunday
Pound A Week



Please sign up for electronic giving at
stthommre.weshareonline.org

Stewardship of Treasure

Easter Collection: \$ 6934
Monthly Online: \$ 2594

Rest in Peace

This week Kay Cavanaugh entered eternal life. We offer our prayers, and our sympathy to Jim and his family at this difficult time.

Vivere Christus Award

The annual diocesan Vivere Christus Awards acknowledge dedicated people in parishes who help build up Christ's Church. Once again, we are asking for nominations. Send the person's name to the parish office along with the reasons why this person should be considered. It should be a parishioner but their work or ministry can extend outside the parish.

Two Next Door Neighbors

Fr. John Hart is being honored by the Dept. for Persons with Disabilities at their Annual Golf Classic. on June 26. If anyone would like to join in his celebration or join the Golf Classic, contact the parish office.

Mr. George Hundt, Fr. George's father died this week. His funeral is Monday at St. Vincent's at 1:30. May he rest in peace.

Ice Cream

Our Ice Cream Freezer is ready to work. We're looking for someone interested intaking care of a few Ice Cream Sundays this summer.

Piano

Many thanks to the Phil Family from Hopatcong who donated the new piano. As soon as it's tuned ... great music!



WELCOME

To all our visitors this weekend

As a faith community, we keep in mind who have asked us to pray for them, that they may experience the healing power of our gracious God.

Special requests for prayers at liturgy and donations made in honor of loved ones. These intentions and names of our sick are noted on the Gifts Table in the Remembrance Book and on the Weekly Sheet.



Ministry to the Homebound

If you know a homebound person who would like communion and/or on a regular basis, if you are ministering in that way OR if you can visit and/or bring communion to a homebound person, please fill out the form on the info rack in the vestibule.

**PREPARING FOR
NEXT WEEK'S LITURGY**
Fourth Sunday of Easter

First Reading: Acts 6:1-7

In Jerusalem at the time of Christ, some Jewish people spoke Greek, others spoke Aramaic, and each group went to its own synagogue. It appears that the apostles were among those who spoke Aramaic. In today's reading, we will hear some of the problems this created in the Christian community and how these were addressed.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:4-9

The first letter of Peter was written to a Christian community that felt alienated from their pagan neighbors. Today the author reminds them that they belong to a special group of people, the people of God..

God's Grace is Young Enough

Acts 2:14-41; 1 Peter 2:20-25; John 10:1-10

The Good Shepherd

- Peter refers to his audience (Jews gathered in from a world) as "the whole house of Israel." He is using a term that implies that his listeners constitute potentially the "restored Israel" of "the age to come."
- Our second reading interprets the fourth Servant Song of Isaiah. The author takes a passage that Jews understood as portraying Israel as a witness to the nations, and he applies it to Jesus (fulfilling Israel's role)
- Jesus states clearly that he came so that his followers might have abundant Life. Jesus uses the metaphor of a caring shepherd and sheep to indicate how his followers might receive that Life: by hearing his voice and their name, by following the Good Shepherd, by recognizing whose voice calls them.

This Week's Question

For Adults:

How are you a shepherd to those in your care?

For Children:

What will you do this week to show you love those around you?



FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



Listening for God's Voice

Almighty Father,
you who have given us life and love,
whose creation we are,
whose Son redeemed the world,
lead us home.

We are like sheep listening for your voice,
turning to you for guidance.

May our hearts find in you an open gate
and open arms of love

even when we stumble and fall,
and hear other voices beckoning.

May your voice be clear and calm,
and welcome us home to your Kingdom,

Through Christ, your Son and
our Shepherd,

who lives with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,

one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

May 7, 2017

The Sheep Gate

Today's Readings: Acts: 2:1, 4a, 36-41; Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4; 5, 6; 1 Peter 2:20b-25; John 10:1-10. Sheep know their shepherd's voice, and follow him where he leads them. In looking out for his sheep, the good shepherd, the responsible shepherd leads them through the gate. A flock of sheep instinctively trust those who raise them. Sheep recognize, through sound and smell, even more than sight, their shepherd. The relationship between sheep and shepherd is built on the nurturing the shepherd has provided. The sheep know who provides shelter, food, and protection for them, and who finds them when they are lost.

So it is with Christ. The flock finds its way through him. Not only do we know his voice, not only do we trust

him to care for us—he is the gate through whom we know our way. When we are lost, he opens the path for us. Many distractions get in our way of following the Good Shepherd. A number of obstacles cross our path to woo us in another direction. In today's Second Reading, we hear, "For you were going away like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls." By Christ's wounds we have been healed. Whenever we stray, he is there for us, eager for our return to him. Through Christ, we find solace for our self-doubts and security for our missteps. Through Christ, we find the one sure way.

A SHORT CONVERSATION ABOUT PASTORAL COUNCILS

A Parish Pastoral Council as a consultative instrument of the pastor to help him understand pastoral matters so he can make wise decisions on the parish's behalf. As a pastoral instrument this group is not expected to discuss theology, moral principles or church law. Rather, its members are called to use their experience, prudence and faithfulness as they discuss issues in search of practical resolutions.

What does Pastoral Mean?

Councils are pastoral insofar as they aid the mission of pastor in his role to lead the parish. The pastoral work of a council, then, is moving from self-knowledge to vision, and from vision to an improved practice.

What does Parish Pastoral Council is NOT

As a body, role of the Parish Pastoral Council is not to coordinate tasks or ministries. Nor is a council a collection of the parish's chief ministers or a roster of the "elders" of the parish. It does not attempt to coordinate all facets of parish life and does not have responsibility for financial matters. This is the role of the Parish Finance Council.

What the Church Expects of Pastoral Councils

The Parish Pastoral Council is involved in planning in the parish but should not get involved in planning every aspect of parish life directed by church policy or diocesan mandate. This would create an agenda too ambitious in scope for a council which only meets periodically.

A good Parish Pastoral Council tends to the parish's mission and its plans with realistic and clear expectations. Church law states that councils "are to investigate, ponder, and draw conclusions." There are no inflated expectations about coordinating a system of committees or accomplishing diocesan agenda in a parish.

In this model, the pastor knows his parish and consults the council about the parish's needs. The council, then, assists him by its study, reflection, and considered recommendations.

The pastor invites the council to examine issues of real importance in the parish and community and he relies on the council's wisdom. In this image of Pastoral Councils, Church law presumes pastors who want to know the reality of the parish so he can love and serve it better. It also envisions council members who also want the best for the parish and are willing to put aside personal agendas for the good of the whole.

To sum up, pastoral councils are composed of wise parishioners with a gift for three things: investigating pastoral matters, pondering them, and drawing practical conclusions. This is a healthy consultative model that can greatly benefit parish life.

A Council should be representative, not necessarily in a demographic sense, but as it makes present the wisdom of the whole community. Members should be chosen for their ability to undertake the work of the council, the work of study and reflection and see themselves as part of one community of faith.

Consider Being a Member of the Parish Pastoral Council

SAINT THOMAS MORE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Pastoral Council of Saint Thomas More parish serves as an advisory group to the pastor. A major focus of the Pastoral Council is to develop an ecclesial community rooted in gospel service and compassionate relationships.

With this focus in mind, the pastor and the members engage in short and long range planning to both increase and retain parish membership, strengthen current ministries as well as develop new ministries, enhance liturgical and spiritual life of the parish, and build a solid financial base for a vibrant parish.

The members of the Pastoral Council serve the parish and the pastor by providing:

- **an overall view of the parish needs as a result of their involvement in parish life**
- **leadership in evaluating pastoral and liturgical aspects of parish life, including communications between and among pastor, staff, committees and parishioners**
- **recommendations regarding responses to these needs, keeping in mind parish finances, facilities, and personnel**
- **recommendations regarding increasing present and future community service**
- **suggestions as to appropriate parishioners to lead pastoral initiatives.**

For the pastor, the Pastoral Council is a primary source of support, challenge, and consultation as well as an avenue of communication within the parish.

The Pastoral Council consists of the pastor and 6 - 8 members of the parish. Two of these members may be appointed by the pastor and the rest are to be elected at large by the parish following a broad process to determine appropriate candidates and to provide information to the parish regarding the nominees' backgrounds, participation in parish life, and potential contributions to this advisory body.

Presently, members serve three year terms with a one third membership changing each year. The Pastoral Council normally meets five times a year.

From the Pastoral Council:

Please consider running for the St. Thomas More Pastoral Council. As laity, we are called to serve the Church. A member of the council makes an important contribution to the Parish by providing the Pastor with advise, support and helps him cultivate ministers and activity committee personnel. The council meets five times per year. There are two three-year terms open for July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020 terms. Look for a "Candidate Nomination Form" in the vestibule of the church soon; complete one and email to ossela@optonline.net or drop off at the Parish office by May 22. The forms will be condensed into candidate blurbs, which will be published for two Sundays in June with an election at the end of June.