

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Fourth Sunday of Easter
April 21, 2024



By laying down his life for the sheep, Jesus gives evidence of His knowledge of the Father and by the love with which He dies for the sheep, Jesus shows His great love for the Father.

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

Weekend Masses: Saturday: 4:00pm - Sunday: 7:30am & 4:00pm

Holyday Mass Schedule: afternoon prior at 4:00pm

Holy day proper at 12 noon and 4:00pm

Confessions: First Saturday of every month at 3:30pm

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MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, April 20 *Vigil of the 4th Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm +Frank Rano

Sunday, April 21 *Fourth Sunday of Easter - World Day of Prayer for Vocations*

7:30am For the intentions of Sean Richard & Susan Kelly

4:00pm +Sister Mary O'Leary, SP by her niece

Monday, April 22 Jewish Passover begins

12:00nn For continued growth & discernment in a secular vocation

Tuesday, April 23 *Saint George, martyr & Saint Adalbert, bishop & martyr*²

12:00nn +Ernesto Ceste

Wednesday, April 24

12:00nn For the gifts of the Holy Spirit for Sam & Zach

Thursday, April 25 *Feast of Saint Mark, evangelist*

12:00nn For the health of Maria Brophy

Friday, April 26

12:00nn +Mariano Osorio, Jr. — 3rd anniversary

Saturday, April 27 *Vigil of the 5th Sunday of Easter*

4:00pm For the intentions of Rebecca & Julia Chase

Sunday, April 28 *Fifth Sunday of Easter*

7:30am For Bridget & Ciara Kelly, Conal Lynch and Ciara Regan

4:00pm +Dr. & Mrs. James Cosgrove and Bridget

The Key to Understanding the Day's Liturgical Significance: *Sunday* is the day that the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery—the Lord's Day—which, according to apostolic tradition, is the day of Christ's Resurrection. The Sundays of Advent, Lent, and during the Easter Season take precedence over other celebrations. **Solemnities** honor significant religious events, beliefs or saints of the greatest importance and universal in their observance that begin at Vespers (or Evening Prayer) the day before. **Feasts** must be observed, though, less important than solemnities, hence, feasts are only observed on the natural day. **Memorials** are of two types: Either the observance is an **obligatory memorial**¹ or an **optional memorial**².

Toward a Better Understanding of the Gospel of Eastertide

Even in its purely human form, love can only really be understood by the actions that it engenders. The only way to speak about love, then, is by analogy or comparison to what you have experienced as someone's love. How much more is that the case when talking about the love of God and Christ's love for His disciples. There you have one of the reasons why Jesus often used parables and allegories to reveal the nature of His love for the Twelve and us. This week's Gospel is from chapter ten of the Gospel according to Saint John and scholars debate the literary genre of that chapter. Is it a parable or an allegory? A *parable*, strictly understood, is an account that by means of the persons and situations it describes serves as the basis for some kind of a teaching. An *allegory*, on the other hand, is an anecdote in which each element has a symbolic role for something else. These two genres are not mutually exclusive because a parable can also have allegorical elements. Thus, chapter ten of the Fourth Gospel is neither a pure parable nor an allegory – so, as such, its meaning must be discerned. The Lord often chose ordinary elements to convey profound information such as the beginning of this passage, "I am the good shepherd" (Jn 10:11). At first, Jesus distinguishes who He is from a hireling (Gk. μισθωτός) who has no concern for the sheep and who flees whenever a threat arises that is directed at the flock. Those sheep are without a shepherd. While as the true or good shepherd, the Lord knows the sheep and they know Him. Jesus is not simply making a comparison that He is like a good shepherd; no, He categorically says that He IS the good shepherd. Ordinary shepherds knew their sheep and their markings that identified their specific flock. The knowledge that Jesus has of the flock He shepherds, though, goes beyond physical characteristics and constitutes His insights into the sheep who heed His voice that is akin to the intimate knowledge between the Father and the Son, "...I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father..." Easily overlooked is that Jesus no longer was speaking in parables or allegories because, like the God of Israel (Ex 3:4), in acts of solemn revelation, He has said "I am" or *ego eimi* (Gk. ἐγώ εἰμι). This solemn declaration affirms that Jesus acts then and will act in the future in keeping with what He is or who He really is. Freely and willingly, then, He laid down His life by dying on the cross. By laying down (Gk. τίθημι) what He has the power to take up again (Gk. λάβω αὐτήν), Jesus is

Pope Saint Gregory the Great - *Homilies on the Gospels*

...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 pleasure of success to seduce us, or we shall be like a foolish traveler who is so distracted by the pleasant meadow through which he is passing that he forgets where he is going.

distinguishing Himself from the merely heroic shepherd who would fight the marauding wolf to the death. The death of the shepherd might save them, but they would be sheep without a shepherd, easy prey for other wolves. Jesus foretells that though dying for His sheep, by rising or taking up His life again, Christ will increase the number of His flock by leading those who are not part of His sheepfold into "one flock, one shepherd." By doing so, Jesus fulfills what the prophets had long ago foretold, "Like a shepherd he feeds his flock" (Is 40:11). This invokes upon Jesus the mantle of King David, "He chose David his servant...to shepherd Jacob, his people, Israel, his heritage" (Ps 78:70-71) or "David my servant shall be king over them; they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my ordinances, observe my statutes, and keep them" (Ez 37:24). In this revelation, Jesus notes that His obedience to the Father is what is the bedrock element in His saving work and Christ's willingness to do whatever the Father asks of Him is the bond that obedience establishes between the Father and the Son. Laying down His life and taking it up again is the command that the Father gave to Jesus. This command constitutes the essence of the love relationship between the Father and the Son. The Father's command expresses the love God has for His Son as well as the Father's love for the sheep that He has entrusted into the care of the Good Shepherd. Placing our lives under the guidance of Jesus the Good Shepherd, by loving the Lord Jesus, remaining with Him and like Him, we express our love for the Father whom we cannot see. As the Christ or Messiah, by dying and rising again, Jesus is the cornerstone on which all that God has built is solidly based. Throughout salvation history, God was preparing hearts and minds for the Messiah's appearance. He continuously nourished the desire and hope for the advent of salvation upon which the Church would eventually be built. All the prophets foretold the Savior's future coming, clothed with majesty and with the characteristics of the Suffering Servant, all those prior writings were aimed at their fulfillment when God sent His only Son. Having died on Calvary, raised up on the third day by the Father, the Risen Christ is Savior and Shepherd and, so, without imitating His sacrificial love and submitting to His guidance, there can be no true salvation

National Eucharistic Revival — The Good Shepherd, Atonement, and the Holy Spirit

This Fourth Sunday of Easter marks a shift in the post-Easter Gospel readings. Whereas the previous two Sundays focused more on the concrete events relating to the Risen Christ's post-Resurrection appearances, the emphasis this weekend and for the upcoming Sundays moves to Jesus' teaching about His impending Ascension and the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. In its opening verse, Jesus declares, "I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (Jn 10:11). Unlike a hired hand who flees to save his life, Jesus saved his flock from the wolf even though it meant sacrificing his own life. The Lord laid



down His life in order to save the world from three life-destroying enemies: the first of those three enemies is sin and, by dying, He atoned for the sins of the world. The Good Shepherd sacrificed His life for the sheep under His protection and did so by becoming God's Lamb (Is 53:6-12). The Lamb of God signifies Jesus' atonement. The Good Shepherd signifies his love. The second and third enemies are death and divine judgment. Death is a great destroyer. It attacks and destroys everyone, great and small, rich and poor, men and women, every race, every creed. Death is an omnivorous wolf of destruction. And after death comes judgment. While Saint John does not explicitly testify to the Institution of the

Eucharist, the evangelist wanted to offer a deeper understanding of that saving act in terms of Communion. This mysterious coming of Jesus into our heart, this revelation of the Father's Love for us and his coming with the Son into our heart, is a deeper dimension of the Eucharist. The first manifestation of his indwelling through the Eucharist, then, is the coming of the Holy Spirit. According to the late Pope Benedict, "The Eucharist is a perpetual Pentecost. Every time we celebrate Mass, we receive the Holy Spirit who unites us more deeply with Christ and transforms us into Him." What Jesus did 2000 years ago now comes to us sacramentally through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Easter 7 Weeks x 7 Days + 1 = Fifty Days of Rejoicing

The Church refrains from the angelic hymn or Gloria during Lent and the same is true during Advent, which are two great seasons of preparation for an even greater mystery – the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas and Christ’s rising from the dead on Easter. The General Instruction on the Roman Missal (GIRM) describes that prayer this way, “The Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the highest) is a most ancient and venerable hymn by which the Church, gathered in the Holy Spirit, glorifies and entreats God the Father and the Lamb. The text of this hymn may not be replaced by any other. It is intoned by the Priest or, if appropriate by a cantor or by the choir; but it is sung either by everyone together, or by the people alternately with the choir, or by the choir alone. If not sung, it is to be recited either by everyone together or by two choirs responding one to the other. It is sung or said on Sundays outside of Advent and Lent, and also on Solemnities and Feasts, and at particular celebrations of a more solemn character” (GIRM, n. 53). The Gloria is not said during Advent or Lent (except on a few special solemn feasts that take precedence). The liturgy is often meant to paint a picture for us of the mysteries that we celebrate. Traditionally, the return of the Gloria at the Easter Vigil is meant to mark the moment of the Resurrection in that liturgical celebration. There is a nice spiritual meaning to this, that just as the angels sang *Gloria in excelsis Deo* at the birth of Christ, it is fitting that the faithful sing the same at His rebirth on Easter. While Lent is clearly penitential in its character and Advent having a penitential aspect, after those two seasonal periods without the Gloria, its absence is understood as a moment of pregnant pause and as an anticipation of hoping that something wonderful will happen to deliver the world from sin, darkness, and misery. After an entire liturgical season, the Gloria intoned on Christmas night or during the Easter Vigil reminds us of Heaven’s glory bursting not only into the liturgical celebration but even into human history. Outside of most of those Sundays of Advent and Lent, the Gloria is known to be one of the ancient hymns of the Church. While the text relies on the Scriptures for some of its content, scholars believe it was composed as a kind of supplemental psalm or what liturgical dictionaries refer to as *psalmi idiotici*. The descriptive Latin word *idiotici* is not used in its colloquial understanding, but rather because the Gloria is not strictly biblical and *idiotici* literally means private. Often referred to as the “angelic hymn” (Lat. *hymnus angelicus*), the Gloria was first intoned by the angels from heaven for the birth of Christ on earth (Lk 2:14). In every sense of that word, the Gloria is a true hymn. Its opening verses are a burst of praise overflows into a series of joyful cries addressed to the Father: “we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.” The hymn goes on to implore the mercy of the Son, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. In singing the Gloria, the church relives the experience of Saint Stephen who, “filled with the Holy Spirit, looked up intently into heaven and saw the glory of God

and Jesus standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:55). Gazing on Christ, the Church praises him: “You alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High.” The final lines of the Gloria soar into the blinding mystery of the Blessed Trinity: “Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.” The hymn ends precisely where it first began, namely, in the heavens. The Gloria is a doxology (Gk. *δοξολογία*) or a prayer of praise that extols the glory of God. It is sometimes called the *Greater Doxology* in order to distinguish from the short prayer known as the Glory Be or the *Lesser Doxology* that is usually recited after the Our Father and Hail Mary. The Gloria recalls the mystery of the Incarnation. In this prayer, we give praise to God by recalling how great the Lord our God truly is and how worthy God is to be worshiped. Despite the world’s sinfulness, God loved the world enough to send His Son. Hence, therein lies the joy that should accompany the praying of the Gloria. The prayer’s original form began in Greek and, as said earlier, the Gloria is derived from the Gospel of Luke, a gospel overflowing with praise. In fact, Saint Luke speaks of praising God more than any of the other evangelists. In the Lukan infancy narrative, each new revelation of Jesus’ coming as the Messiah is met with a hymn of praise. The Gloria that we sing or recite at Mass echoes and amplifies that angelic hymn. As Pope Benedict XVI once said, “The Church, in the Gloria, has extended this song of praise, which the angels sang in response to the event of the holy night, into a hymn of joy at God’s glory - ‘we praise you for your glory’ ” (Homily at Midnight Mass, Christmas, 2010). In the Gloria, the whole Church voices a heavenly joy that cannot be contained because the goodness of God had been made visible and tangible in the birth of Christ and in his saving work as our Redeemer.

History of the Gloria

The hymn was composed in Greek some time in the second century and can be found recommended as a daily morning prayer (Gk. *proseuche eothini*) in book VII of the *Apostolic Constitutions* (3rd/4th century). It was introduced to the west by Saint Hilary of Poitiers (d 368), who was the first to introduce hymns into the Western Church. Saint Hilary was an uncompromising foe of Arianism, a heresy which denied the divinity of Christ and was condemned at the Council of Nicaea in 325. Saint Hilary’s opposition to Arianism earned himself the title of *Malleus Arianorum*, the Hammer of the Arians, along with the ire of the Arian Emperor Constantius, who exiled him to Phrygia in 356. While Saint Hilary was in Phrygia, he was exposed to the hymns that were then in use among the eastern Christians of the era. Upon his return home to Gaul he began to introduce hymns into the western liturgy, borrowing the Gloria from the east, as well as composing some of his own. The Latin translation of the earlier Greek version of the Gloria has been used since the late 4th century and it is likely from St. Hilary. The hymn has been an integral part of the Mass of the western Rites since around the 5th century.
