

Saint John Henry Newman

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where heart speaks to heart

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20/21 April 2024

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Page 261)



Jesus, the Good Shepherd, knows his sheep and the sheep know him (v. 14).

How beautiful and comforting it is to know that Jesus knows us one by one, that we are not unknown to him, that our name is known to him! We are not a “mass”, a “multitude” for him, no.

We are unique individuals, each with his or her own story, Christ knows each of us with our own story, each one with his or her own value, both as creatures and as people redeemed by him. Each of us can say: Jesus, knows me! It is true, it is like this: He knows us like no other. Only he knows what is in our hearts, our intentions, our most hidden feelings. Jesus knows our strengths and our defects, and is always ready to care for us, to heal the wounds of our errors with the abundance of his mercy.

... Therefore, Jesus the Good Shepherd defends, knows, and above all loves his sheep. ... Christ’s love is not selective; it embraces everyone. He himself reminds us of this in today’s Gospel when he says: “And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd” (Jn 10:16). These words testify to his universal concern: He is everyone’s shepherd. Jesus wants everyone to be able to receive the Father’s love and encounter God. (Pope Francis)



What does it mean to be inclusive?

We can begin with the word “Catholic”: The opposite of “Catholic” is not “Protestant.” The opposite of “Catholic” is being narrow, exclusive, and overly selective in the concerns and people we are willing to embrace. The opposite of being “Catholic” is to define our faith-family too-narrowly. “Catholic” means wide, universal. It means incarnating the embrace of an abundant and prodigal God whose sun shines on all indiscriminately, the bad as well as the good.

Jesus once defined this by saying: “In my father’s house there are many rooms.” God’s heart is wide, abundant, prodigal, and universally-embracing, a heart that takes care to pray for those “other sheep who are not of this fold.” To be “Catholic” is to imitate that.

Of course, we all, without a single exception, fall short of this ideal, but we do not let that prevent us from improving, and this brings us joy. In the gospels we see that Jesus’ passion for inclusivity virtually always trumps his concern for purity and worthiness. He associates and dines with sinners without setting any prior moral conditions to be met to before they are considered worthy of his presence. His disciples, much like many good sincere church-people today, were forever trying to keep certain people away from him because they deemed them unworthy; but Jesus always answered that he didn’t need that kind of protection, and that, indeed, he wanted them all to come to him: let them come to me! Indeed, that is still Jesus’ call: Let them come to me, all of them! (Ronald Rolheiser OMI)



Year of Encounter

With a UK general election expected sometime this year, politicians will be looking for our votes. Like all good citizens, Catholics have a responsibility to make sure that parties commit to tackling issues such as poverty and injustice and that public policies represent universal, non-factional, values. Raising our

voices and contacting parliamentary candidates as church communities will send a strong signal to those standing for election in our local constituencies. *A Year of Encounter* is a joint initiative between CAFOD and St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP), equipping Catholics to ask key questions of local candidates at the key moments. Please see cafod.org.uk/encounter for more information, including online sessions on Thursday 25th April and Saturday 4th May to learn more.

Confirmation

We will be joined on Thursday 18 July by Bishop Mark for a celebration of Confirmation together with candidates from Saint Monica's parish. Those attending Cardinal Newman High School will be make their preparations at school. Those attending other schools will be invited to attend a short programme in the parish. Those in year 8 and above (adults included¹) are eligible to take part. Please complete one of the application forms available on our website: [**Confirmation - Blessed John Henry Newman Church Warrington UK \(newmanparishwarrington.com\)**](http://Confirmation - Blessed John Henry Newman Church Warrington UK (newmanparishwarrington.com)) and bring it to church asap.



Parish School of Prayer

In preparation for a Year of Jubilee in 2025 Pope Francis is encouraging parishes to become *Schools of Prayer*. So, in response to this and following a very encouraging conversation last week I propose to hold a series of monthly gatherings at which we can look more closely at various aspects and methods of prayer drawn from our rich Catholic heritage of spiritualities, devotions and liturgical life. More will be said about this over the coming weeks.

In the meantime anyone who might be interested in learning more about the approach taken to the spiritual dimension of Christian discipleship offered by the Christian Life Community (CLC) are invited to join us after Mass this Thursday evening for an informal presentation. There is no expectation that those attending will necessarily join our area group, but it is always helpful to know what is available.


¹Adult candidates please speak with Fr Peter

20-21 APRIL - FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER PAGE 261

Sat 20 April	7.00 pm	George Eakins RIP
Sunday 21 April	9.00 am	a. Withers Family Int's b. Bernard Creaghan
	11.00 am	Antonia Huguetta Morgan RIP
Mon 22 April	10.00 am	Penny Jude Kelly RIP
Tues 23 April	10.00 am	Deceased Clergy Shrewsbury Diocese
Wed 24 April		No Services
Thursday 25 April	6.30 pm	Quiet Adoration
	7.00 pm	Kathleen Brennan RIP
	7.30pm	Introduction Christian Life Community
Friday 26 April	10.00 am	Parish Intentions

27- 28 APRIL – FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER- PAGE 265

Sat 27 April	5.30 pm	Terry Reardon
Sunday 28 April	9.00 am	Mike Barlow RIP
	11.00 am	Cath Maxwell Intentions

 KINDLY REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: **Pamela Rita Verdon** who died recently and those requesting our prayers including *Barry Bennett, John & Marie Clowes, Harry Challoner, Margaret Daintith, Harold Entwistle, Mary Finn, Tony Graham, Rita Hutson, Barbara Lynskey, Rita Mahon, Kathleen Mannion, Roger Maxwell, Gerard Moulding, Marcos Sala, Vaughan Stone, Meryl & Tony Wernham, Gordon Whittaker, & Carol Worsley.*



Teas and Coffees will be served by Team A after the two Sunday morning Masses this weekend 21 April.

I am the Good Shepherd and my own know me. My dear brethren, you have heard the test we pastors have to undergo. Turn now to consider how these words of our Lord imply a test for yourselves also. Ask yourselves whether you belong to his flock, whether you know him, whether the light of his truth shines in your minds. I assure you that it is not by faith that you will come to know him, but by love; not by mere conviction, but by action. John the evangelist is my authority for this statement. He wrote *anyone claiming to know God without keeping his commands is a liar.*

Pope Gregory the Great