

CATHOLIC PARISH OF HEMEL WEST

4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

8 May 2022

Sunday cycle
Readings Year C
Weekday readings
Year 2
Divine Office
Week 4



TODAY'S MASS

*I know my sheep
and they follow me*

Good Shepherd Sunday. World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Fr Brian writes....

The fourth Sunday of Easter is also called Good Shepherd Sunday. The purpose of this day is to fulfil Jesus' instruction to "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:38). While appreciating all vocations, the Church concentrates her attention on raising up shepherds for God's people - vocations to Holy Orders (the priesthood and diaconate) and to the religious life - while encouraging all who are discerning their vocation to pray more earnestly that they may hear and respond to God's call. I encourage parents to consider with their sons the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood. Whatever age your son is, it is never too early to sow the seed. It doesn't have to be a serious conversation, just a gentle nudge. Remember, it's always the Holy Spirit who does the nudging in the first place anyway. That's how it began for me aged 7, though the journey took 50 years, which included uncertainty, confusion, work, marriage, parenting, homelessness, unemployment, redundancy, 15 years of lapsation as a Catholic and bereavement. I have an unflinching moral certainty (probability so great as to allow no reasonable doubt), that God has called me to be a priest. Men (married or single) may also like to consider a vocation to the diaconate (celibacy is required for single men, or for married men whose wives may predecease them.) Speak to Deacon Simon or myself in regard to the diaconate. Imagine if the bishop said that there were so few priests available that they would only be sent to parishes which have already provided men for training as priests? On that basis, would Hemel West get another one after my ministry here has ended? Time to pray now for my successor or for serious and immediate consideration to be given to alternative paths for the selection, and training of priests. I'm well aware of the different arguments and divergent opinions in regard to such a discussion and pray that the Church may come to a radical solution to the lack of priests, felt even in this country and diocese. Clergy are required to submit their resignation to the bishop at the age of 75 (although Deacon Simon and myself have got a few years to go yet - he's winning that race!), whether they have been re-assigned elsewhere or not. Today's Gospel reading is very touching and reassuring for us all. We may be less familiar with the metaphors of sheep and shepherd than those to whom Jesus spoke. The image of Jesus as Good Shepherd and the community of followers as his sheep has endured over the centuries as a primary image in our faith tradition. Its power to describe the relationship between Jesus and his followers transcends direct experience with sheep - of which I have none! The image speaks to us about the protection, security, and care that shepherds represent for their sheep and their willingness to lay down their lives for their sheep. Today's Gospel speaks powerfully about the familiarity and intimacy between Jesus and his disciples, expressed as recognizing and knowing another's voice. Today's Gospel also speaks to the relationship between Jesus and the Father. In the Gospel of John, Jesus identifies so closely with the Father that he tells us that they are one—not just close, but actually one. To know Jesus is to know the Father. Jesus doesn't just bring us closer to the Father, Jesus puts us directly into contact with God the Father, removing all distance between us. Our relationship with Jesus is an invitation to share in the life of God. Priests are here, assisted by deacons, to help you respond to that invitation with the graces provided in the sacraments. Thank you in advance for your generosity to the PTF (Priest Training Fund), which provides for the initial formation/training of seminarians over a seven-year period and some of the costs for priests as part of their ongoing formation/training.

PARISH NEWS

Welcome to the parish of Hemel West. If you are new to the parish, please make yourself known to Fr Brian, by contacting him on 01442 391 759.

Prayer for Vocations

Heavenly Father, we ask you to send labourers into your harvest.

Inspire, in the hearts of your people, vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

Bless our families with a spirit of generosity, so that those whom you call have the courage to give themselves to your Church in faith.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen

PRIEST TRAINING FUND: This Sunday is Good Shepherd Sunday and our second collection will support the Priest Training Fund. This fund pays for the priestly formation of men for the Catholic priesthood. There are currently 58 men studying at Allen Hall seminary, 17 of whom are from our own Diocese, and two men are studying in Rome, also from our Diocese. Last year four men who studied at Allen Hall were ordained to the priesthood to serve as our future priests. The fund also supports the ongoing enrichment and formation of our ordained priests. Your gift ensures we can provide training for these men responding to Christ's call to dedicate their lives to serve God's people. Please be as generous as you can. Please also pray for vocations and for all our priests. If you do not have a donation envelope, plenty are still available at the back of the church. You can use the QR code to make your donation online or visit www.rcdow.org.uk/donations. Thank you for your generosity.

FLOWER FESTIVAL: I hope you were able to visit the Flower Festival over the Bank Holiday

weekend? The flowers, their arrangement and presentation and the overall association with Our Blessed Mother and peace, were wonderful! We had a wedding on the Saturday and I told the bride that she didn't need to buy any flowers for her wedding. She was so pleased at how beautiful they made the church look for her special day. Well done to the CWL (Catholic Women's League) and all their collaborators for putting on a splendid event, as well as those providing light refreshments, cake and early morning bacon butties - my favourite bit after the flowers!

SS MARY & JOSEPH FLOWER FESTIVAL: Many thanks to all who made our Flower Festival a great success. We made £400 in donations over the weekend, and these monies will go to CWL charities, including humanitarian aid for Ukraine. One of the nicest aspects of the weekend was the number of people from Boxmoor village who came in for a look around and have a cup of tea afterwards. Most of them had never been inside our church in spite of living in Boxmoor for many years. It was delightful to welcome them. Perhaps some may come back in the future. The Festival would not have gone ahead without the support of our sponsors and contributors. Thank you once again. If you were unable to come along, you can see some pictures on the Hemel West Parish website on the Parish Life Page.

BAPTISM PREPARATION CLASS: If you are a new parent, congratulations! You should now be thinking about having your child baptised. You will need to prepare for this important sacramental event, for when your child becomes a member of God's family. Full details can be found at the link <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hemel Hempstead West/sacramental-prep/baptism-preparation/> or go to the parish website.

PARISH FINANCE COMMITTEE: HELP! The diocese has recently introduced a new parish audit and the depth and scope of inspection has increased substantially. The purpose of the audit is to ensure that parishes are compliant with a range of policies that relate to financial controls, data protection and general health and safety etc. Overall, it's about good risk management and corresponding governance. Many in the world of work will be familiar with these requirements. We already have several men and women on the Parish Finance Committee but need more to assist with financial matters and oversight for stewardship of our income, expenditure and maintenance of our assets. This would rarely require more than a couple of hours per month and as part of a collective effort make a big difference. Can you help me please? Call me for a chat.

Prayer for Migrants

Saint Joseph you who have experienced the suffering of those who must flee to save the lives of those dearest to you, protect all those who flee because of war, hatred, hunger, support them in their difficulties.

Strengthen them in hope, and let them find welcome and solidarity.

Guide their steps, and open the hearts of those who can help them.

Amen

"Compassion becomes real when we recognise our shared humanity."

(A Quote from Pema Chodron American Tibetan Buddhist Nun.)

JUSTICE & PEACE: When I give food to the poor they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food they call me a communist... Dom Helder Camara, 1909 - 1999.

E-ALERT: Please sign up for the parish e-alerts and keep up with all the parish news.

GOSPEL READINGS FOR THE FORTHCOMING WEEK:

Mon: John 10:1-10
 Tues: John 10:22-30
 Wed: John 12:44-50
 Thurs: John 13:16-20
 Fri: John 14:1 - 6
 Sat: John 14:7- 14
 Sunday: John 13: 31-35

PARISH FINANCES

PLANNED GIVING: Thank you to all those who have made the switch to donating by Standing Order. For those who wish to donate in this way, the details are:

Account Name: **WRCDT Hemel West**
 Sort Code: **40-05-20**
 Account No.: **31095048**

The offertory collection income figures are published on a monthly basis once the bank reconciliation is completed.

Office Hours and Telephone cover for Hemel West.

Email: shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk
 Phone: 01442 391 759 option 2

Telephone cover for West	Hemel West Office Hours
Monday 12 noon-6pm	Monday 3pm-6pm
Tuesday 9.30am-3.30pm	Tuesday Closed
Wednesday 9.30am-3.30pm	Wednesday 9.30am-3.30pm
Thursday 9.30am-3.30pm	Thursday 9.30am-12.30pm
Friday 9.30am-3.30pm	Friday 9.30am-12.30pm

HOLY MASS

SUN 8 May	4th SUNDAY OF EASTER	(SMSJ) 6pm (Vigil) ((SMSJ) 8.30am (SMSJ) 10.15am (SM) 12 noon	For the Healing of Sin & for Unborn Babies Pro Populo For the Intention of Antonia & all of Her Family For all of the Dead from all Wars
MON 9 May	Easter feria	(SMSJ) 10am	
TUE 10 May	Easter feria	(SMSJ) 10am	
WED 11 May	Easter feria	(SMSJ) 10am	
THU 12 May	Easter feria		No Public Mass
FRI 13 May	Easter feria	(SMSJ) 10AM	
SAT 14 May	ST MATTHIAS	(SMSJ) 6pm	
SUN 15 May	5th SUNDAY OF EASTER	(SMSJ) 8.30am (SMSJ) 10.15am (SM) 12 noon	Pro Populo

MASS INTENTIONS: If you would like a Mass offered for a deceased family member or a friend, or for any other intention, do let Shirley Bailey know by emailing her at shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk or you can call her on 01442 391 759. It is customary to make an offering and the diocese recommends £10 per Mass. If this is unaffordable for you, please feel free to make an offering you can afford.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: **Saturday:** 5pm-5.30pm at SS Mary & Joseph church and by appointment.



Please switch off all mobile phones

MAKING CONTACT AT HEMEL WEST CATHOLIC PARISH

Parish Priest: Fr Brian McMahon brianmcmahon@rcdow.org.uk (Opt 3)


Deacon: Rev Simon Wright simonwright@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Administrator: Shirley Bailey shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk (Opt 2)

Hall Bookings: via Shirley or hemelwesthallbookings@rcdow.org.uk (In Office Hours)

Address: The Presbytery, 186 St John's Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP1 1NR

website: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hemel Hempsteadwest/>

 **01442 391 759**

Diocese of Westminster Charity N^o: 233699