



Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Newman University community invites you to join us in celebrating the 50 days of the Easter season with these reflections.

April 26, Fourth Sunday of Easter - Acts 2:14a, 36-41; 1 Peter 2:20b-25; John 10:1-10

Today Jesus presents himself as both *The Shepherd* and *The Gate*. This imagery is understandable to his listeners. Jesus doesn't describe himself as King or a demanding authority figure. He speaks of Himself as a shepherd – someone close, attentive, and deeply invested in the lives of His sheep, whose sheep *know His voice*.

“Knowing His voice” can be a challenge for us: there are many voices in our lives, not all of them positive . . . fear, anxiety, shame, control, self-reliance, discouragement to name a few. We are called to recognize voices that are not leading us to peace and serenity. Instead we listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd that leads, invites and speaks truth with kindness and love. It doesn't push or force but may call us out of our comfort zone. It always leads us toward life – not away from it. And the Good Shepherd will always go in search of the sheep who wandered elsewhere.

Jesus then shifts the image. Not only is He the shepherd – He is also the Gate. Jesus is both protector and pathway. Through Him, going through that gate, we find the peace, safety, and freedom we seek. Jesus says, “Whoever enters (the gate) through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.” Herein lies our peace and our true happiness. Jesus says, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” Jesus just doesn't want to keep us safe; he wants us to have fullness of life with Him. “Jesus, we believe, hope, and trust in You.”

Sister Linda Fischer ASC

April 27, Monday of the Fourth Week of Easter - Acts 11:1-18; John 10:11-18

In this Easter season, we are reminded that Christ is the sacrificial Lamb who has a profound love for each of us personally. Christ, the Good Shepherd, tells us that His sheep hear His voice, that He knows them, and that they follow Him. This relationship is deeply personal and rooted in trust. The invitation to communion with Christ stretches beyond what is familiar and comfortable, calling us to ongoing conversion. Just as the Lord revealed something new to Peter through his encounter with the Gentiles, we too are invited to trust that God is leading us toward our ultimate good.

Payton Meyer, Newman Student

April 28, Tuesday of the Fourth Week - Acts 11:19-26; John 10:22-30

The truth of Christ is inexhaustible. Setting aside the drama of history and tradition, in the end the simple truth of “I know my sheep and my sheep know me,” rings deeper than any quest for self-reliance. Those, in Jesus’ hand, can’t be snatched or seized by the nuances of digital media or human recognition. As our individual lives wind down day by day, moment by moment, it dawns upon us more spectacularly. Recognizing Christ and following Christ is the real pursuit of life, the perfect end to being in Jesus’ hands and following his voice.

Lon Flippo, Head Women’s and Men’s Golf Coach

April 29, Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Easter - Acts 12:24-13:5a; John 12:44-50

What stands out from today's readings is the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. In Acts, the Holy Spirit guides the prophets and teachers of Antioch to lay hands on Paul and Barnabas. In the Gospel, Jesus Christ states that both He and the Father are in perfect union. All three Persons of the Trinity are at work in the Scriptures, and the same is true in our own lives. I think that it is easy for us to focus on only one Person, but the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all at work in us for our salvation.

Rev. Mr. Kyle Demel '20, Transitional Deacon

April 30, Thursday of the Fourth Week of Easter - Acts 13:13-25; John 13:16-20

As we continue to celebrate this glorious Easter season, John’s words and the message in the Acts of the Apostles reflect beautifully on what this holy and hopeful season holds for me and for all of us. John’s promise of “whoever receives the one whom I sent, receives me” and Paul’s reassurance in Acts that “the message of salvation has been sent” re-affirm that God was, is, and always will be with us. What a glorious Easter message for us to carry in our hearts and souls.

Gerry Killeen, 65’ 69’, Board of Trustees Member

May 1, Friday of the Fourth Week - St. Joseph the Worker - Acts 13:26-33; John 14:1-6

On this feast of St. Joseph the Worker, I am reminded of a line from St. Thomas Aquinas in which he says that every task in our day can be performed with joy through the work of the Holy Spirit. Every task? I mean, we all have some tasks more interesting than others; some of them can be quite tedious. But Aquinas is not going to let us off the hook by dividing our work into interesting and boring. *Every* task, he says, can be performed with joy and delight, if we approach it alongside the Holy Spirit.

Now, if we approach our work as just something I have to do by myself, as if it were all up to me, well, then we can get weary even before we begin; we can start to dread what we have to do; something we can’t wait to get over so that we can relax. But to approach our day like that is live much of it as tedium to be endured. Aquinas says there’s a better way to live.

The secret to finding more joy in life is to invite the Holy Spirit into whatever we must do. We are good about turning to Jesus, but not so good about turning to the Spirit who is the joy, the energy, the vitality of the Risen Christ; so, turning to him throughout our day; noticing when he shows up, relishing his presence, thanking him and asking for an even greater share of the Spirit. Doing so will bring joy and delight in all we do, which will open us up even more to the Spirit, which will generate more joy, more delight, even in the midst of our daily tasks.

It's a nice summer day outside as I am writing this; but what I'm talking about is really a snowball--an ever-growing spiritual snowball of delight to support us in our work.

Happy Feast Day of St. Joseph the Worker!

Rev. Joseph Gile, Professor of Theology

May 2, Saturday of the Fourth Week of Easter - Acts 13:44-52; John 14:7-14

Today's readings invite us to be a "light to the Gentiles" and a beacon to others. Even though Paul and Barnabas were expelled after preaching the gospel, they did not despair. They simply shook the dust from their feet and moved on. Even when faced with doubters and naysayers, we should continue to find joy in sharing the word of God. The gospel reinforces the call to discipleship. Jesus tells Phillip, "anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." Jesus provides us with a path to the Father through his words and actions. Emulating his mercy and love brings us closer to understanding the true nature of God.

Chris Siefers '91