

Dear Sacred Heart Parishioners,

I was going to begin by stating that I have no personal knowledge of a king or shepherd having never met either one, but that isn't really true:

“The King of love my Shepherd is, Whose goodness fails me never;  
I nothing lack if I am His, and He is mine forever.”

I know Jesus the King whose throne was a cross and Jesus the Shepherd whose flock is all of us. He informed Pilate that His kingdom does not belong to this world and yet, we belong to Him. If we humbly follow Him He brings us to His kingdom. If we honor and serve Him He raises us up in glory. I think it is fair to say that since the spring of 2020 we have been making our way through the valley of darkness feeling lost and frightened, troubled and anxious, even hungry and cold. Yet, as long as we knew we belonged to Him there was a gentle light, a certain warmth, a way forward, and a path homeward.

This week, our journey will probably bring us to a table, to gather together with family and friends to celebrate, to remember, to give thanks. I remember other journeys, simple ones, heartfelt ones. The journey my father would make to purchase the groceries for our Thanksgiving dinner. The journey my mother would make to the kitchen stove, again and again, to check on the turkey which would be slowly roasting in the oven all night long. The journey my sister and brothers would make, upstairs to downstairs, on Thanksgiving morning following the wonderful aromas of turkey and vegetables, home-made bread and pumpkin pie.

Perhaps, this past year and a half taught us never to take our journeys, our tables, our gatherings for granted and that whenever and wherever we sit down at table with love, the King of Love our Shepherd will take His place with us simply because we belong to Him. How blessed are we?

“And so through all the length of days Your goodness fails me never:  
Good Shepherd, may I sing your praise Within your house forever.”

So thankful for all of you,  
*Father John*