



December 24, 2024 -
December 28, 2025

Building Faith@HOME

May 11, 2025
Fourth Sunday of Easter
Good Shepherd Sunday

First Reading: Acts 13:14, 43-52
Responsorial: Psalm 100:1-2, 3, 5
Second Reading: Revelation 7:9, 14b-17
Gospel: John 10:27-30

Jubilee Year - Faith Facts

Did you know that sheep are mentioned more than 200 times in the Bible, more than any other animal!

Sheep were important as sources of wool, milk, and meat, and throughout the Bible, sheep served as symbols for God's people.

Sheep are followers. Following isn't something sheep have to think about—it's an instinct.

The 4th Sunday of Easter Year C, also known as Good Shepherd Sunday, focuses on Jesus as the Good Shepherd. In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." This beautiful image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd reminds us that He cares for each of us, just like a shepherd cares for their sheep. But what does this mean for us, especially as families? It invites us to think about how we can listen for Jesus' voice in our daily lives and encourage one another to follow Him. Just as a shepherd knows each sheep by name, Jesus knows us personally and loves us deeply. As families, we can create a space where we share our thoughts and feelings, helping each other recognize the ways Jesus is guiding us. We can pray together, talk about our experiences, and look for opportunities to serve others, reflecting the love of the Good Shepherd in our actions. By doing so, we strengthen our bond as a family and deepen our relationship with Jesus, who promises to always be with us, guiding us safely along the right path. This Good Shepherd Sunday, let us celebrate the joy of being part of His flock, knowing that we are cherished and called to share His love with everyone around us.

Jesus said:

**"My sheep hear my voice;
I know them, and they follow me."**

Family Table Talk

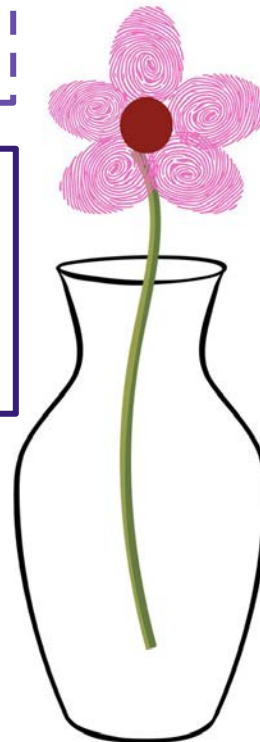
- How can I better listen to Jesus' voice in my daily life?
- What are some ways I can share the Good News with others?

Five Finger Prayer

For a Mother's Day Spiritual Bouquet

Create the Spiritual bouquet as seen here. By drawing a simple vase and add a "fingerprint" flower. With each fingerprint petal, children can pray for their moms.

Give this a try! If you and your child created this, let us know! Send a picture or blurb to us! Send to:
buildingfaithathome@syrdio.org



Thumb – A Prayer of Love

"Jesus, I love my mom so much. Thank You for giving her to me."



Pointer Finger – A Prayer for Her Heart

"Dear God, fill my mom's heart with peace, joy, and Your love today."



Middle Finger – A Prayer for Her Day

"Lord, please bless everything my mom does today and everyday."



Ring Finger – A Prayer for Her Soul

"Holy Spirit, help my mom grow close to Jesus and feel His love always."



Pinky Finger – A Prayer from Me

"Mary, Mother of Jesus, help me be kind and loving to my mom, just like you were to Jesus."

"Dear God, thank You for moms—please bless mine with Your love today and always." Hail Mary, full of grace...



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More Faith Builders!



Statue of the Blessed Mother, Mary

Where is the Statue of Mary in your parish? Do you have one outside? Inside?

During the Month of May, in devotion to our Blessed Mother, bring a flower to lay at her feet. Some parishes keep a vase near her. This would especially be symbolic on Mother's Day.



Add to Your Mary Garden!

Last week's issue described how to create a Mary Garden with popular Marian Flowers. You can also build a Mary Garden with herbs.

Here are 12 Popular Marian Herbs

Sage (Mary's Shawl)

Parsley (Our Lady's Little Vine)

Basil (Holy Communion Plant)

Rosemary (Mary's Bouquet) "Mary's Rose."

Legend says the flowers turned blue when Mary laid her cloak on the bush.

Lavender (Mary's Drying Plant)

Lavender (Lavandula spp.) –

Chamomile (Matricaria chamomilla) –

Sometimes called "Mary's flower" or "ground apple," connected with rest and peace.

Marjoram (Origanum majorana) – Symbol of joy and sometimes used in bridal wreaths in Marian devotion.

Thyme (Thymus vulgaris) – Symbolizes courage and humility, virtues seen in Mary.

Mint (Mentha spp.) – Freshness and hospitality; legend says it lined the manger where Jesus lay.

Good Shepherd Sunday & The Role of the Pope



On Good Shepherd Sunday, we remember that Jesus is the Good Shepherd—He knows His sheep (that's us!) and lays down His life for them. In the Catholic Church, the Pope is called to be a shepherd too—he follows Jesus and helps lead the Church with love, wisdom, and care.

Who Is the Pope?

The Pope is the leader of the Catholic Church all around the world. He's also called:

- The **Bishop of Rome** - The pope is the local bishop of Rome and the universal leader of the Catholic Church.
- The **Vicar of Christ** - The Pope acts in the person of Christ on Earth, representing Him to the Church.
- The **Holy Father** - This title reflects the Pope's spiritual fatherhood over the Catholic faithful.

Just like a shepherd looks after sheep, the Pope helps care for the whole Church and keeps us united in faith. He prays for all of us and teaches us how to follow Jesus.

What the Pope Wears and Why

Here are some interesting things the Pope uses that show his role as a shepherd and a teacher:



The Crozier (Shepherd's Staff) Sometimes the Pope carries a staff called a **crozier**, shaped like a shepherd's crook. It reminds us that, like a shepherd, he guides and protects the people of God. The crozier symbolizes the Pope's pastoral role and his duty to guide and protect the faithful. Some popes have a cross at the top.



The Mitre (Pope's Hat) The tall pointed hat the Pope wears is called a **mitre**. It is worn during special Masses and shows he is a leader and teacher in the Church, symbolizing the Pope's authority and teaching role within the Church.



The Fisherman's Ring The Pope wears a special ring called the **Fisherman's Ring**, because Saint Peter (the first Pope) was a fisherman. This ring is a symbol of the Pope's connection to Saint Peter, whom Jesus called to "feed my sheep" and represents apostolic authority.

Pilgrims of Hope - Diocese Pilgrimage Sites



Now that spring has sprung, there are three dedicated pilgrimage sites in Syracuse that you may visit during this Jubilee Year of Hope:

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Syracuse, NY

Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Syracuse, NY

St. Mary of the Assumption Parish & Shrine, Oswego, NY

For more information, visit

<https://www.syracusediocese.org/jubilee-2025>