



St. Martha's Parish

4th Sunday of Easter - April 21st 2024

Gospel Reflection - John 10:11-18



With a solemn formula of revelation, Jesus states: I am the good shepherd. To make us understand what He means by "good", He repeats the verb 'to lay down' five times.

The shepherd laying down his life is the common thread of the entire work of God. Opus Dei, the great work of God, is to give life. I am the handsome shepherd, the Greek text literally says, and the beauty of the shepherd, His charm, lies in this unstoppable force of life, in the joy of seeing life flourish in all its forms. I lay down my life: offering life does not first mean dying, because if the shepherd dies the sheep are abandoned and the wolf kidnaps, kills, wins. Laying down life here is understood in the first sense, as the apostles understood: of the vine that gives life to the branch (John); of the grafted olive

tree that passes the good power to the wild branch (Paul); of one who, being the author of life (Peter), writes it, in this moment, syllable by syllable, on the tables of flesh that is me. Divine sap that makes us live, that breathes in my every breath, our bread that makes us daily dependent on heaven. Like sparrows we have the nest in His hands. The hands of God: shepherd's hands against the wolves, hands that write in the dust and never throw stones, pierced hands offered to Thomas. From those hands no one will ever kidnap me, shepherd's hands, the only one who makes me walk through the skies (Turolido). The Gospel ends with a solemn phrase: this is the command I received from my Father. Not a command but the command, the one that makes you a beautiful shepherd and makes your life beautiful: the command to lay down life, to offer it. We learn from Jesus, that life is a gift, that the secret of life is giving. If you don't give love, a shadow ages the heart. The happiness of this life of ours has to do with giving. And by becoming good, beautiful shepherds of a small, minimal flock entrusted to our care.

Why Go Perfume Free to Church?

Out of compassion for others, please come fragrance-free. It may surprise us to learn that millions of people around the world suffer from mild to very serious allergic, asthmatic, immunologic and neurological reactions to perfumes, colognes and synthetically fragranced products. For the average person, breathing in fragrances from perfumes, colognes, hair sprays, deodorants, air fresheners and/or cleaners can just be a little annoying, ...but for a growing number of others, these smells, called 'emissions of volatile organic compounds,' can be a form of torment that throws their bodies into reactive overdrive.

Contact Information

403-381-8891 • office@stmarthasparish.ca

Pastor: Fr. William Monis

To rent the Knights of Columbus Hall contact Marcus Lynch-Staunton (403) 359-4457

Mass, Confession, Prayer

Mass Times: Mon, Wed-Fri 9am Tue. 7pm
Sat. 5pm Sun. 9am & 11am

Reconciliation: Sat. 4pm or by appointment

Adoration: Fri. 10am-8pm following Mass – schedule permitting

Rosary: 30min before Mass - **Divine Mercy Chaplet:** Fridays

3pm **Divine Office:** Morning prayers after weekday morning Masses

Please pray for the sick in our parish:

Ruth M. Paetz, Tom Jepp, Bill Bennett, Rita Bouw, John Zeinstra, Deborah Huneault, Katie Lindsay, Maureen Adamkewicz, Nico Escobar, Vera Schwartzkoff, Pauline Chabot, Joe Gatner, Anthony Johnston, Riley Svoboda, Devassy Palissery, Helen Smith, Kathleen Roth, August Schulze-Ebbinghoff, Ernest Geisler, Veronica Eagle Bear, Teresa Andron, Roz Walderman, Lou Karpick, Ellis Watson, Adeline Sherman, Linda Westgeest, Peter Danielson, Raymond Sander, Most. Rev. Gerard Pettipas, Bernie Yaretz, Theresa Blackwater, Viola Mogus, Robert Dubois.

Mothers' Rosary Group

The Mothers' Rosary group will be meeting weekly downstairs at St. Martha's for prayer and fellowship, **every Wednesday from 9:30-11:30**. Babysitting is provided. Please join us! We are looking for babysitters.

Soap for Hope Canada

If you have extra soap/toothpaste/shampoo or any hygiene items you'd like to donate to those in need, you can drop them off in the box by the church's door.

Grocery Cards Program

Support our Parish! It is a KofC & CWL Fundraiser. Purchase your Grocery Cards in our gathering space after all weekend Masses or **make an e-transfer: knightscards9280@gmail.com indicating the STORE name. Orders received & paid for by Thursday, will be available for quick pickup at our Grocery Card stand at the Masses on the following Saturday / Sunday.**

Day Home run by our parishioner Helen

Joyful Day Home on the West side near the University: Helen is an active member of our parish, compassionate and caring; she is looking for two children ranging from 4 to 5 years old. Joyful Day Home is under the We R Kids umbrella | For info: hellowokingo@yahoo.ca

KofC outreach program

Thank-you to all the generous folks who have donated clothing, soap and snacks to be used for the outreach program. A special thanks to the Monday hobby group who have been knitting warm hats, scarves and other items to keep people warm this winter. If you are donating items, please consider the season as we are looking for warmer clothes and gently used items. As spring and summer approach have look in your cupboard for water bottles that aren't using as we can certainly use those. Currently we are going out about once a week and delivering food and support to about 50 people in the downtown area. Please know that your donations are appreciated as well as any prayers you wish to offer. If this work interests you and/or you are interested in becoming involved with our Knights of Columbus Council please contact Grand Knight Mark Nixon or Ken Hakstol – 403. 382.9856

STM Picture Directory

Mark your calendar: our parish is scheduled to have a Picture Directory on **May 2, 3 and 4**. **Book your appointment in the gathering space or call the office: it's FREE.**

Holy Spirit School Division International program

We are looking for Home Stay families interested in hosting European and Japanese students. We also are looking for a 17 year old Italian boy who will be here from September until June. Please contact: homestay@holyspirit.ab.ca

Couples for Christ

You are invited to a spiritual journey thru the Christian Life Program, intended to lead to a renewed understanding of God's call; the program is open to everybody and starts on Sunday, 28 April at St. Martha's. For info: Angelito & Kaye 403 929 5941

Mass intentions

Mon 22 Apr	9:00 am	Sara Victoria Velasquez +
Tue 23 Apr	7:00 pm	Antony Thason +
Wed 24 Apr	9:00 am	Ken Maudie +
Thu 25 Apr	9:00 am	Bob Hagerty +
Fri 26 Apr	9:00 am	Bob Hagerty +
Sat 27 Apr	5:00 pm	Primo Vicencio Tongco +
Sun 28 Apr	11:00 am	Jeremie Ntacomaz

Mass Intentions guidelines

To those requesting multiple Masses (be it for one person or several different people) please note that **only one Mass per person requesting** can possibly be prayed here in this parish. We will make every effort to schedule one Mass here on the date you are requesting. **We cannot hold Mass requests for more than 2 months, all other requests will be sent away.**

Donation envelopes

Donation envelopes for 2024 can be picked at the parish office. If you wish to sign up for Pre-Authorized Giving Plan please contact Moncy: finance@stmarthasparish.ca **For those who already have PAD, a box of special donations envelopes is available at the parish office.**

Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary meets every **Saturday, at 10:00 am**, in the basement of St. Martha's Church. All are welcome!

Called to serve!

Our parish needs people of good will to volunteer in any of the Ministry you are called to serve: **Lectors, Singers/Players for the choir, Sacristans, Hospitality team members and Eucharistic Ministers** for our Sunday Masses.

Abiding Together Podcast group

Abiding Together Podcast group for adult women is **Thursdays from 6:30pm - 8:00pm** in the gathering space at St. Martha's. Bring your bibles and a notebook. More info here: <http://www.abidingtogetherpodcast.com/> or email Shanice.scharchun@gmail.com

Assumption Charismatic Prayer meetings and potluck

Assumption Charismatic Prayer Group meet every Wednesday at 7:00 pm in Assumption hall. Their monthly potluck is on **the first Wednesday of each month**. Doors open at **5:30pm**, supper at 6pm with praise and worship starting at 7 pm at Assumption Hall. All are welcome!

March for life, 9 May

LOCATION: The Alberta Legislature - Violet King Henry Plaza
WHY ATTEND: Join thousands at this peaceful event to show the size, strength, and solidarity of the pro-life movement to the public and government. **Mass at 10am, dinner at 6pm** | For info: www.albertamarchforlife.com

Our Lady of Good Counsel Mass

The CWL Ladies of St. Basil's and Assumption are inviting you to *Our Lady of Good Counsel* Mass at **St. Basil's on April 26, at 7pm**. All members of Lethbridge and District are welcome: let's celebrate together! Refreshments will be served after Mass in the church hall.

Share the Mission Award

Nominations are now welcome for the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division's "Share the Mission Award." This prestigious award recognizes community members, parents, students, and school staff who have: Offered outstanding or long term service for the benefit of our students; Accepted demanding challenges and set new standards for the rest of us to follow; Contributed, through action and deed, to the Catholic atmosphere of our schools; Demonstrated involvement and leadership in community / parish organizations; Reflected the Mission Statement of the Holy Spirit School Division in all actions. If you know of an individual or group you would like to nominate, please forward their name to the Holy Spirit School Division Office **by June 7, 2024**. The nomination form is available online on the division's website or by clicking on the following link: [Share the Mission Award Nomination Form](#) For more information, contact Rhonda Kawa at (403) 327-9555.

Youth nights

Join the NET team for fun games and snacks. There will be a new discussion topic each week.

Grades 6-9: Every Wednesday, 7:00 - 8:30 pm at **St. Martha's**

Grades 9-12: Every Sunday, 7:00 - 9:00 pm at **Assumption hall**

Questions? Get in touch lenthbridge@netcanada.ca

Diocesan Women's Conference

Join *Beloved Daughters* Ministry for their second annual women's conference entitled, "Worthy and Made New." Conference will be held from **May 3-4, 2024 at St. Michael's Church (Calgary, AB)** with guest speakers Crystalina Evert and Fr. Anthony Sortino, LC. For more information visit: www.beloveddaughtersyc.com *Beloved Daughters* received permission to host the event from the Diocese.

CWL Mother's Day flower fundraiser

St. Martha's CWL is having a Mother's Day flower fundraiser. Orders along with payment can be submitted after masses this weekend April 20th-April 21st and next weekend April 27-28. Order will be ready for pick up on May 11th after 5pm Mass. Use of the proceeds will go towards youth programs at our Parish.

St. Vincent de Paul Collection

St. Vincent de Paul needs YOUR help and asks for your generosity: on the first Sunday of the month there will be volunteers collecting your donation at the end of Mass. THANK YOU!

SFXC Events for young adults

April 27th, Saturday = 5pm Mass @ St. Martha's. Social after **May Events**

Saturday, May 11th = Pilgrimage w/ Mass

Friday, May 17th = Adoration @ Assumption Church. Boardgames after

June Events

Saturday, June 1st = 5pm Mass @ Assumption. Social and Formation Session after.

Saturday, June 8th = Hike for Life (organized by Lethbridge Pro-Life)

Friday, June 21st = Adoration @ Assumption. Social at Henderson after

Parish renewal update

Our Parish Renewal gathering needs YOUR input. You are invited to be part of this new journey: join us on Sunday, April 21 at 12:30 pm. We will have lunch together, followed by a community prayer and discernment process that includes small group discussions (from 1:00 to 3:00pm).

It's a great opportunity to provide feedback on our life journey with our Church (the good and the bad!), to tell your story and help move us all closer to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Sacraments

Baptism Infant baptism is celebrated following the completion of our parish baptism preparation program. New and expectant parents are invited to contact Zachary Hampton, our Sacraments Coordinator, for more information: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

First Holy Communion, Confirmation: To register; fill out registration form on our [website](#). Contact Zachary Hampton, Sacraments Coordinator, for more information: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults): If you are interested in becoming Catholic or know anyone who is, please register on the parish website as soon as possible. For more information, call the office or email: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

Marriages/Marriage Preparation: Couples registered within the parish are required to make arrangements at least **six months prior, no exception**, to the date of marriage by calling the office to schedule interviews with Fr. William and completing the marriage preparation program. Couples complete the marriage preparation course AFTER their first interview with a cleric. Calgary diocese marriage preparation courses: catholicyc.ca/marriage_prep. There are also classes available at All Saints Parish, Lethbridge.

Anointing of the Sick If you have a relative who has been admitted to hospital please call the parish office.

Our parish relies on your Sunday offerings for maintenance and growth. By making your pre-authorized offertory gift, you are providing crucial support to care for your parish.

Contact our parish office to set up a direct debit deposit.

Please prayerfully discern where you are called to serve Our Lord at St. Martha's.

A shepherd we can trust

It's a commonly held belief that sheep are dumb animals. This belief has given rise to the phrase "to fleece," which is used in reference to stealing from a person who is unaware of what is taking place.

With our common presuppositions about sheep, could it be that Jesus is insulting us by calling us sheep? Perhaps we should reconsider the reputation of sheep. Are they really as dumb as we've been led to believe? Could it be that they've just gotten bad press? This seems to be the case.

Apparently, sheep have had their reputations smeared by cattle ranchers. As you may know from watching westerns on TV, cattle-ranchers hate sheep and their herders with a passion. Ranchers, who are predisposed to cattle, decided that sheep are dumb because sheep don't act like cattle. For instance, when you herd cattle, you drive them from behind by whooping and hollering and cracking whips. If you try this with sheep, they'll just circle around you. **It seems you can't drive sheep; you have to lead them.** Sheep won't go anywhere unless they know that there is someone out in front making sure that everything is okay. So who are the dumb ones?

Despite the bad press that sheep tend to receive, the reason we're attracted to the images of sheep and shepherd is that they provide us with a sense of comfort and well-being.

This sensibility is reinforced by the 23rd Psalm, which begins with the line: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." By describing himself as the Good Shepherd, Jesus takes over the imagery of the Psalm, imagery that is used by the Psalmist to describe Yahweh's relationship to the people of God. Indeed, in John's account, Jesus goes so far as to say: "the Father and I are one." That is, when you think of the Lord being your shepherd, think also of Jesus, because they are of one purpose. As we ponder the meaning of the claim put on the lips of Jesus, "I am the Good Shepherd," it would be appropriate for us to consider how Psalm 23 defines what that means. We love this Psalm because it speaks of God's comforting presence in difficult times. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff -- they comfort me (Psalm 23,4).

The sheep have confidence that when they walk through even the darkest valley, their shepherd, armed with rod and staff, will not let anything happen to them. They will make it through the difficult times that face them. If God is our shepherd, we need not fear, for God stands with us.

Remember the sheep have confidence in the shepherd because the shepherd has been there for them, and the same is true of us. John reminds us that through an act of grace, God seeks out His sheep and He lays down His life for them. Therefore, if we hear the Shepherd's voice calling out to us, if we're willing to attune ourselves to the Shepherd's voice, then we can have confidence when we walk through the darkest of valleys of life, whether they are sickness, loss of jobs, a disaster, or death of a loved one. **We have this confidence because we know that in Jesus, God has already gone before us and scouted out the path.** If we stick close to him, we will make it through safely. That doesn't mean that the wolves won't nip at our heels, but the Lord is with us, to lead us safely through the danger.

R.D. Cornwall

Vocations Sunday/Good Shepherd Sunday

Give generously

GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY COLLECTION

Today is the Fourth Sunday of Easter (April 21, 2024), or widely known as Good Shepherd Sunday, or the World Day of Vocations. Please pray that young men and women hear and respond generously to the Lord's call to the priesthood, diaconate, religious life, societies of apostolic life or secular institutes.

Please also give generously for the work of vocations, in supporting the education and formation of seminarians and permanent diaconate program in our Diocese.



DONATE
ONLINE
NOW
[catholicyyc.ca/
donate/vocations](http://catholicyyc.ca/donate/vocations)

LORD of the Harvest,
BLESS young people with the gift of courage
to respond to your call.
Open their hearts to great ideals, to great things.
INSPIRE all of your disciples to mutual love and giving—
for vocations blossom in the
good soil of faithful people.
INSTILL those in religious life, parish
ministries, and families with the confidence
and grace to invite others to embrace
the bold and noble path of a life
consecrated to you.
UNITE us to Jesus through prayer and sacrament,
so that we may cooperate
with you in building your reign of mercy
and truth, of justice and peace. Amen.

— Pope Francis