



Reflection for the Fourth Sunday of Easter

This weekend, we observe our annual ANZAC Day commemorations. Communities gather to honour those who died in times of war. Yet the metaphorical rattling of swords in their scabbards persists, as the United States and Israel assert their will in Lebanon, Palestine, and Iran. There are no victors—only the continuing evidence of humanity’s inability to live in, and walk, the path of peace.

In a homily, earlier this week, Pope Leo XIV preached at a papal Mass in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

“We can see today how the hope of many people is frustrated by violence, exploited by the overbearing, and defrauded by the rich. Consequently,” he said, “when injustice corrupts hearts, the bread of all becomes the possession of a few.” (Cath News)

These words are prophetic. Once again, we have a Pope willing to speak plainly about the injustices around us and the need to pursue a different path to peace, rather than persisting in killing and leaving lands and homes devastated.

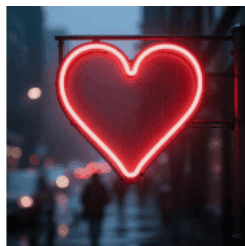
Is it not sufficient that we must contend with natural disasters across the globe, only then to be confronted by needless hatred and violence that leaves those with whom we share this planet in an ever-expanding sea of ‘have-nots’?

The Gospel of the Good Shepherd offers a gentle yet compelling reminder of a different way. I believe Pope Leo is walking this path: that of a steady pastor who seeks to respect differences and to work with others through reasoned dialogue and integrity. It is a counter-cultural response to bloodshed and senseless violence—one that upholds the dignity of every person and reminds us that the Christ we follow calls us to be brothers and sisters to one another.

The image of the shepherd is one that may be embraced and practised in daily life: reaching out to others without condemnation; opening our eyes to injustice and raising our voices against it; speaking with trust; and acting with compassion and understanding. It also calls us to come to know those who are strangers and to welcome them—listening to their experiences, attending to their plight, seeking practical ways to encourage and support them, and leading them to safety within our church and local communities.

Pope Francis offered the evocative image of the Church as a ‘field hospital’. It is worth pausing to contemplate what such a place might look, sound, and feel like. I find it unsettling, because it is a vision of the Church as a community of people of different colours and creeds, in which one can hear and see—and begin to understand—something of their pain, loss, and continuing isolation. When we act as shepherds, we can help to bring people home, allowing the compassionate God to act in and through us, so that all may be shepherded: fed, clothed, given drink, and welcomed as family.

Yes, this is challenging; nevertheless, it is what Jesus asks of us: “Follow him.”



God go with you, Warm regards,

Paul

*"Even hope, like all good things in this world, has enemies... Hope is the push in the heart of those who leave their home, and sometimes their family and relatives - I am thinking of migrants - to find a better life, with more dignity for themselves and their loved ones... It's also the push in the heart of those who welcome: the desire to encounter, meet, dialogue... hope is the push to share the journey," **Pope Francis***

Scripture reflection: Fourth Sunday of Easter (Good Shepherd Sunday) Year A, 26 April 2026.



I am the good shepherd . . .

Almighty ever-living God, lead us to a share in the joys of heaven, so that the humble flock may reach where the brave Shepherd has gone before.

LECTIONARY READINGS

First reading: Acts 2:14, 36-41

Responsorial psalm: Ps 22(23):1-6

Second reading: 1 Peter 2:20-25

Gospel: John 10:1-10

Link to readings - <https://universalis.com//Australia/20260426/mass.html>

Today's readings invite us to contemplate the tender image of Christ as the Good Shepherd, who leads, protects, and cares for his flock. His relationship with the sheep is one of trust, recognition, and belonging, where the sheep follow only their shepherd, the one who knows them personally and calls them by name.

In the **Gospel**, Jesus reveals himself as the door of the sheepfold through which the sheep enter. He warns his listeners against the voices of strangers who prey on the vulnerable and weak, leading to confusion and fear rather than the life that Jesus offers.

The **Second Reading** urges us to follow Christ's example and endure hardships patiently, trusting in God. Even when we wander and lose our way, we can return to the safety of the Lord, our shepherd. The familiar **Psalm** tells us that the Lord always cares for and protects us, guiding us to safety. Peter calls all to

turn away from sin and be baptised in the name of Jesus (**First Reading**). The gift of the Holy Spirit is for everyone whom the Lord has called.

As we consider how each of us responds to the voice of the Good Shepherd, we pray for the grace to respond to God's invitation, always trusting in his loving care and guidance through any struggles.

ANZAC DAY April 25th



"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

*At the going down of the sun and in the morning.
We will remember them"*

We will remember them "Lest we forget"



Sons of Gallipoli Fr Chris Skinner

To play click on the link below:

https://youtu.be/N19p71z5iVI?si=QhZ8O8ze_cU3KAs9

Lest we forget....

This clip is on the hope of no more war! **One Day - Matisyahu (Lyrics Video)**

https://youtu.be/p0U975U0180?si=MQ_40zJ_RHtvMoiO

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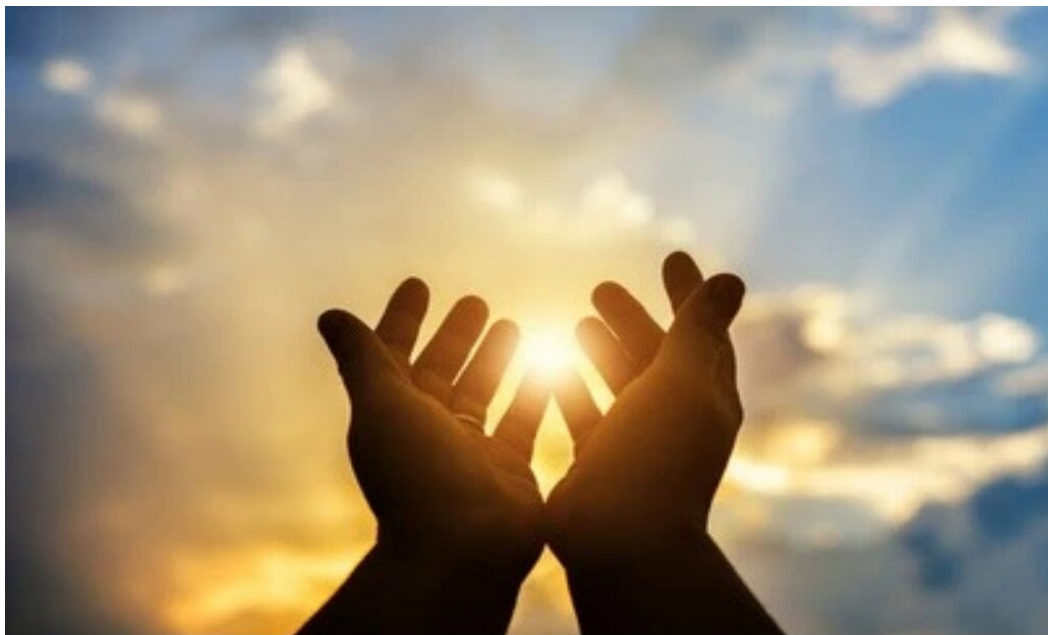
Formation (Adult Faith Education & Spirituality)

There will be Formations offered in 2026. The Theme is **Nurturing and Nourishment**. Hugh McKay prefers the term "kindness" because it is the only form of human love that does not depend on affection. It is a response to a need, and it draws on our compassion – the quality that stands out most in Jesus' life. Jesus chose to mix with and meet outcasts, inviting them to share his table. His fellowship included everyone – a family for all!.

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Formation Bookings: Dunedin Parishes 13 & 14 June; St Helliers 26th July and 35th Anniversary; East Coast Bays 28th July 2026

Prayer



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1. We pray for Pope Leo and thank him for his truth-telling regarding the war in the Middle East and elsewhere. His stance has been one of integrity, and his leadership provides a stark contrast to the quest for power and domination. Let us walk the path of peace with him.
 2. We pray to be like Jesus, the Good Shepherd - welcoming, guiding and leading people through care, compassion and forgiveness.
 3. Let us take up the call of Pope Leo to foster a sense of belonging in our communities. Also to be united in Christ – united in Mission
 4. We remember that God calls on us, as people of faith, to offer our voices to help those who have none.
4. Keep in mind all those who continue to struggle with mental health challenges, and their families who support them in their daily lives.

1. Please remember Leonie Christian, Margaret and Graeme Armstrong, Jocelyn Kev Bryant and family, Elizabeth, Tim Walsh and family, Debbie and Mike Cotter and family and friends; Christine and Derrick Scott; Paul, Deb and Nick Kelly, Norma Bellamy and family and Lindsay Penman in your prayers

6. Also, please remember, Pat Carson, Graeme Matthews, Di Buckley, Adrian van de Pas and her son Robert, Tim Bartells & family, Linda Darbyshire and family in your prayer, Christine Geoghegan's daughter Kate and extended families, Pauline Prendergast, Robyn Burns (Hill)

7. Keep in mind all those who are struggling with decisions made by leaders that are causing harm, fear, injustice and separation of families.

8. Your own intentions



Humour:

- I got a new pen that can write under water. **It can write other words too.**
- My boss said, "Dress for the job you want, not for the job you have." **So I went in as Batman.**
- I went to the aquarium this weekend, but I didn't stay long. **There's something fishy about that place.**
- What do you call a sheep who can sing and dance? **Lady Ba Ba.**
- What do you call a French man wearing sandals? **Philippe Fallop.**
- Why can't dinosaurs clap their hands? **Because they're extinct.**
- I gave my handyman a to-do list, but he only did jobs 1, 3, and 5. **Turns out he only does odd jobs.**
- Why should you never take sides in an argument at the dinner table? **Trick question. It's the perfect time to take sides because no one's paying attention. Bring Tupperware.**
- Who won the neck decorating contest? **It was a tie.**

Have a great week everyone.....

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these... you did for me." — Matthew 25:40

