



Early Christian funerary art from the Roman catacombs depicting the good shepherd 3rd-5th cent. AD, from the Baths of Diocletian. The Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, Italy.

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Sunday 30 April 2023

Welcome to St Philip's

We acknowledge the Ngambri and Ngunnawal people, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we worship, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present and emerging. We extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who worship with us.

St Philip's COVIDSafe Plan We are asking folk not attend church if they feel unwell, to be aware of their hand hygiene and to be mindful of social distance. Thank you. Masks are available for those who wish to wear one.

Pew sheet & Order of Service: the full Pew sheet with more news and reflections is available on our website. The QR code in the pews will direct you to the current edition, please use your phone/tablet and follow along. Service cards, Pew Bibles and Prayer Books are also available.

Offertory: at the offertory when our gifts are brought forward, there is an opportunity for you to make your contribution. A self-serve Eftpos machine is available in the foyer, you can use it before or after the service. St Philip's EFT details are also available if you would like to make a direct

transfer: 702-389 05202512. Giving cards are in the foyer if you wish to place something in the offertory bag after giving electronically.

Communion: if you are baptised you are welcome to receive communion. If you would like to receive a blessing please cross your hands on your chest as you come forward.

If you'd like to volunteer as a reader, sidesperson, welcomer or another role on the Roster, then please email rosters@stphilipsoconnor.org.au

St Philips O'Connor, ACT

www.stphilipsoconnor.org.au

email: comeandsee@stphilipsoconnor.org.au



[@stphilipsoconnor](https://www.facebook.com/stphilipsoconnor)

Rector: The Rev'd Martin Johnson 0478 619 911

From the Rector

Dear Friends

Today is often known as 'Good Shepherd Sunday,' it is perhaps one of the most popular images of Jesus. On the front cover of this week's pew sheet is an example of early Christian art depicting Jesus. The image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd was common in the catacombs on Rome, he was generally shown as a clean-shaven, youthful figure with a sheep on his shoulders. Before the depictions of the cross or of the Christ child with Mary it was the Good Shepherd that was dominant in Christian art. It is from the Latin *pastorem* literally meaning 'shepherd' that we derive the familiar terms Pastor and Pastoral. Little wonder then that the 23rd Psalm is perhaps among the best-known and well-loved pieces of scripture.

Next weekend we will celebrate our Patronal Festival – SS Philip & James, the liturgical colour will be red – if you are thinking about your wardrobe! It is also the weekend of the Coronation; I'm looking forward to watching the ceremony and liturgy unfold together. A recipe for a special Coronation Quiche has been created and I'm also looking forward to seeing if that appears on the menu for our lunch after the 10am Eucharist! I hope that you will come along and enjoy the celebration next Sunday.

Brian & James, have left this weekend for Korea to visit James' family, we wish them bon voyage.

Blessings to you all for this Easter season, *Martin*

Eucharist for the fourth Sunday of Easter

Setting at 10am Christ Church Mass, Philip Matthias 1954-

Introit Hymn 111 (TiS) (10am)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation;
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation.
Come all who hear,
brothers and sisters draw near,
praise him in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is wondrously reigning
and, as on wings of an eagle, uplifting, sustaining:
have you not seen
all you have needed has been
sent by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend us;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend us:
ponder anew
what the Almighty can do
as with his love he befriends us.
Praise to the Lord, who when darkness of sin is abounding,
who, when the godless do triumph, our best hopes confounding,
sheds forth his light,

scatters the horrors of night,
saints with his mercy surrounding.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.
Let the Amen
sound from his people again:
gladly for ever adore him.

Joachim Neander 1650-80

Entrance Antiphon

'I am the good shepherd,' says the Lord. 'The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.'

John 10:11

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ ✕ and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all.

And also with you

Let us pray:

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us, therefore we come to celebrate the festival.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, with a sincere and true heart.

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to the Father:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you have given us the consolation of the truth:
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, leading us into everlasting life:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Almighty God,
Who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith:
Pardon you and set you free from all your sins,
strengthen you in all goodness
and keep you in eternal life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gloria (sung at 10am) see 757(b) Tis

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only son of the father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,**

**you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the righthand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray:

God of all power,
you called from death our Lord Jesus,
the great shepherd of the sheep:
send us as shepherds to rescue the lost,
to heal the injured,
and to feed one another with understanding;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Today's Readings

A reading from the book of Acts (2:42-47)

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles.

⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd:
therefore can I lack nothing.

**He will make me lie down in green pastures:
and lead me beside still waters.**

He will refresh my soul:
and guide me in right pathways for his name's sake.

**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil:**

for you are with me, your rod and your staff comfort me.

You spread a table before me
in the face of those who trouble me:
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup will be full.

**Surely your goodness and loving-kindness
will follow me all the days of my life:
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.**

A reading from the first letter of Peter (2:1-10)

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. ² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵ like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer

spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in scripture:

'See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'

⁷To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner',

⁸and

'A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall.'

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

¹⁰ Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.
For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn 145 (TiS) (10am)

The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his
and he is mine for ever.

Where streams of living water flow
my ransomed soul he leadeth,
and where the verdant pastures grow
with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me,
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home rejoicing brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spread'st a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth;
and O what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days
thy goodness faileth never;
good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house for ever.

Henry William Baker 1821-77

Alleluia,

Alleluia!

The stone that the builders rejected, has become the very head of the corner.

1 Peter 2:7

Alleluia!

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John (10:1-10)

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name

and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.' ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So again Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

For the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father; through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead ✕

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

In our prayers we remember all in need, particularly: Ben, Hugh, Sarah, David, Otto, Bob, Noel, Deborah, Sue, Molly, Katherine, David & Margot, those unable to gather with us, those in hospital or care.

We are continuing to offer support to the ABM project in Vanuatu following the recent cyclones and earthquake. Here is prayer for you to use:

Loving God, console and strengthen all who have been affected by recent cyclones in Vanuatu, those who have lost their gardens – the source of their food, those who have lost their homes, and the children whose schooling

has been disrupted. Through the support and generosity of our churches in Vanuatu and Australia, may they find a way to recovery and rebuilding.

We make our prayer in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We commend to God the recently departed, those whose anniversaries fall at this time: John Nicholson (30/4/2021), the victims of war and tragedy, those whose memories are dear to us, and those who have no one to remember them.

In your daily prayer this month please pray for our parish as we seek to live in the light of Christ's resurrection:

Jesus Christ, whose resurrection

has shed new light on all things and renews creation:

open our hearts and minds that our parish and community may see anew.
May our worship in Spirit and Truth, lead others to know
the new life of Easter and the peace that it brings.
We pray in your name, you who reconcile us to God
and each other in the power of the Spirit.
Amen.

The Greeting of Peace

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples
and said, 'Peace be with you.'
Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Offertory Hymn 197 (TiS) (10am)

God's Son came to bless us,
from sin to release us,
as a servant lowly,
yet our God most holy,
bore the cross to save us,
hope and freedom gave us.

Still Christ comes within us,
still his voice would win us
from the sins that hurt us,
would to truth convert us;
from our folly spares us,
and his own declares us.

So, as you have known him,
be prepared to own him;
do not spurn him coldly,
but still trust him boldly;
for our Lord receives us,
heals us, and forgives us.

Christ, all grace possessing,
comes to us in blessing;
to his Supper leads us,
with himself he feeds us,
love and mercy showing,
peace on us bestowing.

Come then, O Lord Jesus,
from our bondage free us,
in your love enfold us,
in true faith uphold us.
Let us here confess you,
till in heaven we bless you.

The Bohemian Brethren (1544)

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

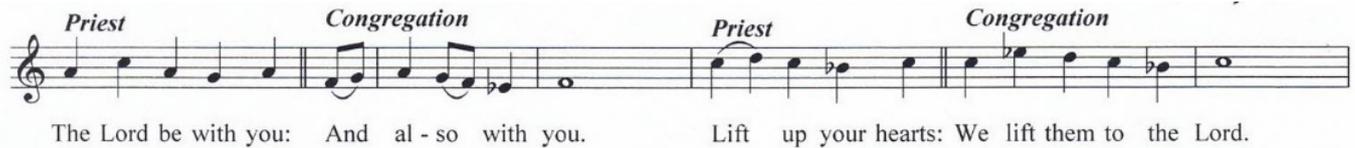
Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit
of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

Blessed be God for ever.

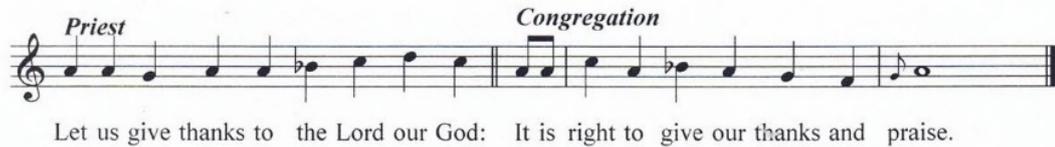
Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Great Thanksgiving (sung at 10am)



The Lord be with you: And al - so with you. Lift up your hearts: We lift them to the Lord.



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Great Shepherd of the world,
you are indeed holy,
and great is the majesty of your glory.

You created all things and showered blessings
and loving care upon all that you created.

You formed Israel as your chosen flock,
and made them to lie down in green pasture.

And when they turned from you, you did not spurn them,
but sent forth another shepherd,
your only Son, to seek out the lost sheep of Israel
and of all the world and call them to himself by name.

The joy of the resurrection renews the whole world,
while the choirs of heaven sing for ever to your glory. (sung at 10am):

see **757(c)&(d)** TiS

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Merciful God, we thank you
for these gifts of your creation,
this bread and wine,
and we pray that by your word and Holy Spirit,
we who eat and drink them
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood,
and be made one with him and with each other
in peace and love.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread;
and when he had given you thanks
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup,
and again giving you thanks
he gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Drink from this all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant
shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.

Do, this, as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.'

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:
Proclaiming his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross,
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming again,
we celebrate with this bread and this cup,
his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice
for the sins of the whole world.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith (sung at 10am)

see 757(e) TiS

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

As we eat and drink this holy sacrament
renew us by your Spirit,
that we may be united in the body of your Son
and serve you as a royal priesthood
in the joy of your eternal kingdom;

Receive our praises, Father,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom and in whom,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
we worship you,
in songs of never-ending praise (sung at 10am):

see 757(e) TiS

Blessing and honour and glory and power

Be yours for ever and ever. Amen.

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

The breaking of bread and communion

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ. We who are many are one body,
For we all share in the one bread.

Agnus Dei (sung at 10am) see 757(f) TiS

Jesus Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Communion Antiphon

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts.

The sending out of God's people

Let us pray:

Most glorious Lord of life,
we thank you that you nourish us
in these Easter mysteries.

Fill us with the Spirit of Love
and unite us in faith,
that we may witness to the resurrection
and show your glory to all the world.

Most loving God, **you send us into the world you love. Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage in the power of your Spirit.**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you what is pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, ✠ the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Recessional Hymn 433 (TiS) (10am)

Christ is our cornerstone,
on whom alone we build;
with his true saints alone
the courts of heaven are filled;
on his great love
our hopes we place
of present grace
and joys above.

With psalms and hymns of praise
this holy place shall ring;
our voices we will raise
the Three in One to sing,
and thus proclaim
in joyful song
both loud and long
that glorious name.

Here, gracious God, draw near
and move among us now;
receive each fervent prayer,
accept each faithful vow,
and more and more
on all who pray
each holy day
your blessings pour.

Here may we gain from heaven
the grace which we implore;
and may that grace, once given,
be with us evermore,
until that day
when all the blest
to endless rest
are called away.

Reflection

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Turning to the Lord in prayer implies a radical act of trust, in the awareness that one is entrusting oneself to God who is good, "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ex 34:6-7; Ps 86[85]:15; cf. Joel 2:13; Jon 4:2; Ps 103 [102]:8; 145[144]:8; Neh 9:17). For this reason I would like to reflect with you today on a Psalm that is totally imbued with trust, in which the Psalmist expresses his serene certainty that he is guided and protected, safe from every danger, because the Lord is his Shepherd. It is Psalm 23 [22, according to the Greco-Latin numbering], a text familiar to all and loved by all.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want": the beautiful prayer begins with these words, evoking the nomadic environment of sheep-farming and the experience of familiarity between the shepherd and the sheep that make up his little flock. The image calls to mind an atmosphere of trust, intimacy and tenderness: the shepherd knows each one of his sheep and calls them by name; and they follow him because they recognize him and trust in him (cf. Jn 10:2-4).

He tends them, looks after them as precious possessions, ready to defend them, to guarantee their well-being and enable them to live a peaceful life. They can lack nothing as long as the shepherd is with them. The Psalmist refers to this experience by calling God his shepherd and letting God lead him to safe pastures: "He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake" (Ps 23[22]:2-3).

The vision that unfolds before our eyes is that of green pastures and springs of clear water, oases of peace to which the shepherd leads his flock, symbols of the places of life towards which the Lord leads the Psalmist, who feels like the sheep lying on the grass beside a stream, resting rather than in a state of tension or alarm, peaceful and trusting, because it is a safe place, the water is fresh and the shepherd is watching over them.

And let us not forget here that the scene elicited by the Psalm is set in a land that is largely desert, on which the scorching sun beats down, where the Middle-Eastern semi-nomad shepherd lives with his flock in the parched steppes that surround the villages. Nevertheless the shepherd knows where to find grass and fresh water, essential to life, he can lead the way to oases in which the soul is "restored" and where it is possible to recover strength and new energy to start out afresh on the journey.

As the Psalmist says, God guides him to "green pastures" and "still waters", where everything is superabundant, everything is given in plenty. If the Lord is the Shepherd, even in the desert, a desolate place of death, the certainty of a radical presence of life is not absent, so that he is able to say "I shall not want". Indeed, the shepherd has at heart the good of his flock, he adapts his own pace and needs to those of his sheep, he walks and lives with them, leading them on paths "of righteousness", that is, suitable for them, paying attention to their needs and not to his own. The safety of his sheep is a priority for him and he complies with this in leading his flock.

Dear brothers and sisters, if we follow the "Good Shepherd" – no matter how difficult, tortuous or long the pathways of our life may seem, even through spiritual deserts without water and under the scorching sun of rationalism – with the guidance of Christ the Good Shepherd, we too, like the Psalmist, may be sure that we are walking on "paths of righteousness" and that the Lord is leading us, is ever close to us and that we "shall lack nothing". For this reason the Psalmist can declare his calm assurance without doubt or fear: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me" (v. 4).

Those who walk with the Lord even in the dark valleys of suffering, doubt and all the human problems, feel safe. You are with me: this is our certainty, this is what supports us. The darkness of the night frightens us with its shifting shadows, with the difficulty of distinguishing dangers, with its silence taut with strange sounds. If the flock moves after sunset when visibility fades, it is normal for the sheep to be restless, there is the risk of stumbling or even of straying and getting lost, and there is also the fear of possible assailants lurking in the darkness.

To speak of the "dark" valley, the Psalmist uses a Hebrew phrase that calls to mind the shadows of death, which is why the valley to be passed through is a place of anguish, terrible threats, the danger of death. Yet the person praying walks on in safety undaunted since he knows that the Lord is with him. "You are with me" is a proclamation of steadfast faith and sums up the radical experience of faith; God's closeness transforms the reality, the dark valley loses all danger, it is

emptied of every threat. Now the flock can walk in tranquillity, accompanied by the familiar rhythmical beat of the staff on the ground, marking the shepherd's reassuring presence.

This comforting image ends the first part of the Psalm, and gives way to a different scene. We are still in the desert, where the shepherd lives with his flock, but we are now set before his tent which opens to offer us hospitality. "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows" (v. 5).

The Lord is now presented as the One who welcomes the person praying with signs of generous hospitality, full of attention. The divine host lays the food on the "table", a term which in Hebrew means, in its primitive sense, the animal skin that was spread out on the ground and on which the food for the common meal was set out. It is a gesture of sharing, not only of food but also of life in an offering of communion and friendship that create bonds and express solidarity. Then there is the munificent gift of scented oil poured on the head, which with its fragrance brings relief from the scorching of the desert sun, refreshes and calms the skin and gladdens the spirit.

Lastly, the cup overflowing with its exquisite wine, shared with superabundant generosity, adds a note of festivity. Food, oil and wine are gifts that bring life and give joy, because they go beyond what is strictly necessary and express the free giving and abundance of love. Psalm 104[103] proclaims: "You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread to strengthen man's heart" (vv. 14-15).

The Psalmist becomes the object of much attention for which reason he sees himself as a wayfarer who finds shelter in a hospitable tent, whereas his enemies have to stop and watch, unable to intervene, since the one whom they considered their prey has been led to safety and has become a sacred guest who cannot be touched. And the Psalmist is us, if we truly are believers in communion with Christ. When God opens his tent to us to receive us, nothing can harm us. Then when the traveller sets out afresh, the divine protection is extended and accompanies him on his journey: "Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever" (Ps 23[22]:6).

The goodness and faithfulness of God continue to escort the Psalmist who comes out of the tent and resumes his journey. But it is a journey that acquires new meaning and becomes a pilgrimage to the Temple of the Lord, the holy place in which the praying person wants to "dwell" for ever and to which he also wants to "return". The Hebrew verb used here has the meaning of "to return" but with a small vowel change can be understood as "to dwell". Moreover, this is how it is rendered by the ancient versions and by the majority of the modern translations. Both meanings may be retained: to return and dwell in the Temple as every Israelite desires, and to dwell near God, close to him and to goodness. This is what every believer yearns and longs for: truly to be able to live where God is, close to him. Following the Shepherd leads to God's house, this is the destination of every journey, the longed for oasis in the desert, the tent of shelter in escaping from enemies, a place of peace where God's kindness and faithful love may be felt, day after day, in the serene joy of time without end.

With their richness and depth the images of this Psalm have accompanied the whole of the history and religious experience of the People of Israel and accompany Christians. The figure of the shepherd, in particular, calls to mind the original time of the Exodus, the long journey through the desert, as a flock under the guidance of the divine Shepherd (cf. Is 63:11-14; Ps 77: 20-21; 78:52-54). And in the Promised Land, the king had the task of tending the Lord's flock, like David, the shepherd chosen by God and a figure of the Messiah (cf. 2 Sam 5:1-2; 7:8 Ps 78[77]:70-72).

Then after the Babylonian Exile, as it were in a new Exodus (cf. Is 40:3-5, 9-11; 43:16-21), Israel was brought back to its homeland like a lost sheep found and led by God to luxuriant pastures and resting places (cf. Ezek 34:11-16, 23-31). However, it is in the Lord Jesus that all the evocative power of our Psalm reaches completeness, finds the fullness of its meaning: Jesus is the "Good Shepherd" who goes in search of lost sheep, who knows his sheep and lays down his life for them (cf. Mt 18:12-14; Lk 15:4-7; Jn 10:2-4, 11-18). He is the way, the right path that leads us to life (cf. Jn 14:6), the light that illuminates the dark valley and overcomes all our fears (cf. Jn 1:9; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46).

He is the generous host who welcomes us and rescues us from our enemies, preparing for us the table of his body and his blood (cf. Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25); Lk 22:19-20) and the definitive table of the messianic banquet in Heaven (cf. Lk 14:15ff; Rev 3:20; 19:9). He is the Royal

Shepherd, king in docility and in forgiveness, enthroned on the glorious wood of the cross (cf. Jn 3:13-15; 12:32; 17:4-5).

Dear brothers and sisters, Psalm 23 invites us to renew our trust in God, abandoning ourselves totally in his hands. Let us therefore ask with faith that the Lord also grant us on the difficult ways of our time that we always walk on his paths as a docile and obedient flock, and that he welcome us to his house, to his table, and lead us to "still waters" so that, in accepting the gift of his Spirit, we may quench our thirst at his sources, springs of the living water "welling up to eternal life" (Jn 4:14; cf. 7:37-39). Many thanks.

Pope Benedict XVI

News

The Revd Dr Colin Dundon has written for us a series called *From Fear to Witness*. Based on the Sunday readings between Easter and Pentecost, you will find each study linked week-by-week on the home page of our website. If you would like a printed copy please let Martin know.

This is a series to complement our Missional Spirituality Project.

At this year's Patronal Festival next Sunday, 7 May, we will welcome back Canon Scott and Lisa from their sojourn in the US, Canon Scott will preach at the 8am & 10am Eucharists. Scott has been the Dean's Scholar at the Virginia Theological Seminary for the past few months. Following the 10am Eucharist we will enjoy a soup lunch together and hear more about Scott's time overseas.

At this year's AGM we were asked to consider a draft Parish Plan for 2023-2025. At the April Parish Council meeting the plan was adopted and will be integrated into our strategies and projects. As a reminder these five elements were seen as central to our ongoing life together: spiritual, worship, missional, community and financial. At each meeting we will be using one or more of these 'nudges' to guide our discussions. In the Sunday pew sheet there will be news and reflections on the projects that we are undertaking that align with our plan.

St John's Care is seeking the following for its pantry: UHT Full Cream 1 litre milk, Pasta, Deodorant, Shampoo & Conditioner, Coffee 100gm jar. The website: <https://www.stjohnscare.org.au/> provides information on how we can help.

This year's ANU Chaplaincy Lecture will be held in the Burgman College Chapel at ANU on Tuesday 9 May at 7pm. The Lecture this year will involve several speakers on the subject of Inter-faith dialogue. They include Prof. Anthony Maher the Executive Director of the Centre for Christianity & Culture. It is an exciting time for ANU Chaplaincy as we develop a multi faith centre and an expanding Chaplaincy Team.

This week @ St Philip's

Today *Fourth Sunday of Easter*

8am Eucharist (followed by Breakfast)
10am Sung Eucharist (followed by Morning tea)

Tuesday 2 May *Anthanasius, bishop of Alexandria, teacher (d.373)*
10am-Noon Men's Group
2pm Eucharist – Sir Leslie Morshead Manor

Wednesday 3 May *Wednesday in the fourth week of Easter*
10am-Noon Pandora's sorting & preparation

Thursday 4 May *Thursday in the fourth week of Easter*
10am Eucharist (followed by Morning tea)

Saturday 6 May *Saturday in the fourth week of Easter*
10am-1pm Pandora's - OPEN
11am Eucharist – Canberra Aged Care

Sunday 7 May *SS Philip & James*
8am Eucharist (followed by Breakfast)
10am Sung Eucharist (followed by a Soup Lunch)
Readings: Isaiah 30:18-21, Psalm 19:1-6, 1 Corinthians 15:1-8, John 14:6-14

Rosters

		30-Apr-23	7-May-23	14-May-23	
Sunday of Month		5th	1st	2nd	
Liturgical Season		4th Sunday of Easter	Philip & James	Sixth Sunday of Easter	
Flowers		Kerry-Anne	Flower team	Flower team	
Celebrant		Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Scott	Rev'd Martin	
Preacher (if different to Celebrant)					
Sidespeople		Shane & Tim	Margaret & Russell	Alison & Alistair	
Liturgical Assistant	8am		Susan J (server)	Ellie P (Liturgical assistant)	8am
Audio Visual Operator		?			
1st Bible reader - OT		Susan J	Russell M	Alison D	
2nd Bible reader - NT		?	Margaret M	Alistair D	
Celebrant		Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Scott	Rev'd Martin	
Preacher (if different to Celebrant)					
Sidespeople & Welcomer		Fred & volunteer	Fred A & Janene B	Helen & Hardy	
Liturgical Assistant			Leighton (crucifer)	Rebecca K (Lit assistant)	
Audio Visual Operator	10am				10am
Musician(s) & Singers/Soloist		Colin F	Colin F	Colin F	
1st Bible reader - OT		Kerry-Anne	Laura W	Lyn P	
2nd Bible reader - NT		Jos G	Tim G	Ann M	
Morning Tea		Liz D	Ann M	Janene B	
<i>Additional details/notes</i>		<i>29 April - Pandora's Autumn launch and St Philip's Books & Food</i>	<i>Soup Lunch for St Phillip's Day</i>	<i>Mothers Day</i>	

Dates for your Diary

Mon 1 – Thurs 4 May Diocesan Clergy Conference

Saturday 27 May 2pm – 4pm Missional Spirituality - Seminar 3, 2-4pm

Fri 8-Sun 10 Sept Diocesan Synod Canberra, Girls Grammar School

Dates for your Diary

Mon 1 – Thurs 4 May Diocesan Clergy Conference

Saturday 27 May Missional Spirituality - Seminar 3, 2-4pm

Saturday 24 June Missional Spirituality - Seminar 4, 2-4pm

Fri 8-Sun 10 Sept Diocesan Synod @ Canberra Girls Grammar School