



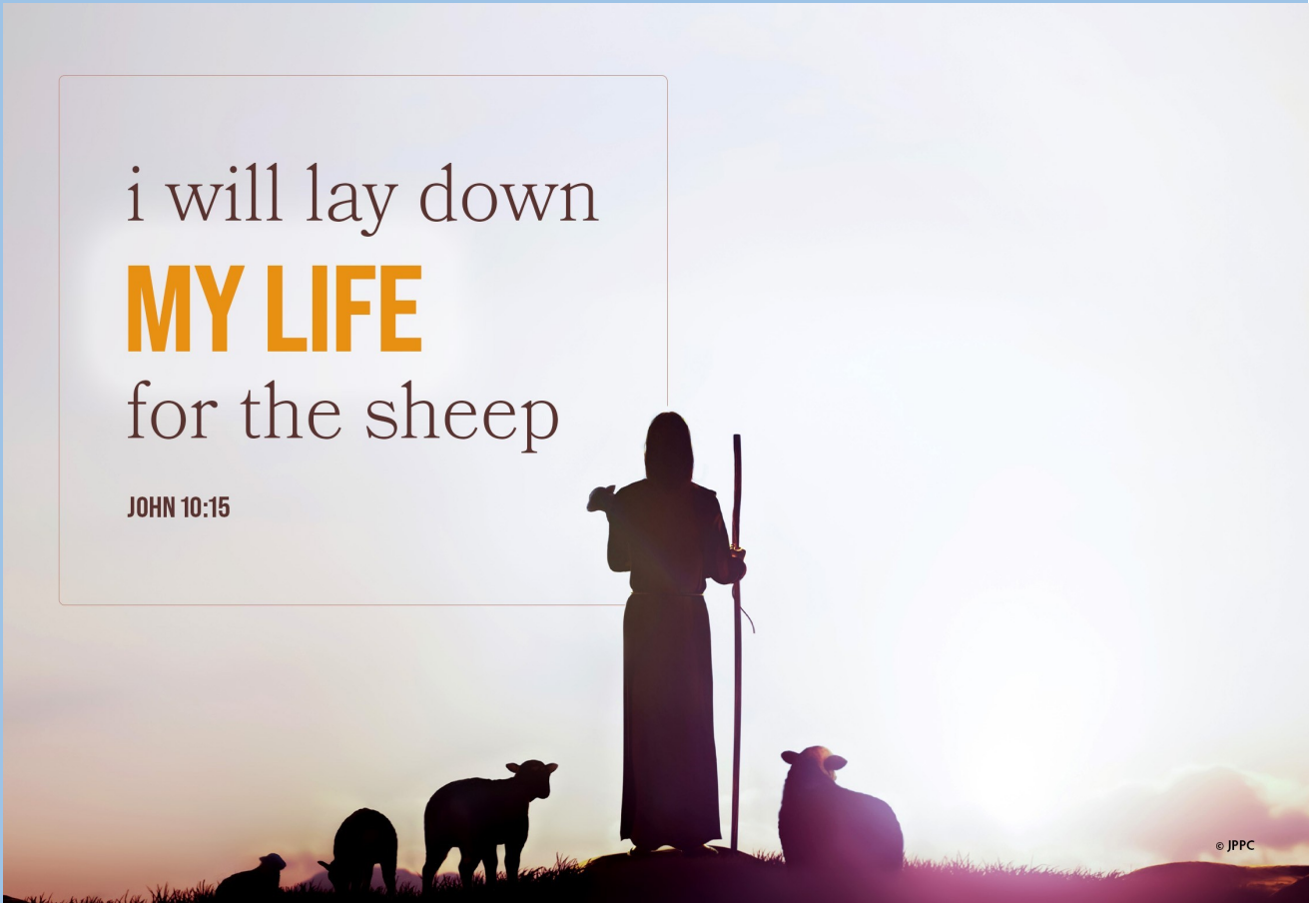
4th SUNDAY OF LENT 2024

MARCH 10, 2024



i will lay down
MY LIFE
for the sheep

JOHN 10:15



Mission Statement

“Good Shepherd parish, under the guidance of the true Shepherd Jesus Christ, is a Catholic faith based community seeking to proclaim and live the gospel message. Recognizing our diversity, we strive to bring together a church family, welcoming all people as we grow together in faith, hope and love.”

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SERVED BY

Rev. Valentine Ugwuanya Pastor
Ed Stolarz Director of Music Ministry
Denise Perry Secretary

For more information on our parish please go to:
Goodshepherdnj.com
Or email us at
gsirvington@comcast.net

From the desk of the Pastor, on Fourth Sunday of Lent.

This Sunday we are being reminded of the love and mercy of God that: “God so loved the world so much as to send His Only- Begotten Son to save and not to condemn the world.” In this broken and fragile world that embraced darkness instead of light, this message is not easy message to accept or receive as it appears. If it were, would not everyone by now embraced such a loving care of God and the salvation He offered.

The readings for this 4th Sunday of Lent focus on God's faithfulness in drawing us closer to him. The first reading tells how God inspired Cyrus to allow the chosen people to return home to worship God once again in Jerusalem. And in the gospel, we hear of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, where Jesus explains that he was sent to us out of the boundless love of God.

This 4th Sunday of Lent presents a profound reflection on themes of longing for restoration, God's mercy and grace, the dichotomy between light and darkness, and God's unwavering love for humanity. These readings invite us to contemplate our own lives in light of God's enduring patience and willingness to forgive. They challenge us to recognize our own transgressions, yet reassure us of the possibility of repentance and returning to God's grace. Through the narrative of the Babylonian exile and the words of Jesus in John chapter 3, we are reminded of the transformative power of belief and the hope that lies in restoration. The readings also emphasize God's mercy and grace towards humanity, despite our sinfulness.

In the first reading, God is patient and long-suffering towards the people, giving them many chances to repent and turn back to him. In the gospel, Jesus speaks of God's love for the world, and his willingness to give his only son as a sacrifice for our sins.

Thus, the readings for this Sunday of Lent offer a deep exploration of God's relationship with humanity, characterized by both justice and immense love. Despite the harsh reality of judgment, there is always a path back to God through repentance, illuminated by the light of Christ.

These themes encourage us to embrace the light, acknowledge God's sacrificial love, and move towards a future where our actions are aligned with God's will. As we journey through Lent, let us hold fast to the promise of restoration and the gift of God's mercy, celebrating the profound love He has for each of us, manifested through the giving of His only Son. As the psalmist told us, “If today you hear His voice harden not your hearts” and return to the Lord, for this is the appointed time and a day of salvation.

Good Shepherd Parish Schedule for Mass & Worship (schedules are subject to change)

Saturday (anticipated) 5:30pm
Holy Day TBD.

Sundays —9:00am, 11:00am
Reconciliation: Saturdays 4:45-5:15pm

National Holidays —9:00am
Adoration Mo-Fri 7:30am-5:00pm

Mass Intentions For the week of March 9, 2024—March 16, 2024

Saturday 5:30pm For the Repose of the Soul of Cosimo Mancino
Mar 09

Sunday 9:00am For God’s Guidance and Protection of Karen and Walter Shawenberg
Mar 10 11:00am For the People of Good Shepherd Parish

Monday 7:00am For God’s Guidance and Protection of Avenella Samaroo
Mar 11

Tuesday 7:00am For God’s Guidance and Protection on the Birthday of Jean Laurent
Mar 12

Wednesday 7:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Rogelio Gonzaga
Mar 13

Thursday 7:00am Thanksgiving for God’s Tender Mercies Jean Laurent
Mar 14

Friday 7:00am For God’s Guidance and Protection of Avenella Samaroo
Mar 15

Saturday 8:30am For Gods’ Guidance and Protection of Avenella Samaroo
Mar 16 5:30pm For the Repose of the Soul of Leonardo Paran

Kindly keep our parishioner's family, with health and other challenges, in your prayers

Let us always remember in our prayers the sick members of our Parish

Paul Kocum	Sandi Mosley	Debbie Watson	Rihanna Scott
Elizabeth Cassata	Pope Francis	Frank Rocchi	Camile Laidlaw
Frederick Hamilton	Curtis Richards	Carlos Quinones	Venus Matthews
Jean Michelin	Corizon Abuzied	Bob and Barbara Nezlick	Partick Roylance

* Please advise if any names should be added or delete from the list

Hospital Privacy | Please remember that current privacy laws regarding patients in hospitals do not allow hospitals/ pastoral care offices to contact parishes. If you or a loved one are in the hospital and want a priest to visit, please call the I office at (973)375-8568

Ministries: If you’re interested in ministries of service either as a Lector or Eucharistic Minister, please call the rectory at 975-375-8568 or fill out the Information below and place in the collection basket.

Name : _____
 Telephone #: _____
 Lector _____ Eucharistic Minister _____



In Memory Of The Deceased Members of The Drews Family By Janet and Luer Drews




ANNUAL APPEAL 2024
MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY





Collection Report		March 3, 2024
Weekly Target		\$6,500.00
Collection (Offering+ Fuel & Energy)		\$ 2,977.00
Surplus (Deficit)		\$ 2,332.00
Fiscal Year to Date		
Budget:		\$346,811.00
Actual:		\$62,441.00
Surplus (Deficit)		\$284,370.00
Rolling 4 Week Averages		
Average Collection:		\$2,545.00
Average Surplus (Deficit)		\$3,955.00

Minister Assignments March 2– March 3, 2024

Saturday Sunday	Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers	Presider
03/16 5:30pm	Denise Perry	Denise Perry Barbara Banks Nellie Bate	Fr. Val
03/17 9:00am	Ernest Devine	Staneslaus Egeolu-Obimezie Augustine Boakye Helen Chife-Akude	Fr. Val
03/17 11:00am	Janice Camacho	Denise Younker Raj Thevarajah Jerome Hule	Fr. Val

GSP EVENT CALENDER

Sunday Mar 10
Fourth Sunday of Lent Day Light Savings Time
Monday Mar 11
Tuesday Mar 12
RCIA 4:00pm in the Rectory
Wednesday Mar 13
RCIA 4:00pm in the Rectory
Thursday Mar 14
Friday Mar 15
Stations of the Cross 12Noon and 7: 00PM
Saturday Mar 16
11:00AM in the Church Anointing of the sick and Confession to follow

Good Shepherd Parish Information

RECTORY HOURS: Monday Thru Wednesday 10:00AM-2:00PM; Thursday / Friday 9:00AM-12:00PM

Parish Registration Forms can be found at the back of the church or call the rectory at (973) 375-8568

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION Saturday 4:45-5:15 pm

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM In order to have your child baptized at Good Shepherd, the parents must be registered and active members of our parish. Godparents or sponsors must meet qualifications as to have received both sacraments of Communion and Confirmation, attend Mass regularly and been a registered parishioner at a Catholic Church For more information please call the Rectory at (973) 375-8568

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY Couples who are planning a wedding should call the parish office to meet the priest, to choose the date of the wedding and before any other arrangements are made call (973)375-8568

PASTORAL OF THE SICK Notify a priest of all who are hospitalized, home-bound, or Emergencies call (973)375-8568

ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS, RCIA. Adults interested in becoming members of the Catholic Church and Catholics in need of Sacraments, Confirmation or Eucharist; inquire at the Rectory. To register please call the rectory at(973-375-8568

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Sunday of October-April from 10:00-11:00 am in the Church building. For more information please call the Rectory at (973-375-8568

Are We There Yet?

St. Paul tell us the Church to rejoice in the Lord! This Sunday, is the 4th Sunday of Lent is always about rejoicing and it is Rejoicing Sunday. We rejoice because we have made it halfway through Lent! We rejoice because the Lord continues to call us His people, his brothers and sisters, and to draw us to Himself. We rejoice because we know that our Lord Jesus emptied himself and took our human nature to die for our sins and is raised from the dead for us, to reconcile us with God the Father. The readings of today make us very aware that we are still sinful humans, in need of God mercy and forgiveness and called to grow in faithfulness and love.

When we look at the first reading of this Sunday, we hear again, we meet an angry God. Always these images of an angry God are tough to struggle with in order to understand them in the light of Jesus. So often in these early writing, when bad things happened, the writer interpreted them as happening with the permission of God who is angry because of the lack of conversion of the people. Even today people struggle to understand darkness, evil, violence and things of that nature. We can never understand why the lives of little children were and still are destroyed as we have seen the past wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and now the wars Russian on Ukraine and the Palestinians— Hamas against Israel and yet every day countless numbers of little children are murdered, killed, assaulted, abused and in different ways maltreated. Many of are asking where is God? How can we possibly believe that there is a God when these things happen?

The 4th Sunday of Lent Year B the gospel reading of the Man born blind, presents a profound reflection on themes of longing for restoration, God's mercy and grace, the dichotomy between light and darkness, and God's unwavering love for humanity. These readings invite us to contemplate our own lives in light of God's enduring patience and willingness to forgive and not put on ourselves or in our hearts stress. They challenge us to recognize our transgressions, yet reassure us of the possibility of repentance and returning to God's grace. Through the narrative of the Babylonian exile and the words of Jesus in John 3, we are reminded of the transformative power of belief and the hope that lies in restoration.

In the first reading today, it is the pagan Persian King Cyrus who is responsible for sending Jewish people back to Israel to rebuild the temple. This is to show that God works as God wants—and not always through religious people. This is a strong message for us in Lent: God is at work in all nations and in all peoples, but always in His way to bring about what He knows is right. This never takes away the special role of the Chosen People, the Jewish People. They are God's chosen ones with whom His covenant endures. And it does not take away the special role of Christians, the followers of Jesus, the Son of God. They also have a new covenant with God. But God cannot be confined.

Thus, today, we reflect on Our Lord Jesus Christ as the "Light of the World," emphasizing His role in fully revealing God's heart. Unlike the Old Testament, which offers insights into God's nature but not a complete picture, Jesus provides a full revelation of God's love and desires. By becoming human, Jesus bridges the gap between divinity and humanity, showing us the depth of God's love and the nature of His sacrificial love. Through Jesus' teachings and sacrifice, we understand that true love involves giving oneself entirely. This lesson is crucial for youth to grasp the profound relationship between God's love and Jesus' mission.

The Gospel is so clear today that Jesus does not come to us to condemn us but to save us by his own life and love. This is no angry God nor a God who would ever break His covenants. The scandal is that Jesus comes in weakness to heal our brokenness. The second reading, from the letter to the Ephesians, is focusing on this same theme: we are saved by grace and not by our works. By ourselves we are never able to lead complete good lives. The Gospel is also clear that most of us choose to live in the darkness rather than choose the to live in the light. This should not scare us. It is simply a part of our normal daily choice. When we are honest, many of us have to admit that we don't really spend a great deal of time looking for the deep realities of the spirit. Rather, we just get on with living and turn to God when we find a need to do so.

So, this 4th Sunday of liturgical Year B of Lent, is a creative activity that ties into the theme of light and darkness. It is like the blown balloon packed with evil and darkness, punctured by the light, and that light is our Lord Jesus Christ, who conquered sin and death through his resurrection. So, the game becomes a lively representation of light overcoming darkness. "In a darkened room, participants try to pop each other's balloons, with the last person having an intact balloon declared the winner." This engaging activity serves as a metaphor for Jesus, the Light of the World, illuminating our path and prevailing over darkness, this is the message that resonating during this season of Lent.

"The words of Christ are at once words of judgment and grace, of life and death. For it is only by putting to death that which is old that we can come to newness of life. Now, although this refers primarily to people, it is also true of various worldly goods which bear the mark both of man's sin and the blessing of God... No one is freed from sin by himself or by his own efforts, no one is raised above himself or completely delivered from his own weakness, solitude or slavery; all have need of Christ, who is the model, master, liberator, savior, and giver of life. Even in the secular history of mankind the Gospel has acted as a leaven in the interests of liberty and progress, and it always offers itself as a leaven with regard to brotherhood, unity and peace" (Vatican II, Ad gentes, 8).