



**OUR LADY MOTHER OF THE CHURCH
CASTLEKNOCK, DUBLIN 15**

**4th Sunday of Easter
25th April 2021**

This 4th Sunday of Easter is sometimes referred to as Good Shepherd Sunday. It takes its name from the Gospel passage read at Mass today, which presents an image of Jesus as a faithful shepherd watching over and caring for the sheep.

The image of the shepherd would have been familiar to the people Jesus was addressing, not only from their own lived experience of daily life but also from their Scriptural heritage where the shepherd image appeared frequently. The promised Messiah was often seen in terms of a shepherd who would gather together the scattered people of Israel and bring them back to one fold. Here we have Jesus in the Gospel today saying that he is fact that shepherd, the promised and long awaited Messiah of the Israelite people and indeed of all humanity.

The image of the shepherd is invoked as the role model for leadership in the Christian community. We speak of our Pope and bishops as being shepherds of the people. They have a special duty to be mindful of and attentive to the spiritual welfare of the people entrusted to their care.

The image of the shepherd reminds us that God is ever present with us. Just as the faithful shepherd does not abandon or neglect his flock, neither does God abandon or neglect us. God accompanies us throughout our lives, in all the ups and downs, leading us and guiding us as we journey towards that fullness of life which awaits us when we will be called home in death from this earthly life to share the glory of God and our risen Lord and Saviour, Jesus, in heaven.

Fr. Kieran Coghlan

Ecumenical Bible Week 2021

Running from **Pentecost Sunday (23rd May) to Trinity Sunday (30th May)**, Ecumenical Bible Week (EBW) is led by the Archdiocese of Dublin and the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough in collaboration with many other Christian traditions ranging from the Evangelical Alliance to Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and support from the National Bible Society and Scripture Union. The overall theme this year is “Unlocking Faith Today: Responding to New Realities”. To **Register visit** – www.bibleweek.ie

National Synod for the Catholic Church in Ireland

The Irish Catholic Bishops have recently announced their intention to hold a National Synod for the Catholic Church in Ireland. Preparations are due to begin this summer with a two year period of prayer and discernment and a nationwide consultation inviting people to share their thoughts on our Church, past, present and future. More information on this is available on www.catholicbishops.ie/synod