

FAITH @Home

Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

Celebrating and supporting faith, hope and love
in the heart of the family!



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4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

Year B

Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Acts 4:8-12

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 117 (118):1,8-9,21-23,26,28-29

Second Reading:

1 John 3:1-2

Gospel:

John 10:11-18

*I am the Good Shepherd.
I know my own and my
own know me"*



Stained glass: Alfred Handel, d. 1946[2], photo:Toby Hudson, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

Hear

Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries, you can find this week's readings [here](#).

Young children will enjoy [this animated video](#) which explains this week's Gospel and readings.

Pray

In today's Gospel, we read about the importance of recognising the voice of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Sometimes our days are so busy and full of distractions that we do not hear the voice of God - even though God is always *trying* to get our attention. Take some time this Sunday to pray the Responsorial Psalm by yourself or with your family. Take your time reading it and don't rush through it. Allow the Lord to reassure you of His love for you.

Talk

Is there a situation or problem that you are worried about? Don't be afraid to talk to Jesus about it. He already knows what is going on but he loves to hear it from you. What it is like for you when you hear his voice? What advice is Jesus giving you about this situation?

Share with your family a time when you heard Jesus speaking to you.

- How do you know that it was Jesus?
- What helped you recognise his voice
- What can you do to hear Jesus' voice better?

Family Challenge!

Write down the names of all the priests, religious and married couples that your family knows and say a special prayer for them this week.

Mission: Jesus called Himself the Good Shepherd and that means we are His sheep. Sheep must listen to the voice of their shepherd so they don't get lost or wander off. Spend an extra few minutes each day this week listening to Jesus when you pray!

Song of the Week!
THE BAA BAA SONG

Please email us at faithathome@waterfordlismore.ie [or click the [subscribe](#) button] if you would like to receive Faith@Home direct to your inbox each week!

"To the Heights" Post-Primary / Youth Version also available: click [SUBSCRIBE](#) / email youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie

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THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The sight of a shepherd leading his sheep would have been familiar to Jesus' listeners. We might be inclined to think that shepherding works the other way around but at that time in the Holy Land shepherds would *lead* their flock from the front rather than *drive* them from behind. Two things are important to notice about this image. First, following someone involves a free choice and, not only that, it requires trust and confidence in their ability to lead.

Jesus leads his flock away from dangers and into safe pastures. He is so committed to the welfare of each one of his sheep (each one of us!) that he is willing to lay down his life for them. Jesus wants to be our shepherd but he will never force us to follow him. He wants our decision to be His to be made freely out of love – not obligation or coercion. We are always free in our decision to allow Jesus be our shepherd. Jesus is so, so gentle with us. He is always waiting and always patient. He never gives up on us or gets frustrated by us. He is continuously seeking people out and inviting them to join with him. He really is a *good* shepherd. His plan for each one of us is that we would know with absolute certainty that we are loved and wanted by God – even when we go astray and wander off.

Sometimes this truth about Jesus can be difficult for us to accept and believe. We may have had experiences in the past where people we trusted deeply hurt us. If this happened within our family it can distort our image of Jesus. It can make it difficult to believe that He is good and to trust Him. It can also be difficult to trust Jesus when it means surrendering something to him. We might have to surrender a particular sin, or we might have to surrender control that we would much rather hold onto.

Jesus only ever wants what is best for us but we have to want it for ourselves. Our true identity will only ever be found in Him and with Him. If we let Jesus lead us we will never have anything to fear. Let us begin to trust Jesus like never before. Trust that He is good. Trust that He is with you. Trust that when you wander off that He goes in search of you. Trust.

CHECK IT OUT: VOCATIONS IRELAND

Vocations Ireland is an office made up from members of the many Religious Sisters, Brothers and Priests from Congregations, Societies, Contemplative and Missionary communities in Ireland. Our Mission is to discern, foster and encourage vocations to Religious and Missionary life.

Click here for: [Diocese of Waterford & Lismore Vocation Information](#) / [Diocesan Prayer for Vocations](#)
Directors: Fr Billy Meehan [frbillymeehan@gmail.com] & Fr Shane O'Neill [shanewoneill87@gmail.com]

EVENTS

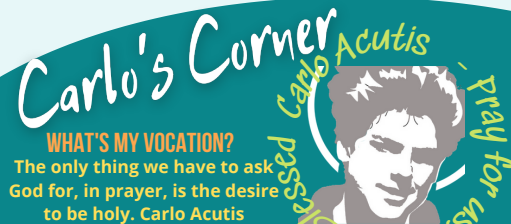
Quo Vadis: Catholic Zoom Series for Young Adults aged 18-35. Sundays 7-8pm, April 11th - May 2nd. "Sr Clare: Alone with Christ Alone!" A four-part series on the inspirational of Sr Clare Crockett, presented by the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother. **Contact** events@waterfordlismore.ie or [click here](#)

"Rooted": Lectio Divina Zoom Series for adults who would like to learn to read and pray with Scripture. Wednesdays 8 - 9.15pm from May 5th - June 16th. **Contact** events@waterfordlismore.ie

REVIVE Live-streamed event for Youth
Friday 30th April: 7.30 - 8.30 livestreamed on www.holyfamilymission.ie
More info: www.waterfordlismore.ie/youth-ministry

Family Prayer

Jesus, You are our Good Shepherd.
You laid down Your life for us.
You know us individually.
You love us totally.
You guard us and defend us.
Keep us always close to You.
May we always listen to Your voice and
never be led astray.
Amen



What do you think you are called to do in life? To be a doctor? An architect? A teacher? Work in I.T. or marketing? Get married? Raise a family? Become a priest or a religious brother or sister? That last one can sound a bit off-putting at times. We can often (wrongly) associate a religious vocation with loneliness and giving up the things in life that make us happy. However, nothing could be further from the truth – if God is calling you to religious life, that is His plan for your maximum happiness! If he's calling you to marriage, then that's His plan for your maximum happiness. Ultimately, each of our vocations, or callings, is to be holy, to be a saint. Carlo Acutis understood this so well. At one stage he desired to be a priest, and yet he knew in his short life this would never be a possibility. Does that mean Carlo had no vocation? Absolutely not! He had a vocation to be a saint, and he lived out that vocation joyfully each day of his young life. Was it easy? Probably not. Was it worth it? Yes! He gained Heaven, and at the end of the day, that's what matters most. Pray to God to discover your vocation, because His plan for you is His plan for you to achieve heaven!

- ▶ [Vocations Sunday \(Diocesan Video\)](#)
- ▶ [What's my Vocation? \(Fr Mike Schmitz\)](#)
- ▶ [Today I Choose \(Brian Doerksen\)](#)
- ▶ Use the attached handouts to guide you.







What is a Vocation?



OWSVA HASAD
AUDREY

"RESTLESS"

You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You. - St Augustine -

WHAT DO YOU THINK ST AUGUSTINE MEANT BY THIS?



Christians believe that God has a unique plan for each person, a calling, specifically for each one of us. Another word for a calling is vocation. In the past, people only spoke about vocations when referring to priests or religious, like brothers or nuns. Now we understand that vocation is broader than that. You may have a calling to priesthood or religious life. Or you may be called to married life. You may be called to single life. Maybe you're called to be a doctor, or a teacher, or an engineer, or a salesperson, or an office worker. God's ultimate plan for each one of us is that we become saints, that we are holy and fulfil the maximum of his plan for us here on earth so we can enjoy eternal happiness with Him in Heaven. We achieve this by living out whatever calling God has for each of us, by offering up our lives for His greater glory. If you're called to be a teacher, be the best teacher you can be. If your vocation is to be a mom or dad, be the absolute best parent you can be! If your vocation right now is to be a student, be the best student you can be. God calls some people to priesthood or religious life. This is an amazing life of service to others! The idea can be daunting at first, but remember, whatever God is calling us to, that is His plan for the absolute maximum of our happiness!

DO YOU THINK OF YOUR LIFE THIS WAY? IF NOT, WHAT DIFFERENCE WOULD IT MAKE IF YOU DID?

THOMAS MERTON VOCATION PRAYER



MY LORD GOD, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.



READ
REVELATIONS
3:20

FOLLOW ON ACTIVITIES:



- Pray for your local priest and don't be afraid to step up and help out where you can in your local parish!!
- If you know any Priests, Religious Brothers or Sisters, ask them to share their vocation story with you! Pray for them in their vocation!
- Watch: "Do we need priests?" on the *Paving the Way Home* YouTube Channel
- Check out *Vocations Ireland* website for information on priestly and religious vocations for men and women.



HOW CAN WE OPEN THAT DOOR?

NOTICE JESUS KNOCKING ON THE DOOR, WHICH IS OVERGROWN WITH WEEDS. THE DOOR REPRESENTS OUR HEARTS. NOTICE THERE IS NO HANDLE ON THE OUTSIDE. HE KNOCKS BUT WE HAVE TO DECIDE TO LET CHRIST IN.



WILLIAM HUNT: "THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"



Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan is Bishop of the Diocese of Waterford & Lismore. Fr Billy Meehan & Fr Shane O'Neill are the Vocations Directors for the diocese.



DIOCESAN VOCATIONS

VIDEO



Priestly Vocations

BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO: WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF A PRIEST'S VOCATION / ROLE?



WATCH THE DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE VOCATIONS VIDEO AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW

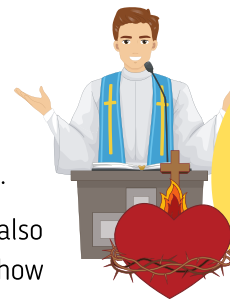
1

How does Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan define a vocation?

A vocation is a _____ from God to live a particular _____ in life.

2

Fr Shane O'Neill comments that as well as God giving us the vocation, he also gives us the _____ by which we discern what that _____ is and how we are to _____ it.



"THE PRIESTHOOD IS THE LOVE OF THE HEART OF GOD."
ST JOHN VIANNEY

3

All Christians by virtue of baptism are called to the **"common priesthood"**: imitating Jesus as priest, prophet and king. Ordained priests who can administer the sacraments are known as the **"ministerial priesthood"**. How does Bishop Alphonsus explain how a priest lives out his ministerial priesthood?



4

What initially discouraged Fr Billy Meehan from considering priesthood?

What did he decide he wanted to be after his Leaving Cert? _____



"YOU WERE NOT MADE FOR COMFORT; YOU WERE MADE FOR GREATNESS!"
BENEDICT XVI

5

Fr Shane describes the essence of the vocation to priesthood as "nothing less than a man laying down his life for Jesus Christ." He explains that a man who serves Jesus as a priest lays down all of his faculties, g_____, a _____ and his entire _____ in service of Jesus and others.

6

What kind of gifts / talents / personality traits could a priest really use in the service of God and others today do you think?



ACTS 1:8
"YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES."

7

According to Fr Shane, where does a priest's power come from?

8

Although taking the first step to answering God's call to priesthood might be daunting, what encouragement do John (seminarian) and Fr Shane offer at the end?

9

After watching the video, what do you think is the most challenging part of being a priest today?

10

After watching the video, what do you think is the most fulfilling part of being a priest today?

"DO NOT BE AFRAID. OPEN WIDE THE DOORS TO CHRIST!"
- ST JOHN PAUL II



PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS IN THE DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE

Lord Jesus,
you have told us that
"The harvest is great, but the labourers are few. Pray therefore, the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his fields." (Lk 10:2)
We ask you, Lord, to send labourers into your fields, which are awaiting holy priests, heroic missionaries, dedicated brothers and sisters. We pray in particular for vocations to Priesthood and Religious Life in our Diocese of Waterford & Lismore. Enkindle in the hearts of our young people the grace and courage to hear and answer your call. May they respond with generosity, freedom and joy. May their lives serve as a witness to the fact that our deepest joy is to be found in you alone.
Grant that Christian families may encourage and affirm such vocations, and that they may desire to give to your Church helpers in proclaiming the Good News to the world of tomorrow.

For more info on vocations in the Diocese of Waterford & Lismore, check out the website at www.waterfordlismore.ie/priesthood/

