

# Fr. Simon Sez

## *Happy Mother's Day!*

In thanksgiving, we wish all mothers a blessed and happy day. We also pray for our deceased mothers. We remember and give thanks for our spiritual mothers - Holy Mother Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church as well as Holy Mother Church! People who have a personal relationship with the Blessed Mother are blessed themselves! Consider praying for this gift and foster it with Maria devotions.



Are we going to have the River Mass? Of course, this has been a concern of many people since I arrived. I took my time to listen to various concerns. I plan on always having the 6:30 p.m. Saturday evening Sunday Vigil Mass available in Sacred Heart

Church as a parish Mass. Since the Catholic Church requires weekend Mass attendance, I believe every parish priest should provide one Saturday evening Sunday Vigil option as consistently as possible in a parish church.

The River Mass is a Mass of convenience and accommodation for people of various parishes in that area which is larger than many towns during the summer. This Mass was originally at 8:15 p.m. I would like to go back to that and try it. The timing might be tight at times, but it should generally work and the wind should go down by then. I will provide as much notification that I can if there has to be a time change or

cancellation. One possibility is when there is a substitute priest. It will be up to that priest as to whether they can do it. We will start Memorial Weekend, Saturday evening, May 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:15 p.m. The ending date is generally the beginning of August. The specific date is to be determined.



The Catholic Home Missions Appeal is an annual collection to benefit Catholic dioceses in the United States that cannot afford their annual needs. It is normally taken at the end of April. I have giving envelopes available in our church pews and gathering spaces. Please use them the next couple weeks and place your contribution in the regular Sunday collections. Thank you.

## Shepherd and the Lamb Scott Hahn Reflects on the Fourth Sunday of Easter



Israel's mission—to be God's instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth (see Isaiah 49:6)—is fulfilled in the Church.

By the "Word of God" that Paul and Barnabas preach in today's First Reading, a new covenant people is being born, a people who glorify the God of Israel as the Father of them all.

The Church for all generations remains faithful to the grace of God given to the Apostles, continues their saving work.

Through the Church, the peoples of every land hear the Shepherd's voice, and follow Him (see Luke 10:16).

The Good Shepherd of today's Gospel is the enthroned Lamb of today's Second Reading. In laying down His life for His flock, the Lamb brought to pass a new Passover (see 1 Corinthians 5:7), by His blood freeing "every nation, race, people and tongue" from bondage to sin and death.

The Church is the "great multitude" John sees in his vision today. God swore to Abraham his descendants would be too numerous to count. And in the Church, as John sees, this promise is fulfilled (compare Revelation 7:9; Genesis 15:5).

The Lamb rules from the throne of God, sheltering His flock, feeding their hunger with His own Body and Blood, leading them to "springs of life-giving waters" that well up to eternal life (see John 4:14).

The Lamb is the eternal Shepherd-King, the son of David foretold by the prophets. His Church is the Kingdom of all Israel that the prophets said would be restored in an everlasting covenant (see Ezekiel 34:23-31; 37:23-28).

It is not a kingdom any tribe or nation can jealously claim as theirs alone. The Shepherd's Word to Israel is addressed now to all lands, calling all to worship and bless His name in the heavenly Temple.

This is the delight of the Gentiles—that we can sing the song that once only Israel could sing, today's joyful Psalm: "He made us, His we are—His people, the flock He tends."

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