

A Reading from a homily of Gregory the Great

‘I am the Good Shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me.’ In these words it is as if our Lord were saying: ‘Those who love me, obey me.’ certainly, those who do not love the truth cannot yet know it.

My dear brothers and sisters, let us reflect upon how these words of our Lord imply a test of our own. Ask yourselves first if you are indeed sheep of Jesus; and secondly, if you know him and recognize the light of truth. We recognize truth not simply by faith but by love. You recognize truth not by the assent of the intellect, but by the love you express in your deeds. As the apostle John says: ‘Those who say that they love God, but disobey his commandments, are liars.’

Jesus goes on to add the following words: ‘My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I will give them eternal life.’ A little earlier he said also: ‘If any enter by me, they will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.’ That is to say, they will go in by faith, and go out from faith to vision, from belief to contemplation, and will find pasture in the eternal banquet God has prepared.

The Lord’s sheep will find the Lord’s pastures. Those who follow Christ with an undivided heart will be nourished in pastures that are forever green. And what are such pastures if not the most profound joy of feeding in the everlasting fields of paradise? For the pasture of the saints is to see God face to face. When the vision of God never fades, the soul is filled with an abundance of food for eternal life.

And so dear friends, let us seek these pastures and join the throng of the citizens of heaven. Let their happiness and celebration be an invitation to us. Let our hearts grow warm; let our faith be rekindled; let our desire for the things of heaven increase; for to love in this way is indeed to be on the way.

We should allow no misfortune to distract us from this happiness and deep joy; for if you are determined to reach the destination of your spiritual journey the roughness of the road will not deter you. Nor should the delights of material prosperity in this life ever entice you astray; only the foolish traveler, spotting a pleasant field on the way, forgets that he is en route to a greater destination.

[Source: Celebrating the Seasons]

SAINTS:

Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, 21 April. Anselm was born in Aosta, northern Italy, in 1033. As a young man, he left home and travelled north, visiting many monasteries and other centres of learning. One such visit was to the abbey of Bec, where he met Lanfranc who advised him to embrace monastic life. Anselm had a powerful and original mind and, during his 34 years at Bec (as monk, prior and finally abbot), he taught many others and wrote theological, philosophical and devotional works. When Lanfranc died Anselm was made Archbishop of Canterbury and had to subordinate his scholarly work to the needs of the diocese and nation. Twice he endured exile for championing the rights of the Church against the authority of the king; but despite his stubbornness, intellectual rigour, and personal austerity he was admired by the Norman nobility as well as loved by his monks. He died in 1109.

Mark the Evangelist, 25 April. John Mark was a Jew and, according to Paul's letter to the Colossians, was cousin to Barnabas. He accompanied Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey. Afterwards, he went to Cyprus with Barnabas and to Rome with first Paul and then Peter. Mark's gospel is generally regarded as the earliest and was most likely written whilst he was in Rome. It was probably based as much on Peter's preaching of the good news as on Mark's own memory. Mark's gospel has a sharpness and an immediacy about it and he does not spare the apostles in noting their weaknesses and lack of understanding that Jesus the Christ would suffer for the world's redemption. Sharing in the glory of the resurrection means sharing in the giving of self, both in body and spirit, even to death; sharing the gospel was, for all, in essence both excessively generous and ultimately sacrificial.

APRIL:

- ◆ April 21, Sunday, 11:30a.m., Vestry meeting
- ◆ April 25, Thursday, 3:00p.m., Healing Mass
- ◆ April 27, Saturday, 3:00p.m., Wedding
- ◆ April 28, Sunday, 3:00 p.m. French Service

MAY:

- ◆ May 1. Labor Day. NON-WORKING Holiday
- ◆ May 4, Saturday.
 - * Vestry Planning day, 9:00a.m.
 - * ECW monthly meeting, 2:00p.m.

- ◆ May 12, Sunday, 3:00p.m., Wedding
- ◆ May 18, Saturday, 12noon-5:00p.m., Norway Day
- ◆ May 19, Vestry meeting 11:30 a.m., Vestry meeting
- ◆ May 25, Saturday, 2:00p.m., Wedding
- ◆ May 26, TRINITY SUNDAY, JOINT SERVICE, 8:30a.m. Potluck follows.
- ◆ May 26, 2:00p.m., Wedding