

# the CATHOLIC NAVIGATOR

Aboard St. Peter's Barque with the Catechism Charting Our Course

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## Liturgical Lights

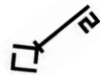
The Eucharistic prayer (the *anaphora*) marks the time when the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus Christ and is the most solemn part of our Mass. Last week, we looked at the first part of this Eucharistic prayer~ the thanksgiving, acclamation, and, specifically, the *epiclesis* (prayer calling down the Holy Spirit).

In the western Church, this 'calling down' prayer usually comes before what is known as the "institution narrative" and the "*anamnesis*." The words in the 'institution narrative' are the ones that describe what actually took place ("For on the night he was betrayed, he himself took bread, and..."). (*Euch. Pr. #3*) Remember the verbs here used to describe what Jesus did with the bread: take, bless, break, and give. (*CCC 1347*) Some argue that these words reflect the actual structure of the

entire liturgy. (see website, *The Shape of Liturgy*)

The next element of the *anaphora* is called the *anamnesis*. The *anamnesis* is signaled by words such as, "Therefore, O Lord, as we celebrate the memorial of the saving Passion of your Son..." (*Euch. Pr. #3*) This word, from the Greek, means "remembrance, recollection," but of a unique kind. It refers to a memory made real, as if you were there, seeing and hearing. It is a special way of experiencing the past. You feel it.

After the *anamnesis*, the Eucharistic prayer concludes with the offering, intercessions, and the final *doxology* ('a hymn of praise to God', like seen in the *Glory Be*). The change during this prayer that turns the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ is known as *transubstantiation*. Lots of big words~ but, should it be any less for such a singular event in history?



## It's Been Said...

We mentioned a strange sounding term way back in December's *Catechetical Corner*: the "Holy See." Now would be a good time to return to this...

This term is often used to refer to different things so it has gotten confusing. The word "See" comes from the Latin *sedes* (chair, seat), by way of the Old French, *sie* (throne, capital). This term is used to refer to the "chair" of the bishop which is situated in the Cathedral in each diocese. This chair represents the 'seat of governance' from which the bishop operates (the diocese, or archdiocese if really big). Although it's tempting to think of the "See" as those whom the bishop 'sees and governs' while sitting in his chair, the word is really unrelated to the word 'see.'

The Pope, our earthly good shepherd, is the bishop of Rome. From the earliest times, it was said that the bishop of Rome had *primacy* amongst all other bishops. This makes his 'chair,' or location of governance, first among all other locations. But this location, does not refer simply to just the Vatican City State (created in 1929). Rather, it refers to its position among all the other *sedes*, or 'chairs' in the Church. So, "The Holy See," refers to the chair of St. Peter, the governing body in the Vatican, that has jurisdiction over the Vatican, the other episcopal 'chairs,' and all the faithful worldwide!

## "OUR LADY, PRAY FOR US..."

A series of supernatural events near Fatima, Portugal began in the spring of 1916. Three children, Lucia Santos and her younger cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto, were visited by the Angel of Peace while tending their families' sheep. This angel would appear two more times, giving them specific instructions to pray and make sacrifices in reparation for the sins that so offend Jesus. Eight months later Our Lady initiated a series of six appearances as Our Lady of the Rosary, the last of which occurred on 13 October 1917 when over 70,000 people experienced what was called "the miracle of the sun" (it was seen to 'dance' in the sky).

In addition there was a secret, the first two parts of which included the following: the frightening reality of hell; God's desire for devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary; the end of the First World War and the onset of the Second World War; the rise and spread of atheistic communism from Russia; the dire consequences of this scourge for much of the world and the damage to the Christian Faith.

The third part of this secret was revealed during the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. It recounts a prophetic vision of a pope suffering greatly and being shot while many Bishops, priests, religious, and lay people were martyred. This offers much to think and pray about as we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima this Tuesday, May 13...

# What's In A Word?

Purely physical creations need only to look to the material world ~the animal kingdom~ for a reason for being. But as a unique body-soul creation, we need to seek knowledge that informs and forms our soul as well as our body. Where do we find this kind of knowledge? Hints of it are seen in the natural world. Yet, more of this has either been directly revealed (in Scripture) or lies just beyond the limits of our five senses.

Today's readings refer to some of the thoughts, words, and actions that are a part of this other kind of knowledge. Baptism, grace, and the relationship between the flock and the Good Shepherd are examples of knowledge revealed to us: *revelation!*

*Mysterion* is a Greek word that refers to those things which are "hidden," or "secret." In the Bible, it is used to describe the



## CATECHETICAL CORNER

Even though we are "unfailingly nourished and led by Christ himself, the Good Shepherd and Prince of Shepherds," (CCC 754), we have human shepherds while here in this world~ priests, bishops, and the Holy See. After the victims, no one has had a tougher row to hoe these days than good priests and bishops who have had to endure the shame of being equated with those who have so abused their positions of power, betraying the very God they claimed to serve. It is these good priests whom we should seek out for the experience of the Good Shepherd who awaits us in heaven.

The priest is a good shepherd when he hears confessions as he was taught. In this act, he "seeks the lost sheep" and is "an instrument of God's merciful love for the sinner." (CCC 1465) When the priest walks us through the lessons of our faith, he leads his flock. When he teaches us to pray, shares the Word of God, and gives us communion, he feeds his flock. (CCC 2665) Communion to the dying (known as *viaticum*, meaning "supplies for the journey") is another special gift that he dispenses in that it is "the seed of eternal life and the power of resurrection." (CCC 1524) When the priest baptizes or confirms, he tends his flock. When he opens the doors to the fearful and desperate, or those bowed in sorrow, he protects, defends and cares for his sheep.

When Jesus commanded Peter, "Feed my lambs... tend my sheep...feed my sheep" (Jn. 21:15-17), he did so by offering Peter a chance to show his loyalty for each of his three betrayals. Here, Jesus ties proof of love for God with the love a good shepherd shows his flock, and he allows Peter to make amends for his betrayals "before the cock crowed." (Mt. 26:34-35; 69-75) The good shepherds of this world turn from any betrayal of God by sacrificing their own wants to feed and tend the flock of God.

'secret counsel of God...' We think of 'mystery' as something that cannot be known. But, the type of 'mystery' referred to here is that truth that God imparts. Mysteries *can* be known! The Latin uses two words to translate *mysterion*: *mysterium* and *sacramentum* (CCC 774). These two go hand-in-hand. The latter word "emphasizes the *visible* sign of the hidden reality of salvation..." (CCC 774; italics added for emphasis) This is what we call a sacrament. The former word describes what happens interiorly.

Sacraments are those outward signs of inward grace, mysterious sharings by God of that which feeds and leads the soul, "The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify *and* make present the graces proper to each sacrament." (CCC 1131; italics added) We have Seven Sacraments in our tradition, while the Eastern Church refers to these as the Seven Mysteries. Both words refer to that which gives form and substance to our being.



## SCRIPTURAL SECRETS...

Today's gospel refers to the "Good Shepherd." The image of 'shepherd,' good or bad, is seen throughout the Bible. One of the most famous of the psalms (Psalm 23), heard today in the Responsorial, lists the attributes of a 'good shepherd': protector, provider, gentle defender, leader, and caregiver. We see the reference to God as "shepherd" made by Jacob on his deathbed as he blessed his grandsons, Joseph's sons. (NAB, Gen. 48:15)

Some 1000 years later, Ezekiel uses the negative image of shepherd to issue a scathing indictment to the rulers of Israel who 'clothed' and 'fattened' themselves while their flock was scattered, lost, or killed by the abuse and neglect heaped on it. He then goes on to contrast this to what God, the Good Shepherd, would do to draw his people back to himself (Ez. 34). In Isaiah (believed to have been written much later than Ezekiel), we see God, the 'Good Shepherd,' as one who will come again to save and gather. It is clear that being a good ruler means having all the characteristics of being a good shepherd.

By the time we get to John, the Good Shepherd is pretty well described and known, because of what was written *and* its familiarity as a livelihood. Yet, Jesus adds more. Not only does the Good Shepherd know each sheep and is willing to search out the missing one, he is willing to sacrifice himself for that sheep. The immensity of this saving action is more deeply felt when we take a closer look at this 'flock'.

We are the flock, the sheep! We tend to 'bunch,' sometimes descending into a mob mentality. We are wary, easily frightened, oh-so-slow in the smarts department, and prone to wondering off and fleeing in all directions if panicked. How humbling. Yet, when we see the lengths to which God has gone to provide, protect, and lead such creatures, we are reassured. This gift of salvation is not in any way earned, achieved, or owed us. Yet, it is given for no other reason than it is the nature of our God, the Good Shepherd.

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