

### ***Thoughts from the Rectory ...***

Dear friends of St. John the Evangelist,

During these stormy days of July we have felt the great power of natural creation. Storm clouds roll and thunder. Rains fall from on high and waters flow. Still more it seems the air of public diatribes blows hot and the frailties of social coherence cloud what is good. With the image and sense of forceful winds and tearing weather, we may easily face the troubles of earthly life with fear and trembling. We may feel as sheep without a shepherd, scattered and afraid.

Yet, as we hear in sacred liturgy today, the Lord God Himself declares: I myself will gather the remnant of my flock from all the lands to which I have driven them and bring them back to their meadow; there they shall increase and multiply. I will appoint shepherds for them who will shepherd them so that they need no longer fear and tremble”.

It is the promise of God our Father that those He adopts as His own beloved children He will care for and lead. In His Incarnate Word, Jesus Our Lord, who is the visible image of the invisible Father, God’s heart is moved with pity for us. It is the divine will that we be found and not lost, that we be near and not far, that we be one as He is One.

“The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want”. As we recognize the Lord as our shepherd, it means we recognize ourselves as His lambs, His sheep, His charge. The Lord is my shepherd, beside restful waters he leads me, he refreshes my soul. The Lord God will bring us to where we need to be and it is up to us to follow.

With His apostles gathered together, the Lord appoints shepherds who give voice to His words, provide hands for His task, and embark on the path of proclaiming His

Gospel. Let us pray ardently for His apostles in our midst, the bishops of our country and the world. May they stand firmly and faithfully, in all they say and do, in the person of Christ, the Eternal High Priest, the Good Shepherd. May they find in us a willing and eager flock, ready for the journey of faith. May they and we, all the Christian faithful, constitute His Body and Members, saved by His grace, redeemed by His Blood, vivified by His Spirit.

*St. John the Evangelist, pray for us!*

**Fr. Pierz**

PS This weekend I especially invite you to pray for the young men in our parish who are joining Bishop Byrne on the *Quo Vadis* retreat. Strengthened in faith and prayer as Christian men, may they know and follow when the Lord asks *Where are you going...?*