

4th Sunday of Easter

- Eric Bogle, an Australian singer/songwriter who has a Scottish background, has a song "Little Scraps of Paper" in which he recounts the story of the death of his father, whom he really didn't know until he discovered the beauty of the man from what he had written on little scraps of paper he found after his death and it lead him to sing – *"I wish I could have known him as a father & a friend"*.
- There are various levels of knowing someone – just as a face, or a name; as acquaintances; as friends or intimately in close relationships.
- A sad & often cruel thing we can do is to judge people on the basis that we claim to know them, when in fact we don't know near enough about them to make our judgement.
- And there are people who rightfully deserve to be known more than what they are by us – it's all too common that they aren't.
- Often children don't know their parents; parents don't know their children; spouses often don't know each other and the greatest problem is when they think they do.
- To know someone takes time, effort & a great amount of listening, but it bears great fruit.
- In a relationship of love, knowing as a process, has to be a two-way exercise of trusting revelation & patient listening.
- And, the fascinating thing is that in growing of knowledge of the other, we come to better know ourselves – as if in a mirror, we see ourselves in the other.
- Jesus says of himself that he is the Good Shepherd who knows us intimately – do we know him and do we allow ourselves to be known by him?
- On this Good Shepherd Sunday, which is also Vocation Sunday, we're invited to know Christ better so that we can know ourselves and the life to which he calls us personally – to live life deeply.
- Being Mothers' Day reminds us of the vocations each of us have been given at our baptisms – to be instruments of God's love to others; to live out a 'duty of care' for those who need to experience God's compassionate care for them through us.
- Some live it out in the single life in their dedication for their families and work; others as parents, mothers and fathers for one another and toward their children; and yet others through priesthood & religious life in their commitment to the community of faith.
- Today we especially remember & pray for our mothers & grandmothers, those still alive & those who have died, & we pray in gratitude for their nurture of us.
- And we also pray for those who aren't biological mothers, but exercise a loving care & nurture for all those they have taken under their wings.
- May all of us be attuned to the voice of the Shepherd that we in turn might shepherd others lovingly.