

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

APRIL 13, 2008

**HE HIMSELF BORE OUR SINS IN HIS BODY UPON THE CROSS, SO
THAT, FREE FROM SIN, WE MIGHT LIVE FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

—1 Peter 2:24a

ON THE ROAD

The twenty-third Psalm, today's responsorial psalm, is arguably the best known of all the psalms. The line that reads "Even though I walk in the dark valley / I fear no evil; for you are at my side / with your rod and your staff / that give me courage" (Psalm 23:4) connects this week's scriptures to the wonderful story of the road to Emmaus, which we heard last week. The Lord Jesus, our Good Shepherd, is constantly at our side. He calls us each by name, beckoning us into a deeper relationship with him. That call, issued to each of us at the moment of our baptism, carries with it the promise of the Good Shepherd: "I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Copyright, J.S. Paluch Co.

HEALTH FAIR

In two weeks, April 27th, we will have our third annual Health Fair, sponsored by St. Mary Medical Center, Long Beach State University and our own Parish Nursing Ministry. You are welcome to stop by between the hours of 8:00a.m. and 3:00p.m. for health screenings, glucose testing, cholesterol testing, blood pressure checks, advance directive information, body fat analysis, health insurance information and info on other services that our community can provide to you.

LITURGY COMMITTEE MEETING

All members of the liturgy committee are encouraged to attend a meeting on Monday, April 14 in the Rectory meeting room.

**MINISTRY NON-AVAILABILITY DATES
FOR MAY AND JUNE ARE DUE BY APRIL 20TH**
csaiza@stmatthewlb.org or 562.491.1217

...REFLECTIONS...

The readings for the Fifth Sunday of Easter are listed below along with two questions to prompt you to relate the Word of God to your life.

FIRST READING: Acts 6:1-7

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:4-9

GOSPEL: John 14:1-12

1) Even the infant church faced division and conflict and had to resolve issues which arose. What are some divisions in our Church or local parish and how can we work to resolve them?

2) The gospel describes us as "a royal priesthood" and "a chosen race." Among many faiths, there are those who believe that they are the chosen people. What do you think Jesus meant when He said these words?

MANNA MEALS

The Manna Meals group will be making bag lunches for the Shower Program at St. Luke's on Friday morning, April 18 from 9-10:30a.m. in the parish hall. For more info, please call Claire Marmion at 597.4030.

IS GOD CALLING YOU?

Liturgical Ministry

Liturgy is the ritual of the people who gather to worship God. Some of the congregation is designated to serve the others and thereby assist them in their public prayer. These "liturgical ministers" are choir members, servers, hospitality ministers, lectors, and Eucharistic ministers. Each role and each volunteer contributes to the beauty and smooth functioning of Mass. Consider one of these:

Eucharistic Ministry

Special Ministers of the Eucharist assist the priest at Mass in distributing Communion to the congregation. In 1973 Pope Paul VI reinstated this ministry due to the increasing number of communicants and the desire to include the role of laity in worship. Besides the volunteers who minister at the altar, there is a group of Eucharistic ministers specially designated to bring Holy Communion to the ill and elderly of the parish. These volunteers visit homes, nursing facilities or hospitals according to parish need and personal preferences.

Hospitality

These cheerful volunteers greet parishioners as they enter the church and pass the bulletins after the service. They also invite worshippers to bring up the offertory gifts, take up the collection, and direct orderly processions. They are of service to the entire assembly.

Lector

The liturgy of the Word, the part of the Mass where we hear the readings of the Old and New Testaments, helps us to open our hearts and our minds to God and ultimately prepares us for reception of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Lector proclaims the Word and leads the General Intercessions. Lectors are on a regular schedule and special training is offered in this ministry. They are asked to prepare prayerfully and diligently for their involvement at Mass, so that the readings of God's Word may be respectfully proclaimed.

Server

These people serve the priest during the liturgy at the weekend Masses and on holydays. This is a beautiful way to contribute your time and talent to further the ministry of the parish. Formation for men and women is offered to prepare them for this important service.