



Alexamenos Graffito

Crudely carved into a slab of marble on the side of a building in Rome around 200 AD, this is the earliest depiction of the crucifixion of Jesus. It was discovered in 1857 when a boys' school founded by the Emperor Caligula was unearthed by archaeologists. In a spirit of cruel childish mockery, it shows a crucified male figure with the head of a donkey and a young man standing next to it. The inscription, evidently directed at a Christian of that day, reads: "Alexamenos worships his God."

— *Picture in the public domain from Wikimedia*

Church of the Good Shepherd

504 N. Roxbury Dr.
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
(310) 285-5425
www.goodshepherdbh.org

Coming to terms with the cross

In the Gospel today, Jesus makes it clear that the cost of being His disciple is to follow Him in the cross. The cross is such a common symbol that it's difficult for us to image the revolutionary impact that a crucified Savior had upon the mentality of His earliest followers.

There is a lot of evidence that even in the beginning, devoted Christians often preferred not to think of the cross and concentrate on other aspects of Jesus' life and teachings.

But that didn't work. It was impossible to escape the cross then, and it's impossible now.

What we heard Jesus saying in the Gospel today continues to haunt and challenge us two thousand years later.

The crucifixion of criminals and slaves dying slowly, shamefully, and painfully was a horrifically common sight along the roads everywhere in the Roman Empire. Such a horrific method of capital punishment served both to justify good citizens -- "those people" deserved it, after all -- and to warn criminals, dissidents, and other undesirable of the fate that could await them.

St. Paul learned a lesson about the cross of Jesus at Athens. There, as recounted in Acts 17:22-33, he preached in the public square to philosophers and tried to show how the 'One God,' revealed to the Jews, actually corresponded to the best of the ideas proposed by their philosophers. When he mentioned the death and resurrection of Jesus, however, they scoffed at him and refused to listen further.

He went from Athens to Corinth, a place deservedly known as "Sin City," and there he resolved not to sugarcoat the message. He preached openly that the crucified Jesus is the center of faith, (1 Corinthians 2:1-6), knowing full well, that the message was scandalous and foolish (1:23).

Even so, there's plenty of evidence that early Christians had difficulty embracing the imagery of the cross. The art of the time depicts many "nice" and comforting scenes like the Good Shepherd, the loaves and fishes, or Jesus' miracles of healing. Until well into the Middle Ages, artists shied away from the crucifixion.

The only "artistic" representation of the crucifixion that we know of dating from the first three centuries of Christianity is the crudely mocking graffito of a man with a donkeys' head on a cross which you can see on the bulletin's cover. That's it. We have to wait until the fifth century for representations of Christ on the cross to appear, and they were "sanitized" of the horror and suffering of crucifixion that people knew all too well from their day-to-day experience of life in the Roman Empire.

And yet, although they shied away from image of the Crucified One, they did not hesitate to live in union with Him, as the great witness of the shedding of blood of the martyrs testifies. In fact, the ridicule and scorn that the young Alexamenos undoubtedly had to endure from his fellow students was also a way of denying himself and taking up his cross daily to follow Jesus, as we are told in today's Gospel.

Congratulations to our new deacon, Eric Stoltz, whose recent book, *Ascend: The Catholic Faith for a New Generation*, which he coauthored with Deacon Vince Tomkovicz, won first place award from the Catholic Press Association (CPA) in the category, "Popular Presentation of the Catholic Faith." (Copies are still available for sale at the parish office.) Visit www.catholicpress.org to see all the winners, which include our own Archdiocesan Catholic Newspaper, *The Tidings*, and a favorite magazine of mine, *One*, gorgeous and graphically rich periodical published by CNEWA -- Catholic Near East Welfare Association. (*One* magazine also publishes all its issues online, from the very beginning, at <http://cnewa.org>.)

Finally, thanks to the fifty or so members of the parish who came to my presentation of pictures of this years' Early Christian World Pilgrimage, Friday evening, June 11. A lot of people who were not able to come asked me about the pictures, and, as I write this, I'm putting the slides and narration on DVDs. I hope they will be available this weekend, if you see me after Mass. To cover the cost of duplicating, I need to charge \$10 for the DVD. With luck, I'll also have it on YouTube -- search for "Early Christian World Pilgrimage."

God bless you always. I love you.

Fr. Tom Welbers
CPA Awards:

Ascend
Tidings
One

Pilgrimage presentation -- DVDs if you want to buy -- \$10



Our Parish family wishes all the Fathers including those visiting our parish,
a Blessed Father's Day!

BIBLE STUDY NEWS

The Adult Bible Study Group is a discussion and faith-sharing group; not a lecture class. Thus, if you join the Bible Study Group, you will not feel as though you are returning to a classroom. We meet twice a month on **Saturday mornings from 10:00 AM until 12:00 Noon** and **Monday evenings from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM** Parish Center. **Monday evenings** is a repeat of the Saturday session.

Our next gathering will be on **Saturday, September 11, 2010.** At that time we will be studying the **"Book of Exodus"**

If you would like to join or obtain more information about our Bible Study sessions, please call Sister Kathleen at **(310) 285-5425**

**TO ALL OUR
 WONDERFUL PARISHIONERS**

Last Sundays' celebration was one of the loveliest and emotional-filled moments of my life. Thank you for helping me celebrate my 50 years of being a religious sister in such a wonderful and loving way. A special thank you to Father Tom, Sister Virginia, the Tatasciores, Margaret Kame and Bill Di Salvo, for making the celebration so beautiful and memorable.

Many thanks also to all those who came to celebrate with me and for all the prayers, good wishes and gifts.

I pray that God will bless each of you in a very special way.

With love and gratitude,
 Sister Kathleen

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

A new Class will begin in September for all high school students interested in receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. For more information, please call Sister Kathleen at **(310) 285-5425**.

FATHERHOOD

A father carries pictures where his money used to be.
 —Anonymous

NEWS FROM GOOD SHEPHERD SCHOOL

Summer School Program Offered at Good Shepherd School

The **Pre-K program** is offering eight, 1 week sessions from Monday to Thursday 8:30am – 3:00pm and Friday from 8:30am – 12:30pm, June 14 through August 6. Activities are designed for 3 year olds through entering kindergarteners and will include water play, art, sports, science, simple cooking, literacy building activities, math, music and movement. The sessions are \$200 per week and payment is due when registering.

The graduating **Kindergarten through 8th grade program** will be from July 5th and July 23rd and offer both morning and afternoon sessions. The **morning session** will be from 8:30am – 12:00pm and include reading, language arts and math. The cost for the morning session is \$300 for 3 weeks and payment is due when registering.

The **afternoon session** will offer a choice of Art from 12:30 – 2:00 pm at \$200 for the 3 weeks or Physical Fitness from 12:30pm – 4:00pm at \$300 for the 3 weeks with payment due when registering.

You may call the school at **(310) 275-8601** for more information or to make an appointment for a tour or visit the school website at:

www.goodshepherdbeverlyhills.com

**2010-2011 Registration is Still Open for
 Preschool – 8th Grade**

Registration is still open for Good Shepherd Parish School, located at *148 South Linden Drive, (approximately 5 minutes south of the church) between Wilshire Blvd. and Charleville Blvd.*

Registration information and forms can be found on the Good Shepherd School website:

www.goodshepherdbeverlyhills.com

Parents who are not familiar with Good Shepherd School are invited to take a tour of the school or call the Admissions Director, Sharon Monroe at **(310) 275-8601** or email her at:

admissions@goodshepherdbeverlyhills.com



PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Good Shepherd Catholic Church will be hosting a Pancake Breakfast on **Sunday, June 27th**, after all Masses. We invite you to enjoy a breakfast of pancakes, eggs, oatmeal, bacon, and sausage. Please note this change: Donation is \$7.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children 12 and under. For more information or if you would like to join us in the kitchen, please call the Parish Office **(310) 285-5425**.

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

PARISH CENTER:

504 N. Roxbury Dr.
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
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FAX (310) 285-5433
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PARISH STAFF:

To leave a message for the Staff, please call
the Parish Center at:

(310) 285-5425

Rev. Msgr. Thomas Welbers, *Pastor*
Thomas.welbers@gmail.com
Rev. George O'Brien, *In Residence*
Rev. Colm O'Ryan, *Pastor Emeritus*
Deacon Eric Stoltz

Sr. Virginia Stehly, C.S.J.

– Director, Christian Initiation
Adult Confirmation

Sr. Kathleen Daly, R.S.H.M.

– Director, Teen Confirmation
Bible Study

Patrecia Formeca

– Director, Religious Education
Lector Coordinator

Terry Hicks

– Director, Music
GSMusicMinistry@aol.com

GOOD SHEPHERD SCHOOL

Terry Miller, Principal
Sharon Monroe, Admissions Director
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MASSES

Sundays 8:30, 10:30 am,
12:00, 5:30 pm
Saturdays 8:00 am & 5:30 pm Vigil
Holy Days 6:30, 12:05, 7:30 pm
Monday-Friday 6:30 am, 12:05 pm

CONFESSIONS

Saturdays 4:00-5:00 pm
Fridays before 12:05 pm Mass

BAPTISMS

ONLY on the 4th Sunday of the month.
Please call the Parish Office
regarding preparations.

MARRIAGES

Please make an appointment
with one of the priests six months before the event.

DEVOTIONS

Eucharistic Devotion:
First Fridays 12:30-1:30 pm
Fatima Devotion: First Saturday
after the 8:00 am Mass