



This simple, rather primitive image of Jesus the Good Shepherd hung for many years in the rectory chapel at my former parish, Our Lady of the Assumption in Claremont. It was an important part of my own environment for my daily prayer, and I think my personal spirituality was greatly nourished by reflecting on the relationship of Jesus and the two sheep depicted here. Its style seems to me a cross between Grandma Moses and a Byzantine icon. While definitely not great art, it's an original oil painting on canvas, signed on the back, "T. Bumgartner, 1976," but I was never able to find out who that was. I felt justified in bringing it with me when I moved to Good Shepherd because nobody there seemed to care much for it, and I feared it might end up in a dusty closet -- or worse. Now it is still loved and appreciated, and graces the hallway of the Parish Center, leading into the chapel.

(Photo and caption by Fr. Tom Welbers)

Church of the Good Shepherd

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Beverly Hills, CA 90210
(310) 285-5425
www.goodshepherdbh.org
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PARISH CENTER

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(310) 285-5425, 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**

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GOOD SHEPHERD SCHOOL

Terry Miller, Principal

Sharon Monroe, Admissions Director

148 S. Linden Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212

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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

UNCOVERING CORE CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

Last week I promised to identify what my own exploration into our Catholic history and heritage seems to indicate are the core beliefs of Christianity. By "core beliefs" I mean those things that are at the heart of the faith which all Christians share, and if one does not believe them, it's impossible by any stretch of the imagination, to call oneself Christian.

By no means do I want to suggest that these core beliefs explicitly contain all that we as Christians believe. (As Catholics we have an additional set of core beliefs that distinguish our faith from that of Protestants. I'll deal with those later.) I think a distinction between primary and secondary may be helpful. These core beliefs are primary because, as I already noted, they are absolutely essential and shared universally among those who consider themselves Christian. Not to assent to all of these core beliefs -- to deny any one of them -- automatically puts one outside the definition of what it means to be Christian. The word secondary rightly refers to most everything else one associates with Christian faith. I call these beliefs secondary not because they are unimportant -- some of them are very important -- but because they have meaning only in relation to the primary, the core. They are usually in some sense derivative, consequent, or corollary. Identifying these secondary beliefs, and exploring how and why they are secondary is a job for another time. First, I want to identify what is primary, core beliefs of Christian faith, and then what is distinctive about Catholic faith -- our own core beliefs as Catholics.

The conclusions I've come to about the core beliefs of Christians in general and Catholics in particular are the result of a lifetime of study into Christian scripture, theology, and liturgy, combined with a strong interest in history, archaeology, and comparative religion -- plus full-time concentration on pastoral ministry in parishes and Newman Centers. I've never been a scholar, full-time teacher, or academician. All my learning and teaching has been in the context of day-to-day relations with the people of real-life communities, not the rarefied atmosphere of university, seminary, or monastery.

The conclusions I will share with you beginning next week, come from two questions, which I think are vital for every Christian and every Catholic. And these questions are related: First, what makes our Christian faith unique, different from all other religions and philosophies throughout the world and throughout the ages? Second, what makes our faith as Catholics unique, different from all the other varieties of Christian faith?

I think it is important to try to look at our faith from this perspective because we face a particular challenge in our world today. Christians and Catholics are by and large ignorant of their faith, or place a lot of effort into secondary, sometimes superficial or emotionally satisfying beliefs or practices, and leave the heart -- the core -- unreckoned. I think there are distortions, at least of misplaced emphasis, on both sides of the mainstream -- right and left, conservative and liberal. It's the core we have to firmly hold on to, and the rest, even if important, only takes meaning from the core.

In addition, it's our experience in today's diverse, secular world, that one does not have to be Catholic or Christian, or even religious, to be a good and moral person. There is a tendency to identify faith with morality, as if it doesn't really make much difference what you believe as long as you're nice. And if you look at the Gospels, at least 80% of Jesus' teaching (and 100% of his specifically moral teaching) can also be found in other, non-Christian religions and philosophies. This isn't anything new. Thomas Jefferson famously re-edited the Gospels, literally with a razor and paste, by deleting everything he thought was irrelevant -- miracles, the resurrection, and anything else that seemed "supernatural" and therefore offensive to "enlightened reason."

One final word before I get specific. I put a lot of effort into being authentically Catholic, and therefore in being 100% in union with the Catholic Church. However, this does not exclude the possibility of being critical of some elements of policy, practice, and even things that are put forth as teachings. One of the solid principles of both theology and canon law is that not all teachings or all laws have equal value, and individual doctrines, beliefs, and practices must be evaluated on the basis of how they relate to the core beliefs and principles. There are times also when one must be critical of what one holds most dear.

To me this is an exciting and important venture. And I'm happy to invite you along. For two weeks now I guess I've been teasing you with all this background stuff. "So, dear Father Tom," say you. "what exactly are these 'core beliefs' you've been making such a big deal about?" Next week . . .

I love you all.

Fr. Tom Welbers

LOOKING FOR FRIENDS, FOR A PLACE TO BELONG AND, FEEL AT HOME

Please read on! We have many women and men who desire to be Catholic and will be coming to our weekly sessions on becoming a Catholic. They need your loving self to journey with them as their SPONSOR. You, as a sponsor have the opportunity to be an encourager and, their support. You will be blessed with meeting and making many new friends. For more information, please contact Sister Virginia at **(310) 285-5425** or e-mail: virginiarcia@aol.com, or Penny Lane at **(310) 880-0428**.

THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A CATHOLIC

If you are worshipping with us at Mass, but are not yet Catholic, please consider joining our Inquiry Sessions on Wednesday evenings, and consider the possibility of becoming a member of the Church and being able to share in the Sacraments. Inquiry is a time of asking questions and exploring whether this faith tradition community is where God is calling you. No one will pressure your decision, but we would love to meet you, and help you find a deeper relationship with God in your life.

Now is the time to begin!
 We meet on **Wednesday evenings, 7:15—9:15 PM** in the Parish Hall beginning **Wednesday, September 8th**. For more information, please contact Sister Virginia at **(310) 285-5425** or e-mail: virginiarcia@aol.com, or Penny Lane at **(310) 880-0428**.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE FOR SALE

You may have noticed the red 4-passenger electric vehicle sitting under the tree behind the church. It was graciously donated to us by a member of the parish, but since our campus is so small we have no use for it. It's brand new, and its list price is \$8,494. We have a considerably reduced asking price in mind, so if you are interested, please call the Parish Office at **(310) 285-5425** and speak with Michael Caraway, our new Director of Administration, or talk to Fr. Tom after Mass.

ADULT CONFIRMATION INFORMATION

Have you received the sacrament of Confirmation yet? Now is the time to step forward! Also, just for your information—in order to be a Godparent for another person, you must have received this sacrament. For information, please contact Sister Virginia at **(310) 285-5425** or e-mail: virginiarcia@aol.com

GETTING TO KNOW GOOD SHEPHERD SCHOOL

This is the continuation of the series of teacher biographies. Below is the 3rd article in the series. For more information about the school go to <http://goodshepherdbeverlyhills.com>



3rd GRADE – Mrs. Michelle Centeno

This will be Mrs. Centeno's 11th year of teaching at Good Shepherd Catholic School. The majority of the time she has spent as the 3rd grade classroom teacher, however she has also taught both 2nd and 5th grades. She has a Bachelor of Science from Western Michigan University and is in the process of clearing her California Credential and working on her Master's degree at Loyola Marymount University. Mrs. Centeno is a mother of two Good Shepherd Catholic School students and enjoys sharing her knowledge of learning with them and all of the wonderful students at Good Shepherd. She is "thrilled to be part of a school that promotes Catholic beliefs and strives to give their students the tools they need to meet their academic needs with confidence."

**ART AS MEDITATION RETREAT
 AUGUST 6-10, 2010
 "ART WINDOWS INTO YOUR
 HEART AND SOUL"**

Join us at Mission San Luis Rey Retreat Center in Oceanside as we explore the inspiration found in different forms of art through prayer-ritual, lecture, discussion, and some hands-on experiences. This retreat is an exploration of the spirituality of art and creativity presented by Franciscan Friars Fr. Tom Herbst, Fr. Franklin Fong and Fr. Philip Garcia. For those who wish, the gift of silence will be available during meals and free-time. The retreat begins with a gathering at 5:30 pm; dinner will follow. It ends with lunch on Tuesday. For more information or to register, please call **(760)-757-3659** or visit the website at www.sanluisrey.org.

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**.



Ask and you shall receive



DID YOU KNOW?

What to know before your child boards the airplane

Every airline has slightly different policies on how they accommodate unaccompanied children. Take special note of their policies for escorting children at connection airports and accommodations in the event that the flight is delayed or diverted. Note that some airlines policies do not include providing overnight accommodations and the airline may turn over your child to local authorities if the flight is delayed overnight. General information and insights concerning airline policies are available at www.AirSafe.com. Click on "Airline Rules for Unaccompanied Children."

For particular help, you may call Assistance Ministry at **(213) 637-7650**.

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**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We Need Your Help!

We need volunteers to drive and deliver meals to home-bound seniors in and around Beverly Hills. We deliver Monday thru Friday from 10:30 AM to Noon.

For more information, please call Pat Jacobson at **(310) 423-3517**.

ST. MEL'S CHURCH
MASS & HEALING SERVICE

On **Wednesday, July 28**, at **6:30 PM** Fr. Bill Adams will be celebrant at Mass & Healing Service at St. Mel's Church, 20870 Ventura Blvd., Woodland Hills, CA.

For more information please visit our website; **www.apostlesofdivinemeracy.org** or call Claudia at **(818) 342-6626**.

You were buried with him on baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

—*Colossians 2:12*