

TAPE: Ps 150 Vers
(R.H.K.)

JOHN 10¹⁻¹⁰ (Adornant)

Yesterday we observed Good Shepherd Sunday, so called from the gospel reading for the day, which was from St. John ch. 10. For the past 6 years or so this day has also been kept as Vocation Sunday, a day of special prayer for fresh and worthy additions to the ranks of the priesthood and the religious life in the service of the Church. Included in this intention are, also, the parents of children who feel this special vocation from God to the service of Christ — for, as in all the more personal aspects of growing up, parents play a great part in the religious formation of their children and in making possible a young man or woman's recognition and acceptance of God's call. And when a young person in a family does follow such a call, very often it's their parents who have the greatest difficulty and sorrow in accepting the fact. I personally know two priests who had to overcome extremely strong family pressure, inclinations even, to prevent them following the way they'd chosen freely as university graduates — and one of them hasn't yet been entirely 'forgiven' by his father. Anyone who knows a number of ~~religious~~ men or women religious, or priests, could easily add examples of other, similar cases. So, when I suggest that we offer our midday prayers today for the intentions of yesterday's Vocation Sunday, besides the undoubted need the Church has for its work, service and sanctification of good dedicated religious and priests, you might especially like to remember all the parents who feel the perplexity Mary and Joseph felt

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[R.11]

when Jesus told them: 'I must be about my father's business'. REGINA PRAYERS

PS. 22 (Israel) For a prayer in music ~~today~~ ^{now}, listen to this setting by Fr. Selineen, of a Ps. which fits it well with our thoughts today on vocation, confidence in God, and Christ the Good Shepherd: P. 22 / MUSIC.

There are many different graces, charisms in Christian life, some of wh. we've come to look ~~on~~ ^{or} as special vocations, in the narrow technical sense the word Vocation has taken on in Catholic terminology. But we shd. keep our idea of religious life and priestly vocation in the context of the call to His friendship wh. God addresses to every man, and the call to holiness in Christ and likeness to Him wh. each of us has received a responded to in the faith we have in God, and in the sacrament of faith, our Baptism which made us members of Christ's body — sharers of His healing, saving work in the world. As Easter is the time of the year when we celebrate Christ's dying — rising — return to His father and ours; when we recall and celebrate the reality of our own assimilation to His Passion in our being baptized, it wd. seem we shd. think of vocations in the Church in this Easter light too — as long as we continue to ^{I think, fairly} have a Vocation Sunday in this paschal season. In fact the link is easily made — for the life and work of religious in the Church is to be a living witness to the presence of Christ in our community, to the reality and joy of His risen life wh. we all share, and to the eternal values of Christian life wh. goes beyond mortal existence and the limitations our human lives are necessarily subject to.

Similarly with the priesthood: while all who are baptized in Christ are made members of a priestly people, sharing the priestly function of Christ's life and work in the world, there are different degrees ^{and} ~~of~~ ways of being partners with Christ in His aspect of His mission among men, from the ability and responsibility of every Christian to take part in the Eucharist, to the fullness of Christian priesthood in the bishop who in Christ's place and name rules, guides and governs the Christian community, presides at its worship and prayer, and nourishes from the tables of God's word and Christ's sacraments, especially the sacrament of His own flesh and blood, the flock Christ has committed to his care.... Which brings us back again to the imagery of Christ as the good shepherd, yesterday's gospel. The relevance and importance of this theme in its very long-standing close connection with the celebration of Easter, is notably emphasized in the new arrangements of scripture readings for the Sunday liturgy. Good Shepherd Sunday will remain, though a week later than at present — it'll be the 4th Sunday of Easter, the previous weeks' gospels being all the resurrection scenes. In each year of the new 3-yr. cycle, a different portion of the 10th chapter of St John will be read on this day, each of them being about the good shepherd. The purpose of this is, evidently, both to keep the long tradition of reading St John in Eastertide (the following Sundays will also be St John), and to instruct all of us by keeping the Pasover of Christ firmly before our minds — His leadership, what He has done for us by His passion & resurrection.... according to the intention of the Vatican Council, as we gain a richer knowledge of scripture, to live more deeply the Paschal rhythms of the