

Deacon Tony's Homily for 4th Sunday of

Mop: A four-year-old spilled his Pepsi on the floor and wanted to clean up the mess himself. So, his mother told him that the mop was just outside the back door. Quickly, he ran to the door, but realized that it had become dark outside. Suddenly scared, he told his mother what the problem was. Assuring him, she told him that Jesus is everywhere, even in dark places, and that he'll always protect him. This put a smile on his face! So, he opened the door just enough to poke his head outside and called out "Jesus, if you're out there, could you pass me the mop?"

One of the most consoling pictures we have that depict Our Faithful Shepherd is the picture where Jesus is walking back with the lost lamb on His shoulders. You can't help feeling secure, knowing that we are in Jesus' care.

We are all familiar with the "Footprints in the Sand" story.

A man was walking with Jesus, and in the sand there are two sets of footprints.

"I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life there has only been one set of footprints in the sand. Why, when I needed you most, have you not been there for me?" The Lord replied, "**The years when you have seen only one set of footprints, my child, is when I carried you.**"

Because my shepherds did not look after my sheep but pastured themselves and did not pasture my sheep...**I myself will look after and tend my sheep.**

(Ezek 34:8-9, 11)

In our time people are also given over to **being exploited by the materialistic culture of the West and have forgotten that Jesus is the Good Shepherd.**

The Father sent His Son, the Divine Shepherd, to tend to His sheep.

Jesus was the only perfect sacrifice worthy to save all of mankind.

He took our place and suffered our punishment, for our sins, and thereby **RECONCILING GOD TO US.**

Sometimes we hear the call to shepherd God's people but we must realize that it is a very different task than the Divine task of guiding the flock. Jesus offered His life, one time, to **RECONCILE** mankind to God and offer **PROPITIATION** to appease God's wrath.

As we read in the Book of Romans: **“for we have all fallen short, by sin, of the glory of God”**.

Sometimes we are called to shepherd God’s children, but we must realize that our human shepherding is very different from Divine Shepherding. We are called to share God’s Gospel and lead people to the Sacraments. If people will see our faith in the Lord, they can be drawn back to the safety of God’s flock.