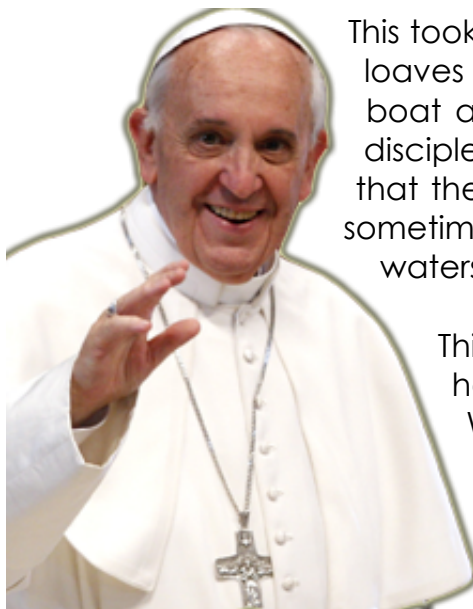


POPE FRANCIS' LETTER FOR VOCATIONS SUNDAY 2020

ADAPTED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

For Vocations Sunday this year, Pope Francis wants everyone to reflect on the Gospel passage of the stormy night on the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 14:22-33).



This took place after Jesus had astonished the crowds by multiplying loaves and fish to feed the 5000. He told his disciples to get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other shore. The image of the disciples crossing that large lake is like our own life's journey. We trust that the boat of life is being steered on the right course. However, sometimes it drifts off course, heads in the wrong direction, or the waters can be choppy and we get fearful.

This is true of our first vocation in life – the call to follow Jesus. We have ups and downs and can be scared that we're not up to it. When being a disciple gets challenging, the Gospel tells us that Jesus is there for us: he walks on the troubled waters to join the disciples; he invites Peter to come to him on the waves, saves him when he starts to sink and, once in the boat, makes the winds die down.

Gratitude

Taking the right course is not something we do on our own. The Lord points out our destination on the opposite shore and he grants us the courage to board the boat. In calling us, he accompanies and guides us; he keeps us safe and even enables us to walk on stormy waters.

Every vocation is born of that gaze of love with which the Lord came to meet us, perhaps even at a time when our boat was being battered by the storm. We discover and embrace our vocation once we open our hearts in **gratitude** and respond to Jesus' call.

Encouragement

When the disciples see Jesus walking towards them on the sea, they first think that he is a ghost and are filled with fear. Jesus immediately gives **encouragement** with words that we can always use in our vocational journey through life: **"Take heart, it is I; have no fear"**.



Courage

When, as adults, we are called to leave safe shores and say “yes” to a state of life – like marriage, priesthood, or religious life – the first reaction is often one of fear for the future. Surely, this vocation is not for me? Can this really be the right path? Is the Lord really asking me to do this?

The Lord knows that to say “yes” to him calls for us to have **courage**. He knows the questions, doubts and difficulties that toss the boat of our heart, and so he reassures us: “Take heart, it is I; have no fear!” We know in faith that he is with us and comes to meet us, that he is always at our side, even amid stormy seas. Knowing this helps us experience the beauty of our vocation.

Fatigue

Every vocation comes with responsibility. The Lord calls us because he wants to help us, like Peter, to “walk on water” – to live his Gospel in everyday ways that he shows us.

Like Saint Peter, our desires and enthusiasm come with failings and fears. If we let ourselves be daunted by our responsibilities, we will soon turn away from the gaze of Jesus and, like Peter, we will begin to sink. Whenever **fatigue** or fear make us start to sink, Jesus holds out his hand to us. He gives us the enthusiasm we need to live our vocation with joy and energy.

Praise

When Jesus at last boards the boat, the winds die down and the waves are calmed. Here we have a beautiful image of what the Lord can do at times of turbulence in our lives. He stills the winds, so that evil and fear no longer have power over us.

Take heart, do not be afraid! Jesus is at our side, stretching out his hand to take hold and save us. Even amid the storm-tossed waters, then, our lives become open to **praise**.

Pope Francis asks us on this Vocations Sunday - and always - to continue to promote vocations. This means **encouraging** people to be like our Mother Mary: to **gratefully** discover God's call in their lives, to find **courage** to say “yes” to God, to overcome all **fatigue** through faith in Christ, and to make of their lives a song of **praise** for God – for their brothers and sisters, and for the whole world.

May our Mother Mary accompany us and pray for us.



Franciscus

JESUS WALKS ON THE WATER (Matthew 14:22-33)

Revised Standard Version (Catholic Edition) – *as quoted in the Pope's letter*

²² Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³ And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴ but the boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. ²⁵ And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. ²⁷ But immediately he spoke to them, saying, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear."

²⁸ And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." ²⁹ He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; ³⁰ but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Jerusalem Bible – *as used at Mass*

²² Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while he would send the crowds away. ²³ After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴ while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a head-wind. ²⁵ In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, ²⁶ and when the disciples saw him walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear. ²⁷ But at once Jesus called out to them, saying, 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' ²⁸ It was Peter who answered. 'Lord,' he said 'if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' ²⁹ 'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, ³⁰ but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. ³¹ Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' ³² And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. ³³ The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

Good News Translation – *for children*

²² Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people away. ²³ After sending the people away, he went up a hill by himself to pray. When evening came, Jesus was there alone; ²⁴ and by this time the boat was far out in the lake, tossed about by the waves, because the wind was blowing against it.

²⁵ Between three and six o'clock in the morning Jesus came to the disciples, walking on the water. ²⁶ When they saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said, and screamed with fear.

²⁷ Jesus spoke to them at once. "Courage!" he said. "It is I. Don't be afraid!"

²⁸ Then Peter spoke up. "Lord, if it is really you, order me to come out on the water to you."

²⁹ "Come!" answered Jesus. So Peter got out of the boat and started walking on the water to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he noticed the strong wind, he was afraid and started to sink down in the water. "Save me, Lord!" he cried.

³¹ At once Jesus reached out and grabbed hold of him and said, "What little faith you have! Why did you doubt?"

³² They both got into the boat, and the wind died down. ³³ Then the disciples in the boat worshiped Jesus. "Truly you are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

Vocations Sunday

3rd May 2020

"Good Shepherd Sunday"

A Virtual Assembly

Diocesan
Vocations
Office

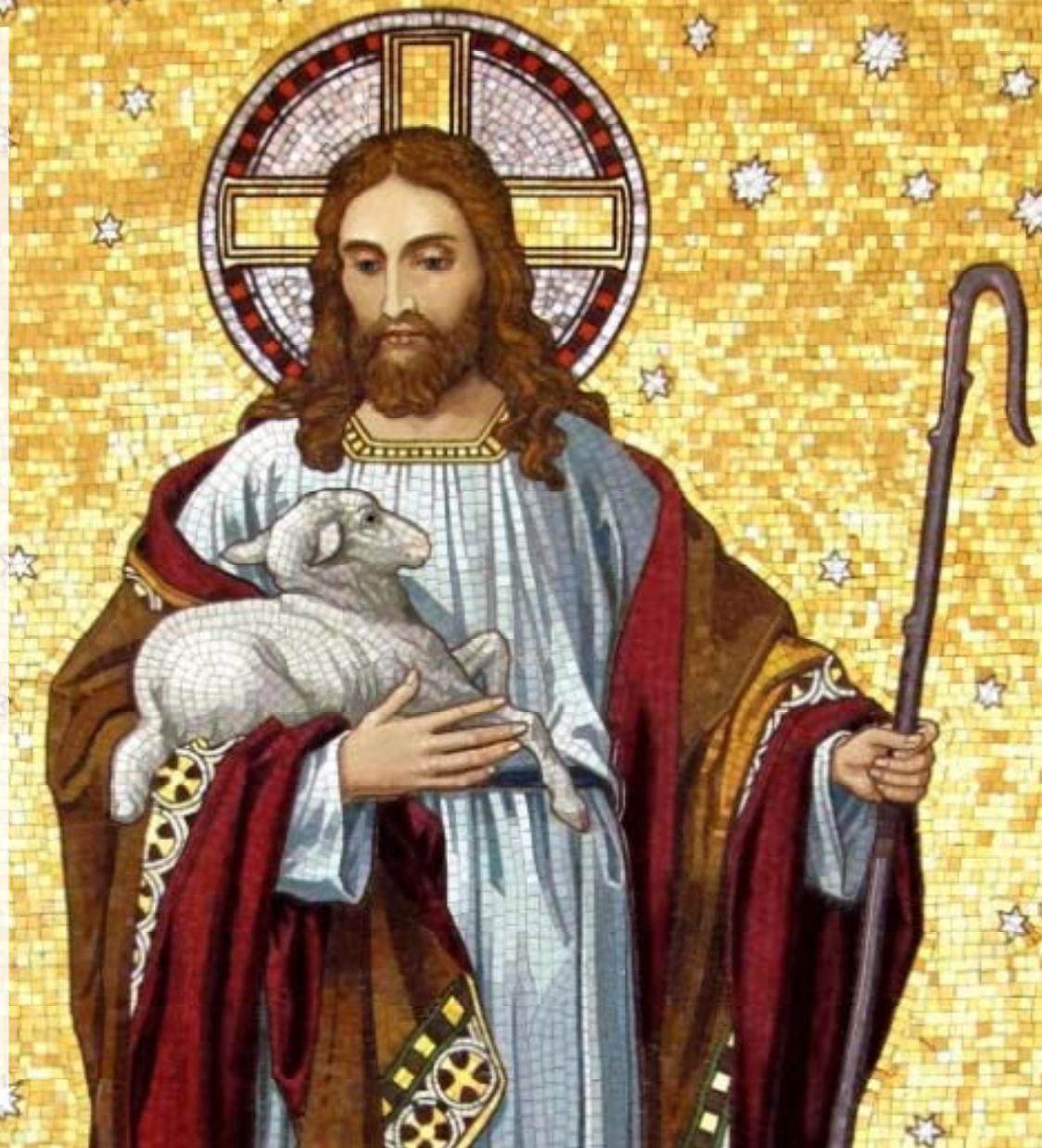


ASK INVITE PRAY



THE ARCHDIOCESE of BIRMINGHAM

Registered Charity 234216



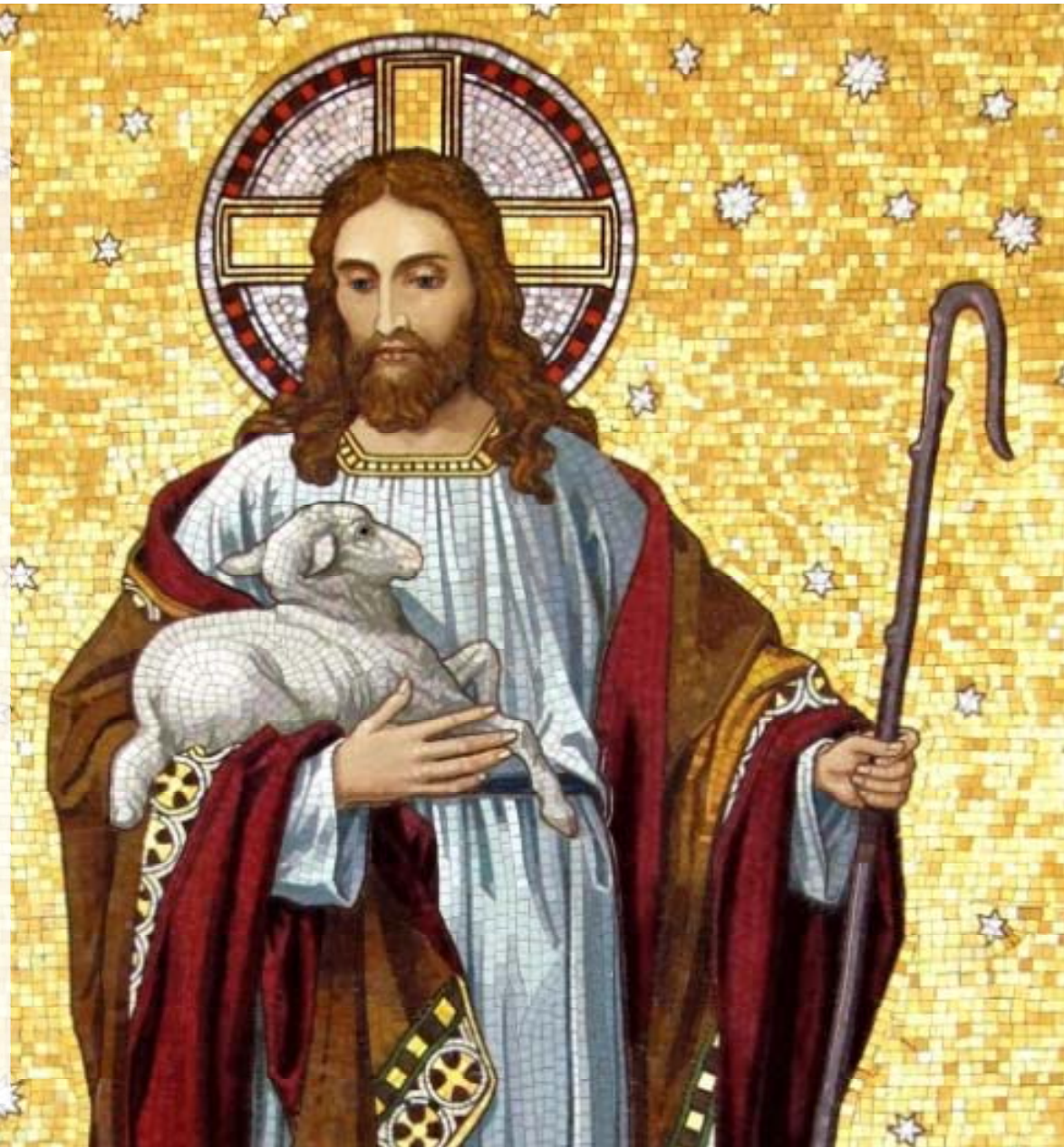
Welcome to our assembly

As we can't gather together, we've prepared this virtual assembly, so that hopefully young people from all the schools of our Archdiocese can still reflect and pray together.

There are some clips as part of this assembly, so you will need the sound turned up.

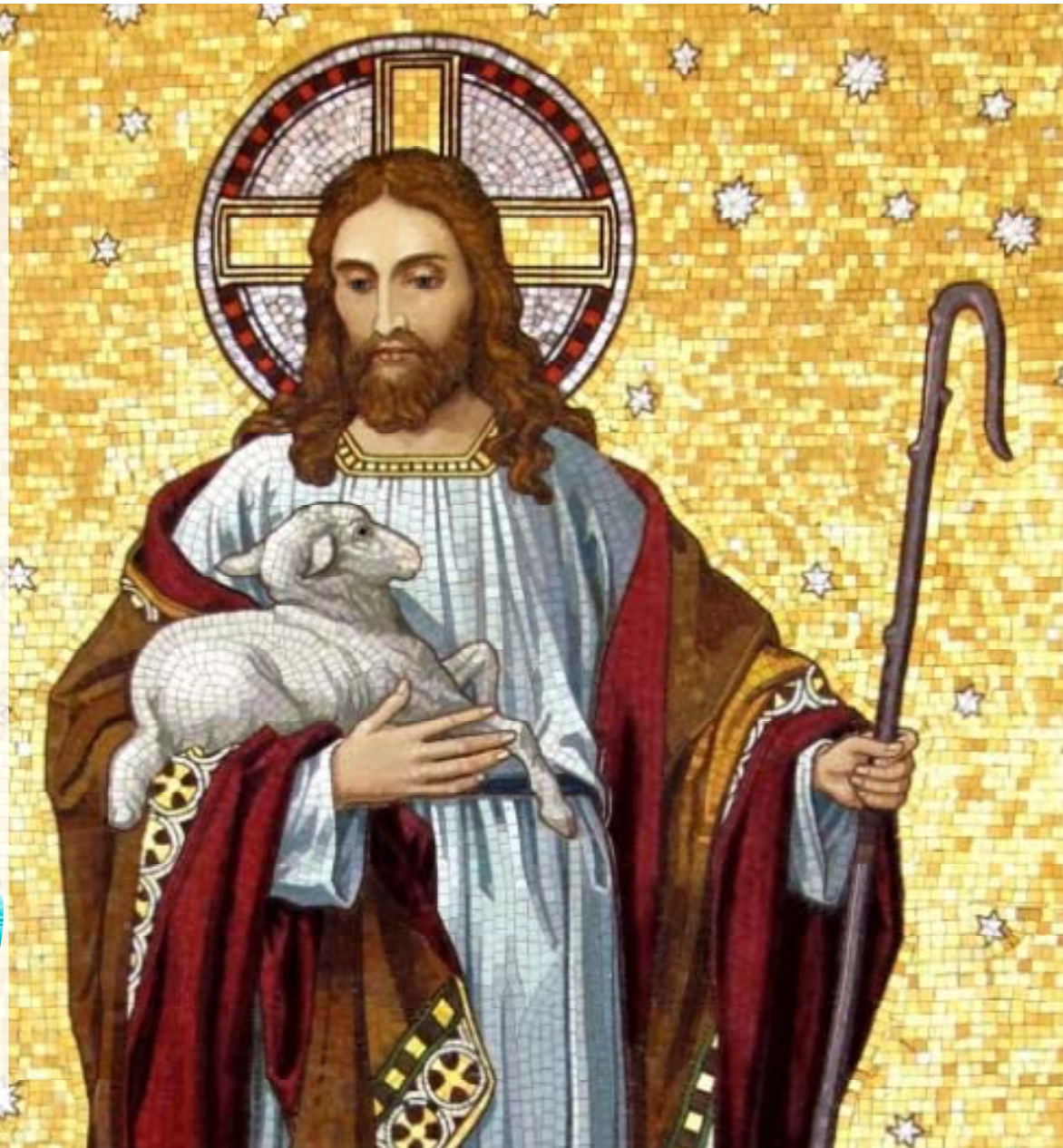
Let us begin this assembly with the Sign of the Cross:

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**



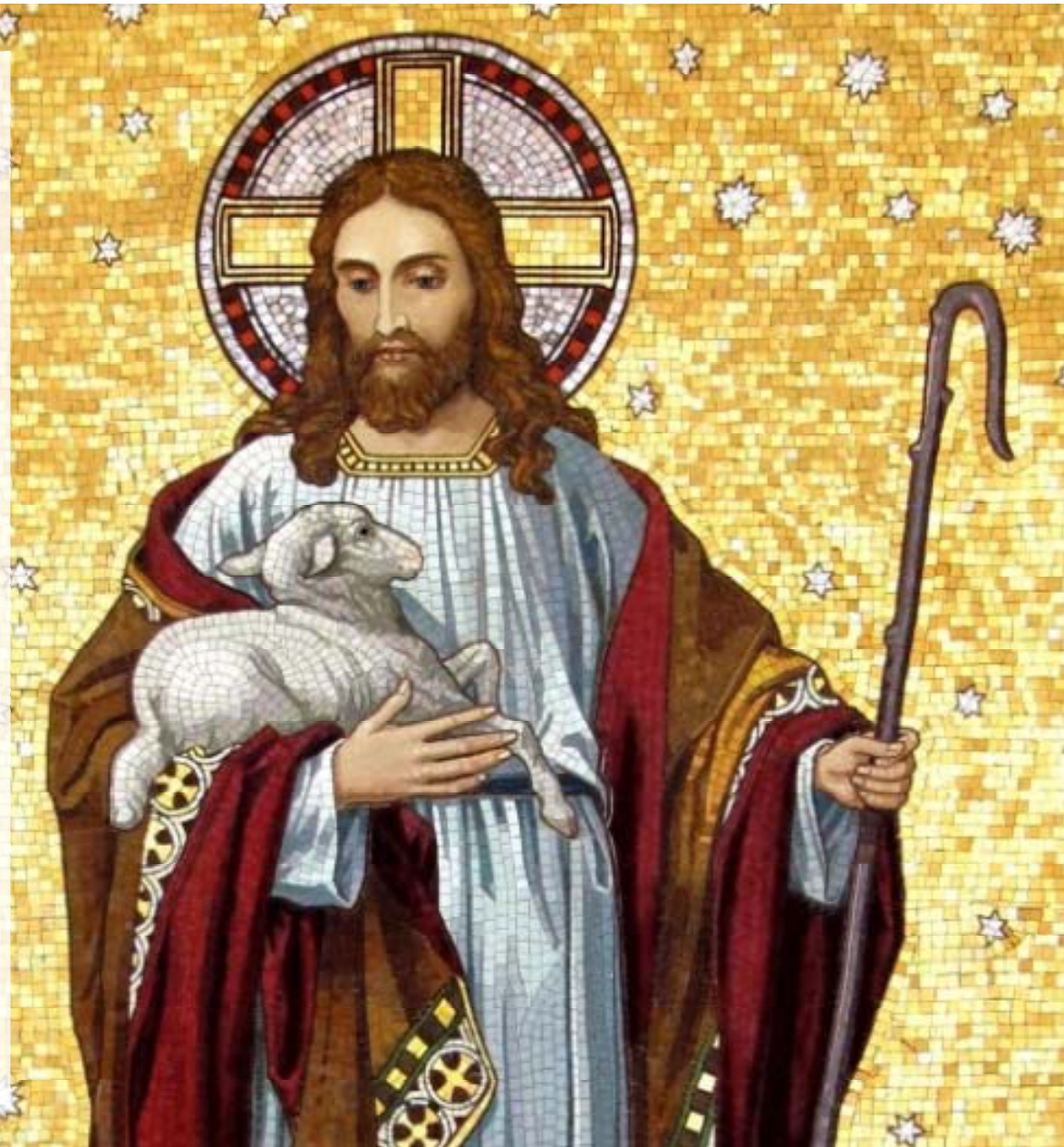
We all have a vocation

In the life of Church, most people are called to **marriage** or **single** life, and have other important vocations - serving God and serving others in their life, whether through their job, or in other ways they bring Jesus' love to others.



The 4th Sunday of Easter
every year is
Vocations Sunday
or “**Good Shepherd Sunday**”

- The readings are always about Jesus as our shepherd, who cares for us and guides us.
- We pray for **vocations** in the Church.
- We ask God to send us people who will be shepherds to care for us.



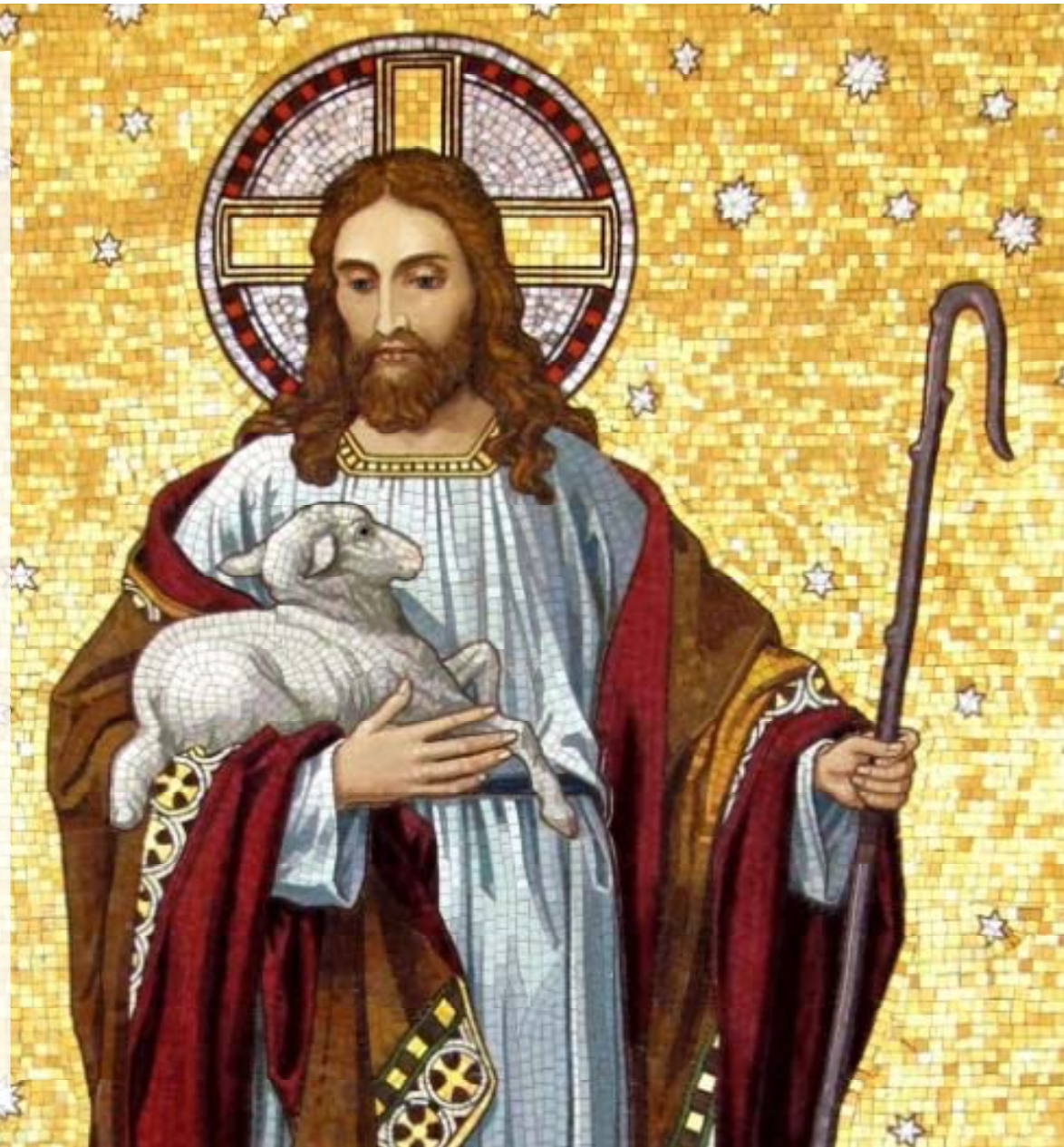
We pray especially for people
to answer the call to vocations
in the Church

Priests

These are men
whom God calls to
be shepherds for us
in the Church today.



They bring Jesus to
us by their **teaching**,
by **leading** us and
by **sanctifying**,
especially through
sacraments.



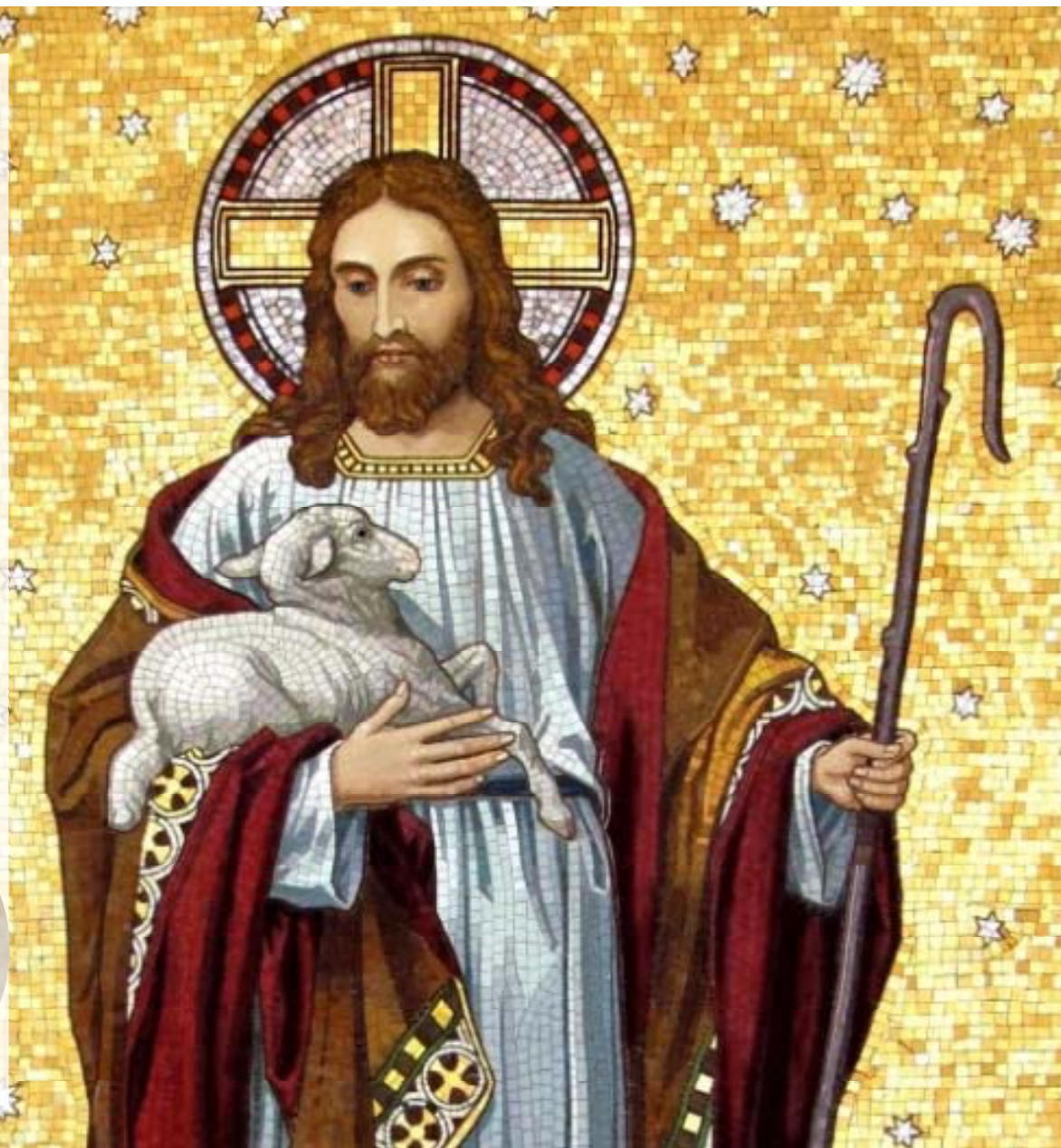
Deacons

These are men who **serve** us by bringing Jesus to us in the sacraments, helping us understand God's Word and his love through charity.



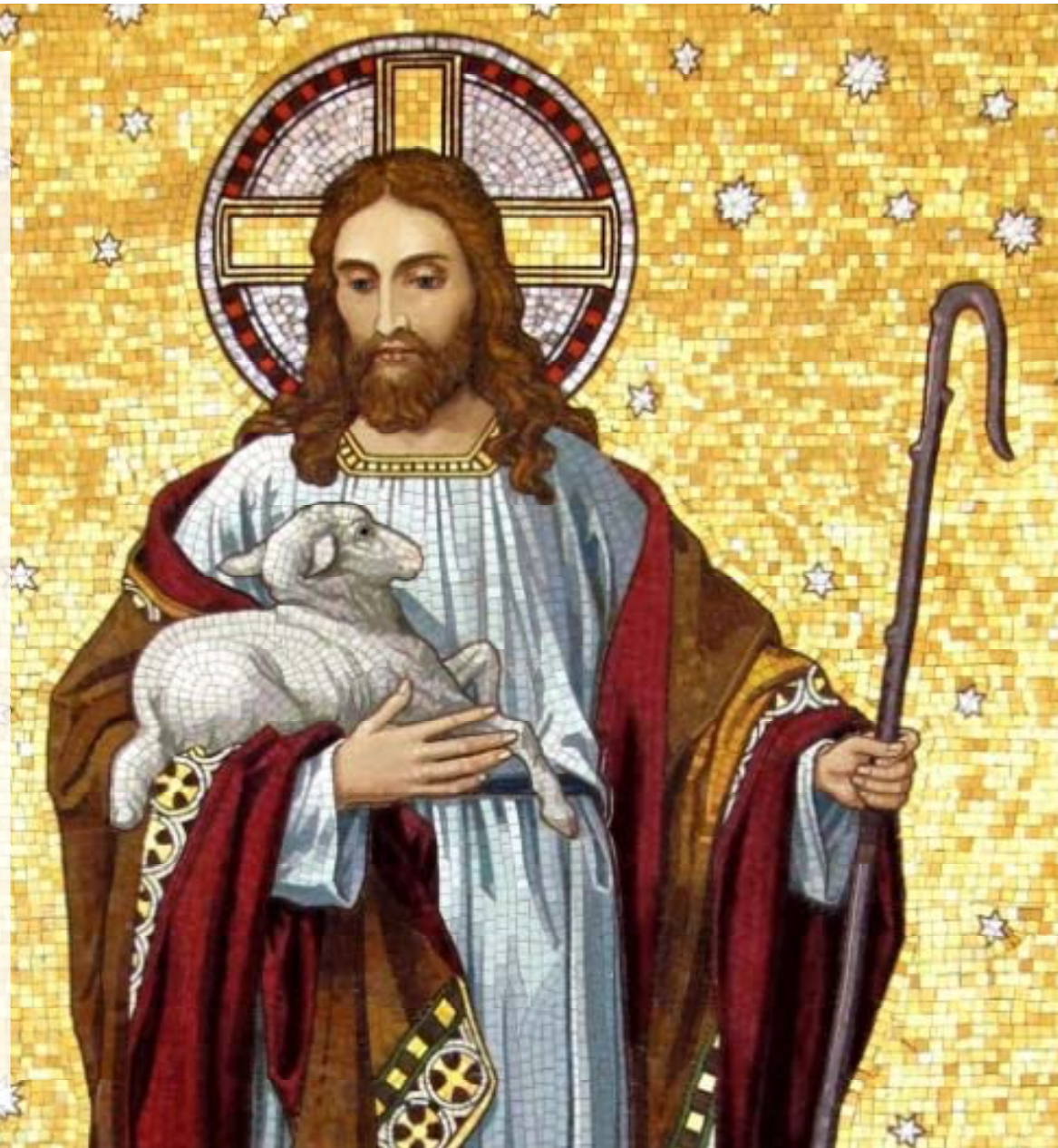
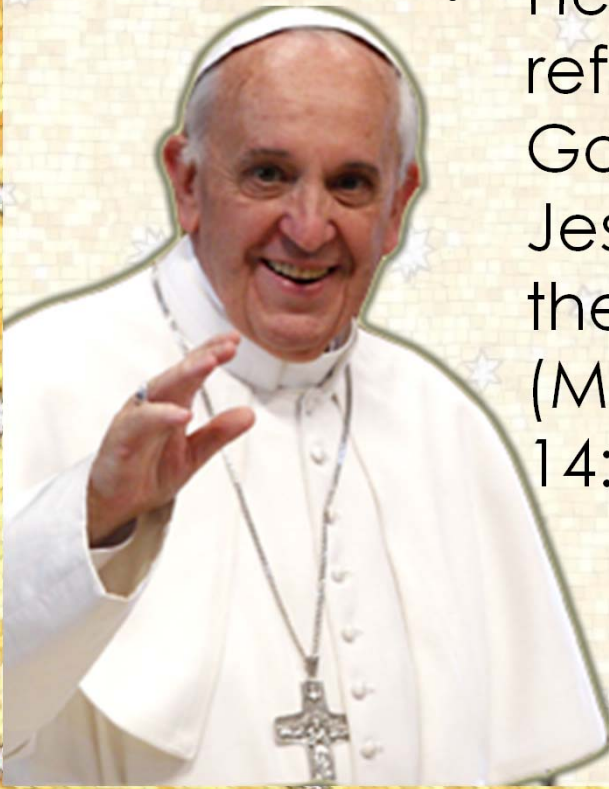
Religious Brothers and Sisters

These are people who either help the Church in the community, or pray for us constantly.



Pope Francis has written a letter for Vocations Sunday 2020

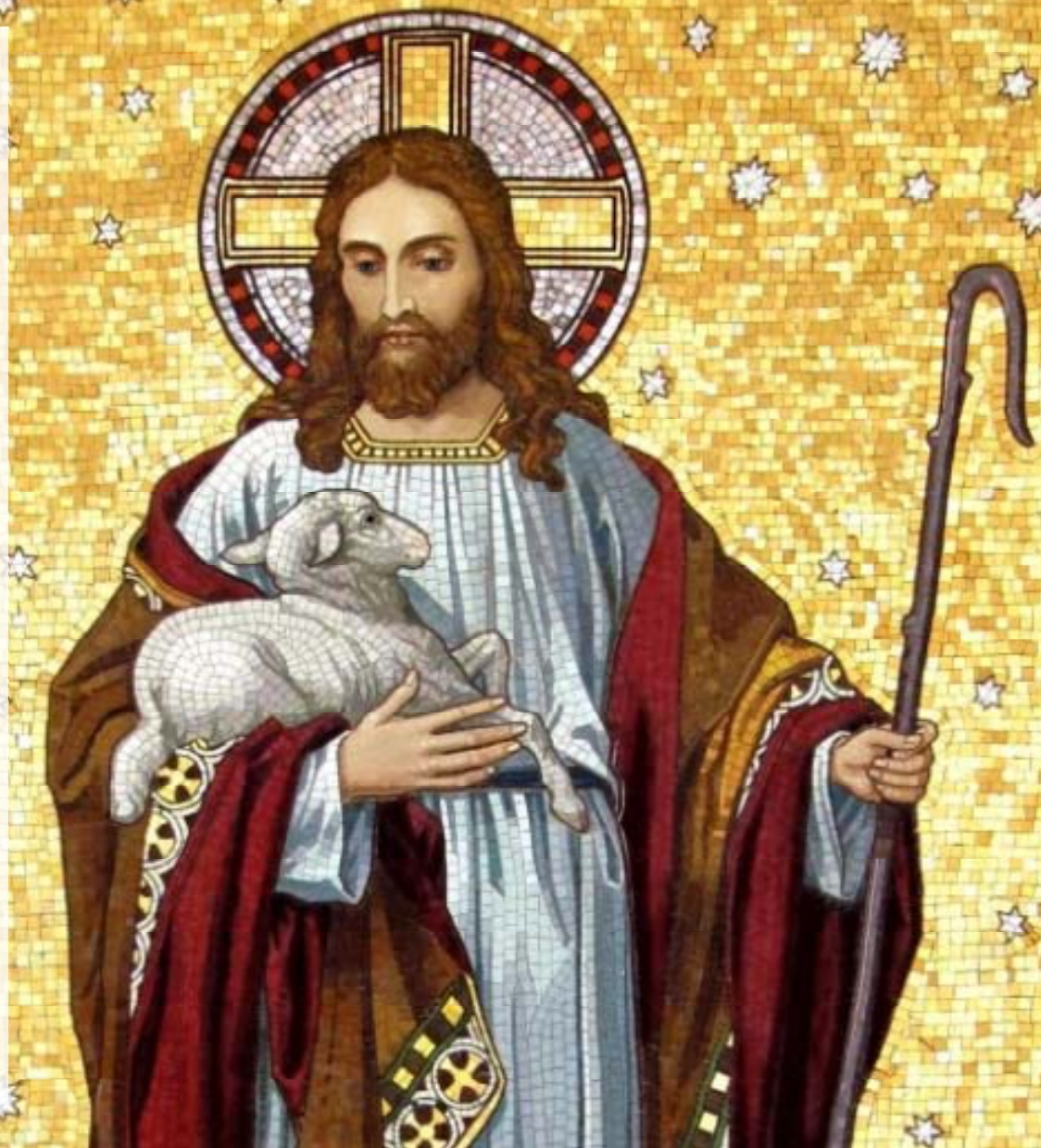
- He asks us to reflect on the Gospel of Jesus calming the storm (Matthew 14:22-33).



Let us listen to this Gospel
being proclaimed

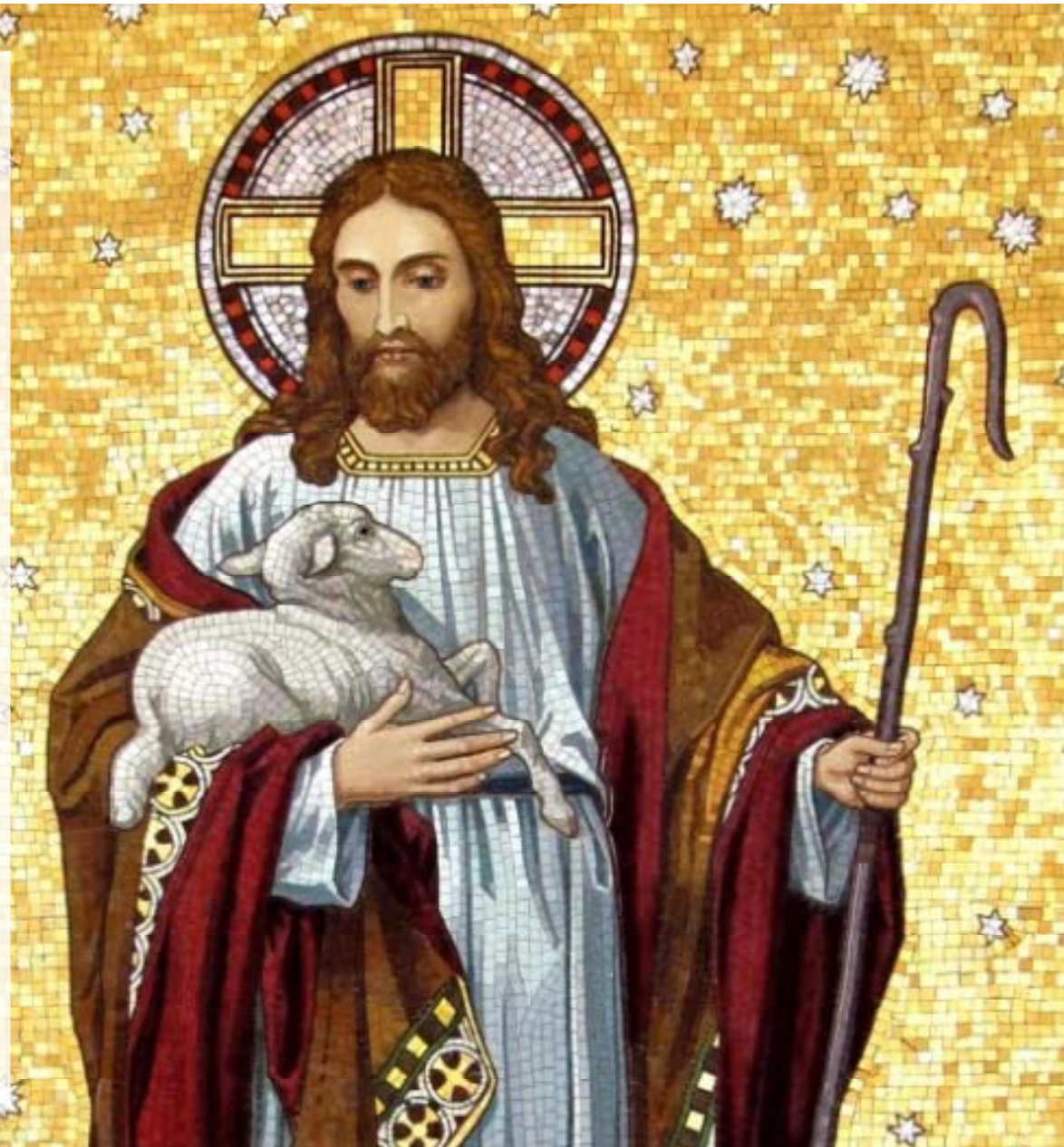


Click to listen



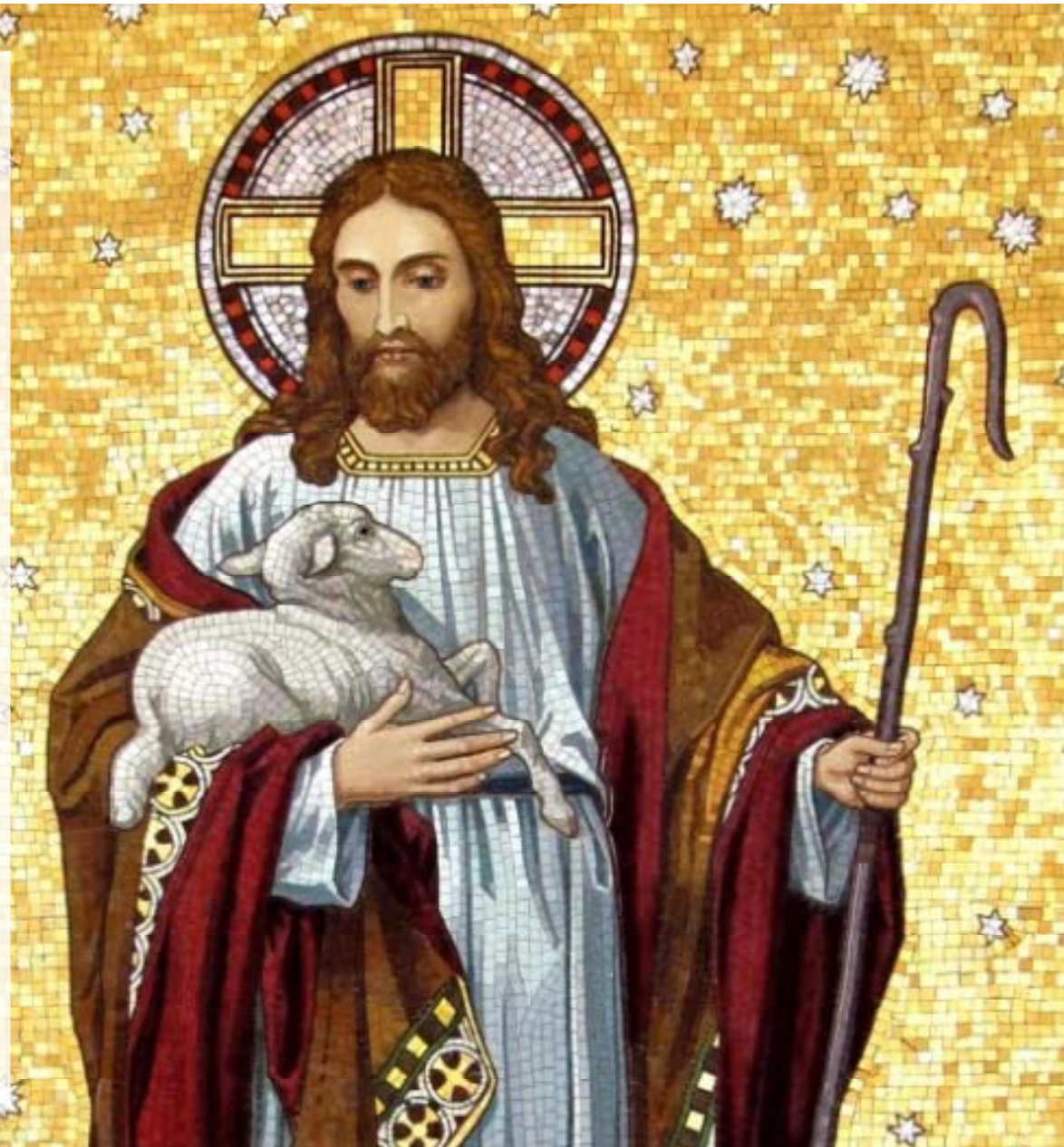
We reflect on how this passage speaks to us today

- Jesus himself makes time to pray to his Father.
- Jesus tells the disciples to go to the other shore. Do I, in prayer, ask for help with the right way to go in life?
- Jesus calls Peter to come to him. He invites us all to a relationship with him.
- He holds out his hand to Peter. Jesus is with us to keep us safe.



Pope Francis wants us to remember 5 words when thinking about vocation:

- Gratitude
- Encouragement
- Courage
- Fatigue
- Praise

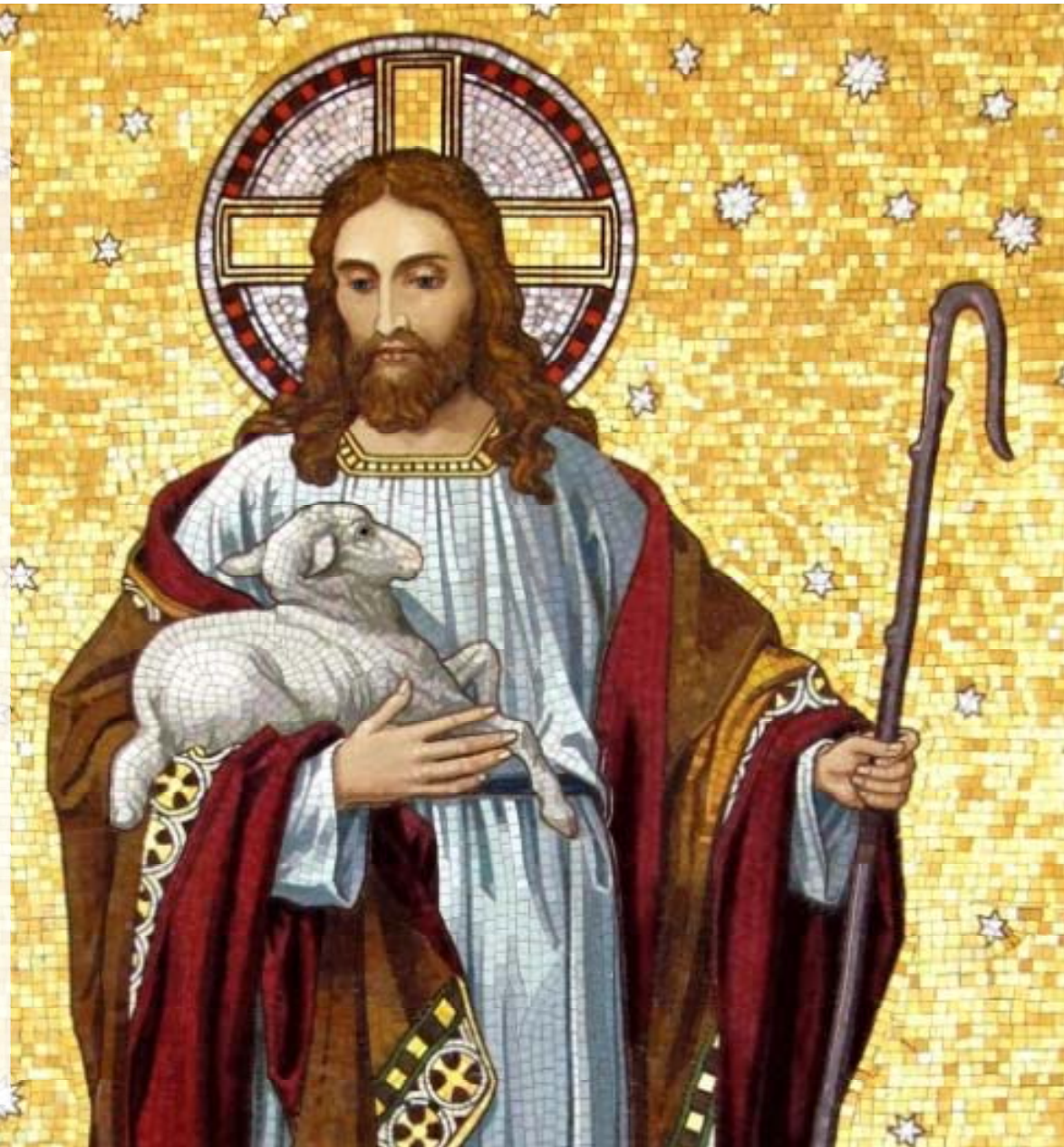


Gratitude

- Our **vocation** comes from Jesus' love for us, which we perhaps realise in stormy times.
- We show **gratitude** – we thank Jesus for his call to us.

Encouragement

- The disciples see Jesus on the water. They think he's a ghost and are filled with fear.
- Jesus gives **encouragement** that we can use on our vocational journey in life: **"Take heart, it is I; have no fear."**

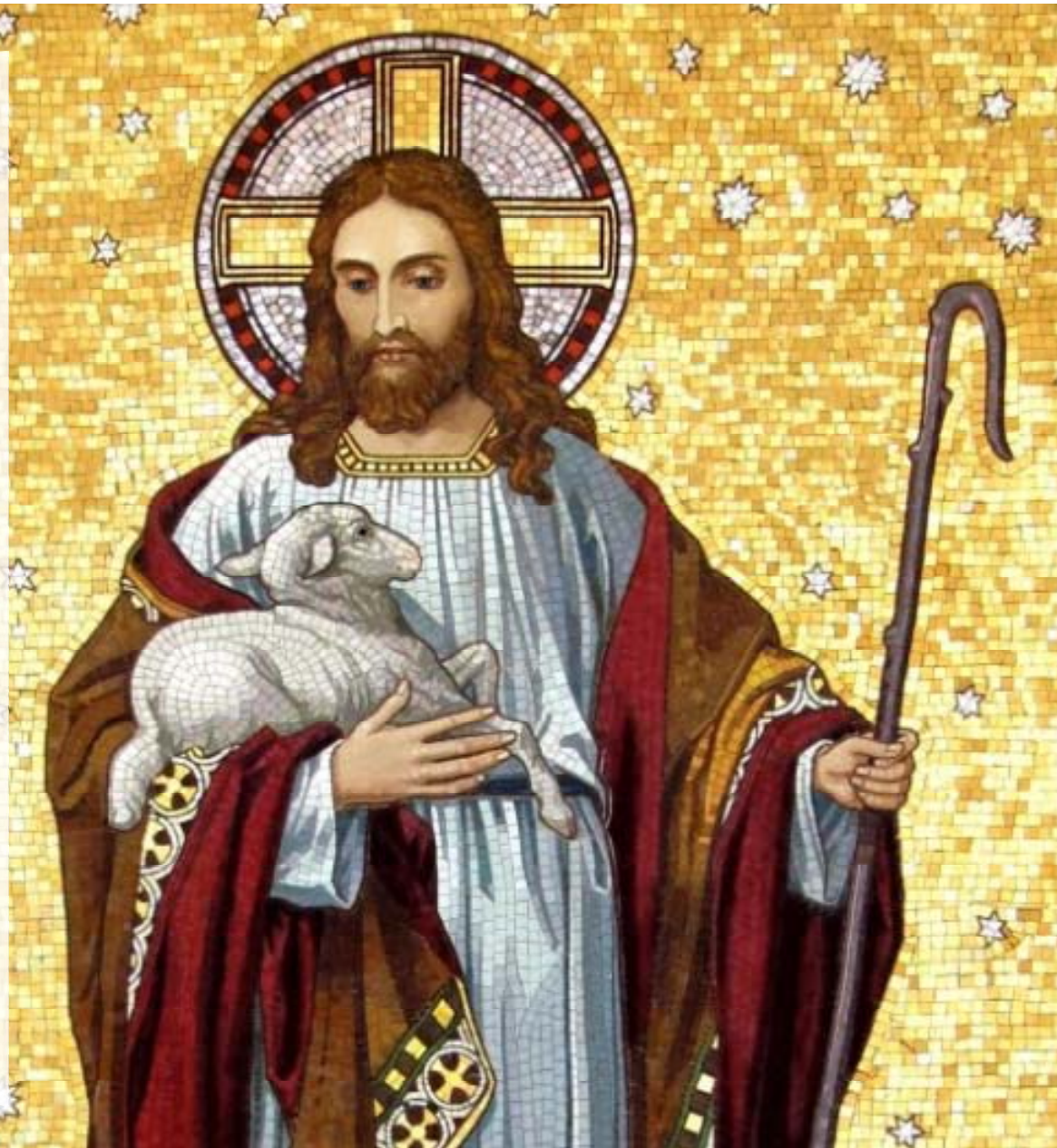


Courage

- We can find it difficult to say “yes” to Jesus, but he knows the questions, doubts and fears in our heart.
- We can have **courage**, knowing Jesus is by our side, remembering “Take heart, it is I; have no fear.”

Fatigue

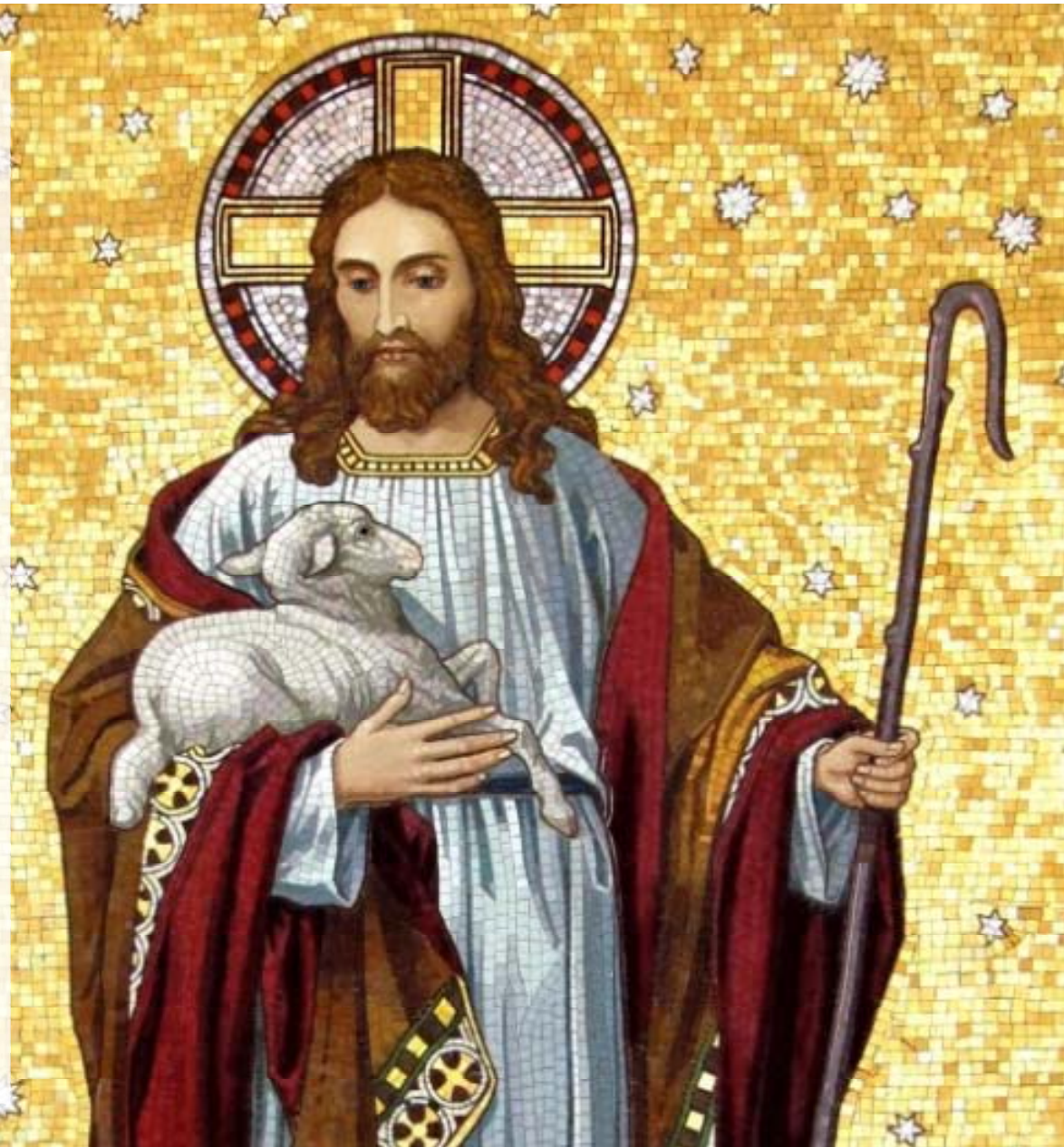
- All vocations come with **responsibilities**, which can be difficult.
- When **fatigue** or tiredness makes us start to sink, Jesus helps us, like he helped Peter walk on water.



Praise

- When Jesus boards the boat, the winds die down.
- Jesus is stretching his hand out to us always - take it!
- Even in stormy times we must **praise** God for the wonderful things he does for us.

In your prayers, ask that that you will **encourage** others in their vocation and that all of us will **gratefully** discover God's call - to find the **courage** to say "yes", to overcome all **fatigue** and to make our lives a song of **praise** to God.



Prayer for Vocations Sunday 2020



Click to join in with the prayer

Bless our Father's Spirit to pour into your
work and lives for the mission.
Inspire the hearts of all people
to the vision of the deacons
and the Holy Spirit in the
and love.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

**In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

