



Dear Members of the Covenant Community of Jesus the Good Shepherd,

Booklets of this kind accomplish two important things. They are first a source of information. As such, they give us the ability to know things about the ministries of the community. They give us the facts when we need them.

They also can be a way for us to be inspired by the outreach of our community and they can open us to respond to the Lord's call to service. Since its foundation in 1985, Jesus the Good Shepherd was also established as a Covenant Community. This means that our common stewardship as members of the Church gives us each the ability to choose ways to offer our talents and abilities for the sake of our parish and the greater community.

This handbook can play a part in showing us the way to be both informed and formed as a Catholic Community. Use it in a spirit of good faith.

I ask God's blessings upon you through the intercession of St. John Vianney during this year dedicated to priests.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fr. Mike". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Reverend Michael J. King, Pastor



*The Covenant Community
of Jesus the Good Shepherd
Dunkirk/Owings MD*

*Covenant Information Booklet
2009 - 2010*

The Covenant Community of Jesus the Good Shepherd is a parish of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington.

The term "covenant" community comes from Jesus' words of consecration over the cup during the Last Supper. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." (Luke 22:20) Since our worship is centered in the Eucharist, we are a covenanted people, that is, called through Baptism, into community by our Lord. Three virtues give special focus to our Covenant Community.

*Through the virtue of **Hospitality** we endeavor to know and care about each other, to share a deep sense of belonging, and to welcome the stranger.*

*Through the virtue of **Spirituality** we endeavor to celebrate the Liturgy in the best traditions of the Church, to promote participation in small Christian study groups, and to develop ministries of spiritual growth within the Community.*

*Through the virtue of **Stewardship** we recognize that each Confirmed person has gifts to bring to the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God. We engage in works of justice and charity, including maintaining a relationship with a Sister Parish in the Third World. We support the Lord's work through sacrificial giving, and avoid means of support which are not within His plan for the Church.*

A Stewardship Council helps us maintain a living expression of that virtue within our Covenant Community by developing our annual budgets and working closely with the Pastor and lay leadership in all financial matters.

The goal of all decision-making is to discern together the will of God for his covenanted people. To this end we enjoy the blessing of pastoral office in the Church, periodic general meetings of the membership, and a Covenant Service Board. We seek consensus in all major matters.

Each year, on the last Sunday in September, the Community celebrates a special, covenant-renewal Mass. During this Covenant Sunday Mass the community is lead in a re-covenanting ceremony. We renew our commitments to the covenant way of life and to the three virtues of hospitality, spirituality and stewardship.

At the same time we offer our gifts on a yearly basis to the Lord as His Spirit guides each of us, and join Christian study groups. The Mass is followed by the Covenant Festival.

We desire a relationship in the Lord with other communities pursuing a similar vision of the Church.

This booklet is a guide to the many works of the Spirit in our covenant community. Its purpose is to assist you in choosing the way in which you will participate in the ministries of this Community and in the covenant way of life. Your commitments are then dedicated on your covenant scroll and brought forward to the Lord's altar on Covenant Sunday.

Explanation of the Covenant Scroll

Every Christian community that celebrates the Eucharist is a covenant community, because according to Jesus' own words, we are celebrating "the new covenant in my blood." The Covenant Way of Life is the vocation, which became ours with Baptism. The first of those baptismal vows are repeated on the scroll. The remainder of our baptismal vows are reflected in the Creed of our Liturgy.

We use the scrolls on Covenant Sunday to dedicate before the Lord's altar, the work we have committed to do during the coming year.

***Covenant Sunday is September 27, 2009,
and September 26, 2010
(always the last Sunday in September)***

The Mass that weekend will be on Sunday at 11:00 a.m. in the field near the Grotto. (The Saturday 5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass is celebrated for Festival workers and those unable to join us on Sunday. Scrolls are also collected during this Liturgy.)

By filling out and submitting our scrolls we dedicate our commitment to living the Covenant way of life by volunteering during the Ministry Fair to serve in the many ministries offered under the virtues of Hospitality, Spirituality and Stewardship. Our completed scrolls (a symbol of that commitment) are brought to the altar during the Liturgy.

Covenant Sunday Festival

A buffet dinner and drinks will be provided as in years past. **This year, we ask families with last names beginning with L-Z to bring a dessert for the Festival.** Desserts may be dropped off in the Dessert Tent before Mass that day. The Covenant Mass and Festival is open to all Community members and is *FREE*.

Please remember to bring folding chairs and to wear appropriate casual clothing to the outdoor Mass. Also, please watch your steps as you walk. (There are ruts in places due to the weather.)

**Festival Coordinators for 2009 are Kathy Gushen and family
Coordinators for 2010 are Dominic Dorsett and family**

**We invite a person, a couple, or team to work with our coordinator
so that we can develop leadership for future festivals.**