

## Easter 4A - 2023

Anecdotes from Fr. Anthony Kadavil, St. John the Baptist Church, POB 417, 12450 Hwy 188, Grand Bay, AL 36541 (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>).

### *The Bismarck*

In the beginning of World War II, the Nazis commissioned a massive battleship named the *Bismarck*. It was the biggest fighting vessel the world had seen up to that time. With the *Bismarck* the Germans had the opportunity to dominate the seas. Very soon after it was commissioned, the *Bismarck* sank tons of Allied shipping and allied aircraft. Its massive armor plating resulted in the boast that the *Bismarck* was unsinkable.

But the *Bismarck* was sunk. And it was sunk due to one lone torpedo. A torpedo hit the *Bismarck* in the rudder. As a result, the battleship zig-zagged through the sea, unable to reach harbor. It was only a short while before the British navy was able to overtake and destroy it.

No matter how large the battleship may be, it is doomed without a rudder to direct it. — Floundering on the waters of chaos without a rudder, the *Bismarck* is a modern-day image of a world without the direction of Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

Without the Lord, the world is headed toward chaos. But with the Lord there is guidance, direction and purpose in life.

### **"She thinks I'm real!"**

There is a story of a grandmother, a mother, and a little boy, three generations, who went into a restaurant, and sat down to order. The waitress took the grandmother's order, the mother's order, and then turned to the little boy and said "What would you like?" The mother immediately said "Oh, I'll order for him." The waitress without being overly rude ignored the mother and again said to the little boy "What would you like?" Glancing over at his mother to see how she was reacting to this, the little boy said "Uh, uh, I'd like a hamburger." "How would you like your hamburger? With mustard and pickles and the works?" asked the waitress. With his mouth dropping open in amazement now, he said "The works, the works." The waitress went over to the hatch, and called out the grandmother's order and the mother's order. Then in a very loud voice she said, "And a hamburger with the works"

The little boy turned to his mother in utter amazement and said "Mommy, mommy, she thinks I'm real!" — God treats each one of us as real people. He takes our needs and requests seriously! (Jack McArdle; quoted by Fr. Botelho).

**"I'd like to preserve my integrity and credibility."**

About 23 years ago, Mark Cuban, owner of the NBA's Dallas *Mavericks*, offered WGN Chicago Radio sports-talk host David Kaplan \$50,000 to change his name legally to "Dallas Maverick."

When Kaplan politely declined, Cuban sweetened the offer. Cuban would pay Kaplan \$100,000 and donate \$100,000 to Kaplan's favorite charity if he took the name for one year.

After some soul searching, and being bombarded by e-mails from listeners who said he was crazy to turn down the money, Kaplan held firm and told Cuban no. Kaplan explained: **"I'd be saying I'd do anything for money, and that bothers me."**

My name is my birthright. I'd like to preserve my integrity and credibility." [Skip Bayless, *Chicago Tribune* (1/10/01); from *Leadership Summer*, 2001.]

**The name "Christian" is our birthright.** From the moment of our Baptism and our birth into the Kingdom of God, we are the sheep of the Good Shepherd Who promises to lead us to green pastures and beside the still waters. The Voice of the Shepherd protects us.

### **We have to know the Shepherd**

While it is true that sheep may be led by shepherds from either the front or back, the shepherd must invest sufficient time with them that they have become familiar with him and he is familiar with them. To be "their" shepherd depends on both familiarity and trust built through time and caring. Lack of that invested time means the sheep will not know their shepherd from any other stranger.