

## The Good Shepherd at Work in our times

Jesus said; "I am the Good Shepherd, I know my sheep and mine know me...My sheep Hear my voice and they follow me." Where does He lead? To verdant pastures and restful waters. All of this is very beautiful to hear. It is a very calming and hopeful image of something else He said; "I came that they may have life and have it more abundantly."

We all want a meaningful life, a rewarding life. The Lord wants an abundant life for each of us. But we live in a troubled world and experience some of those troubles in our own hearts and life. So it is very encouraging to hear Jesus say He is the Good Shepherd who knows what is best for us and is working to lead us into that life. But He did not say He was a magician who would wave a magic wand and solve all our problems. He said He would lead us and help us work through the troubles that arise in our hearts and life that are obstacles to the abundant life He wants for us.

So how does He lead us? Certainly through the ministry of the Church and our life in the Church. Yet the Lord also leads us by the gifts He bestows on His children for the up building of the Church and the flourishing of families.

One of the blessings of our day is the growth of counseling centers founded by men and woman of faith who are working to understand our nature as human beings, the nature God created, and to help us live according to it. This is a wonderful complement to the ministry of the Church and our life in the Church.

One such center is The Institute for Marital Healing which can be found by clicking on the following link. There is another center associated with this Institute which is simply called Child Healing and can be found by clicking on the link below

<https://www.maritalhealing.com>

<https://www.childhealing.com>

They have another center for seminarians and priests too. On their respective web pages, these centers have many helpful resources to help someone overcome some of the obstacles to the flourishing, abundant life the Lord wants for us. These resources also incorporate the ways the Lord comes to us through the ministry of the Church.

**The mission of the Institute for Marital Healing is growth in spousal self-knowledge and in the good habits that can strengthen Catholic marriages. This site uncovers the leading psychological causes of marital conflicts, especially excessive anger, selfishness, control, and emotional distance and provides effective approaches to diminish them. Also included are the luminous writings of St. John Paul II on marriage and family life, as well as the timeless wisdom of the Catholic Church.**

**The goal of Child Healing is to help Catholic Youth by educating parents and youth about the common symptoms and causes of emotional and behavioral problems and by offering effective approaches for addressing such conflicts which includes the new field of forgiveness therapy.**

**The former President of the American Psychological Association, Frank Farley, Ph.d., wrote that Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons M.D. Psychiatry, who founded the**

centers linked above, "elevates forgiveness therapy to its rightful place among the important psychotherapies of our time."