

May 15, 2020-Friday, Fifth Week of Easter

Diocese of Charleston

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Catholic Diocese of Charleston, South Carolina.

The diocese was established on July 11, 1820, and originally included the states of Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Today it is comprised of the entire state of South Carolina, and is the seventh-oldest Roman Catholic Diocese in the United States.

The first bishop of Charleston was John England (September 23, 1786, in Cork, Ireland-April 11, 1842, in South Carolina), who also founded the first Roman Catholic newspaper in the United States, the *United States Catholic Miscellany*, which published until 1861. He also founded the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, and he organized the Brotherhood of San Marino to assist immigrants and the working class. In 1833, he was also named apostolic delegate to Haiti.

The Charleston Diocese's cathedral is the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. It was originally consecrated on April 6, 1854, but the church was destroyed during a massive fire that ravaged Charleston in 1861. The current cathedral was built on the foundation of its ruins.

Jesus said: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves." (John 14:10-11)

I can't always put my personal experience of God into words as I struggle to understand it and express my experience to others.

One way I can talk about God is through images and symbols. I might say God is like a shepherd, or a rock, or thunder, or a mountain, or a cloud, and so forth.

None of these images captures all that God is—God is beyond all images and symbols. And yet a symbol can express something of who God is and how I have experienced God.

What is my favorite image of God?

Maybe I should spend a little time thinking about that.

Spend some quiet time with the Lord