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Keeper of two flocks

by Tom Gallagher

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Father Tom Foster of Duluth is a priest with a flock. Quite literally.

The full-time chaplain at St. Mary's Duluth Clinic keeps 100 ewes and lambs on his 47-acre farm in Cloverland, near Maple. Foster said he loves the contrast of working between his two flocks — parishioners and sheep — though he also spots a number of common traits.

"In scripture, the flock is a very common image, and there are a number of similarities between our behavior and the behavior of sheep," said Foster, who also serves as chaplain to the 148th Fighter Wing of the Minnesota Air National Guard. "They can overeat, just like we can; they need to be trained; and you need to develop their trust."

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