

Sunday Message

4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

THE WORD

Year C • 11th May 2025 • Psalter Week 4

MY SHEEP LISTEN TO MY VOICE

JOHN 10:27-30



Being a shepherd during the time of Jesus was not something that would help you climb the social ladder.

The role was full of danger as it pushed the individual out to the fringes of society where they discover the harshness and dangers of the wilds, the loneliness the role entailed and the difference of a life which communed more with sheep than with people. Jesus chooses this role today and is mindful that as a shepherd for his people, he will give eternal life to those who believe and they will never perish. He states that God the Father and the Good Shepherd are one. This is a short passage today but the message is very clear and specific. Eternal life is to be gained through a deep connection between us believers and the heavenly Father. We experience God's love through the Shepherd, who will lay his life down for his sheep. ■

REFLECT

Traditionally, Good Shepherd Sunday is the time we promote and speak about vocations to religious life and priesthood. Despite the downturn in the number of men and women opting for this way of life, there still remains a steady stream of candidates dedicating themselves to a life of service. Most vocations are first nurtured within the family. The French Jesuit, scientist and philosopher, Teilhard de Chardin, once said, "It was in my family that I became who I am. Most of my opinions, of my likes and dislikes, of my values and judgments, my behaviour, my tastes, were moulded by the family I came from." Parents remain the first and most important teachers of the faith, and of ideals. In fulfilling this role they should try to make daily prayer a natural part of life within the home. By so doing, they may sow the seeds of those vocations which will serve the spiritual needs of the next generation.

Just as Christ called some to be his evangelists, so he calls you and me into his service. What I do, how I live as his follower, concerns others too. On this special Sunday, we ask God's blessing, that volunteers will feel drawn to continue Christ's work. His wish for his disciples was quite explicit, "Pray to the Lord of the harvest, to send labourers to his harvest" (Mt 9:37). ■

SAY

God, my Father,
You have promised to remain
forever with those
who do what is just and right.
Help me to live in Your presence.
Keep before me the wisdom and love
You have made known in Your Son.
Help me to be like Him in word and
deed. Amen.

LEARN

'Jesus was aware of the purpose of his mission: to announce the Kingdom of God and make it present in his own Person, in his actions, and in his words, so that the world would become reconciled with God and renewed.'

(International Theological Commission)

DO

Consider doing some reading this week. There are countless websites dedicated to Vocation Ministry and opportunities to speak with Vocation Directors committed to this ministry.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth;
by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, alleluia.*

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
lead us to a share in the joys of heaven,
so that the humble flock may reach
where the brave Shepherd has gone before.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING Acts 13:14. 43b-52

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

In those days: Paul and Barnabas went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. Many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, 'It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."

And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Saint Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 100(99):1-2. 3. 5. R. 3c

R: *We are his people, the sheep of his flock.*

Or *Alleluia.*

1. Cry out with joy to the LORD, all the earth.
Serve the LORD with gladness.
Come before him, singing for joy. **R.**
2. Know that he, the LORD, is God.
He made us; we belong to him.
We are his people, the sheep of his flock. **R.**
3. Indeed, how good is the LORD,
eternal his merciful love.
He is faithful from age to age. **R.**

SECOND READING Revelation 7:9. 13a. 14b-17

A reading from the Book of Revelation.

I, John, looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands.

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL John 10:14

R: *Alleluia, alleluia.*

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord.

I know my sheep and my own know me.

R: *Alleluia.*

GOSPEL John 10:27-30

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

At that time: Jesus said, 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Grant, we pray, O Lord,
that we may always find delight in these paschal mysteries,
so that the renewal constantly at work within us
may be the cause of our unending joy.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*The Good Shepherd has risen,
who laid down his life for his sheep
and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Look upon your flock, kind Shepherd,
and be pleased to settle in eternal pastures
the sheep you have redeemed
by the Precious Blood of your Son.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.