



Fourth Sunday Of Easter

The Good Shepherd Versus The Hireling

Introduction

Of all the images we have of Christ, the one, which is dearest to us and with which we are most familiar, is probably that of the Good Shepherd. This is not surprising. It is such a lovely image and is deeply rooted in Scripture. Besides, it is one of the images Christ used to describe himself. How well do we trust Christ our Good Shepherd?

First Reading (Acts 4:8-12)

Peter tells the people that the crippled man had been cured, through the power of the risen Jesus, and not through any power of Peter's. Jesus is the only one who can save us.

Second Reading (1 John 3:1-2)

Through his love God has made us his children. In the next life he will do even greater things for us. Then we shall see him as he is.

Gospel (John 10:11-18)

Jesus compares his role to that of a good shepherd who, unlike the hireling, is ready to give his life for his sheep.

Prayer Of The Faithful

Christ is the Shepherd of his flock, the Church; he loves and cares for his people. We turn to him in trust with our prayers.

R: Father, hear us in your love.

For all the leaders of the Church: that Christ may give them warm and caring hearts so that they can be true shepherds to his flock. Let us pray.

R: Father, hear us in your love.

For those who make our laws and who apply them: that the Lord may guide them with his wisdom and discernment. Let us pray.

R: Father, hear us in your love.



For the sick and the hungry, for prisoners and all those who are cut off from society and who feel that nobody cares about them. Let us pray.

R: Father, hear us in your love.

That wherever we are and whatever we do, we may be people who care about those around us and so imitate the love of the Good Shepherd. Let us pray.

R: Father, hear us in your love.

Communion Reflection

Jesus said:

"I know my own and my own know me."

How can we be good shepherds?
To those under us or those in our care,
If we don't try to get to know them?

Often alas, we don't even know their names,
Not to mind their life stories.
Can we blame them, then,
If they look upon us as mere hirelings
Who are just interested in their salaries?

And how can we form a bond with them
If we keep our distance from them
Thus preventing them from getting to know us?
Can we blame them
If they too keep their distance from us,
And if as a result they distrust or fear us?

Don't tell me that you care about me
If you haven't even bothered to get to know my name.
Don't tell me that you love me
If you have kept your distance from me.

Caring is risky.
Love is risky.
It means getting close to people.
As Christ, the Good Shepherd got close to us.