



Liturgy Cycle C

# **Fourth Sunday Of Easter**

## **The Good Shepherd**

### **Introduction**

In today's Mass we have one of the loveliest gospels of the year — that in which Christ describes himself as the Good Shepherd. He says: 'I know my sheep. They listen to my voice and follow me.' We say we belong to the Good Shepherd; yet we don't always listen to him or follow him. Let us reflect for a moment on our failure to respond to his love and care.

### **First Reading (Acts 13:14, 43-52)**

Everywhere they go, Paul and Barnabas preach the Gospel first of all to the Jews, but when the Jews reject it they turn to the gentiles who receive it with gratitude and joy.

### **Second Reading (Rev. 7:9, 14-17)**

This contains a vision of those who will come triumphantly through times of great tribulation and persecution. They will owe their victory to the care of Christ, the Good Shepherd.

### **Gospel (John 10:27-30)**

Christ is the true Shepherd and no one will snatch from his care the sheep that the Father has given him.

### **Prayer Of The Faithful**

Let us pray to Christ, our Good Shepherd that he may touch our hearts of stone and change them into hearts of flesh and blood, capable of loving as he loves.

R: Lord, graciously hear us.

For the pope and the bishops: that they may faithfully and lovingly watch over the flock of Christ. Lord, hear us.

R: Lord, graciously hear us.

For all those in positions of authority, and especially for doctors and nurses: that the Lord may fill them with a strong and unselfish love to work for the good of all people, but especially the weak and the wounded. Lord, hear us.

R: Lord, graciously hear us.

For all those who have no love in their lives, and who are not important or precious to anyone. Lord, hear us.

R: Lord, graciously hear us.



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**That each of us, wherever we are and no matter what our state in life, may strive to be people who love and care for others. Lord, hear us.**

**R: Lord, graciously hear us.**

**For vocations to the priesthood and religious life: that the Lord may inspire men and women to devote their lives to caring for his flock. Lord, hear us.**

**R: Lord, graciously hear us.**

### **Communion Reflection**

**Philip is handicapped  
and was institutionalised when he was very young.  
He is a deeply wounded young man.  
He feels he has disappointed his parents.  
He is deaf and stammers,  
but these are only his visible wounds.  
The deepest wound is that of the heart:  
the feeling that he has not been loved,  
that he is not precious to anyone.**

**We believe that we have hands that can make things,  
and minds that can understand things.  
Yet we don't believe that we have hearts that can give life.  
But we are not sterile people.  
We can give life to people who are inwardly broken.  
We can show them that they are important,  
and so bring life to them.**

**'I can do nothing for you:  
all I can do is be your friend.'  
The person who says that and means it,  
has the greatest contribution of all to make.**

**Today, Good Shepherd Sunday, is also vocations Sunday.  
All vocations are vocations to love.**