



WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



Fourth Sunday of Easter, Cycle C

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We are his people, the sheep of his flock. Psalm 100

The Fourth Sunday of Easter every year is Good Shepherd Sunday. We are reminded that the risen Christ consoles us: *"My sheep hear my voice and they follow me"* John 10:27. Every spring lambs are born in various location among the fields and meadows. A good shepherd searches daily for these helpless lambs, picks them up, and gathers them. It is his joy and delight to place them around his neck and shoulders, and in his arms. This is their "baptism." They are no longer orphaned. With a loving and compassionate heart, he carries them and gathers them into the safety of the sheepfold. They are lifted from a frightening and dangerous world to an ordered and contented life. There they grow and thrive as he instills in them the "Good News" of his voice. They learn his commands. They are thus kept safe. Occasionally there is one that goes astray, but the good shepherd instinctively knows this, leaves the sheepfold to seek that precious little one, and gently carries it safely back home.

Jesus offers this love to each of us: *"My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me."* With a promise of eternal life, no evil can snatch us away from him. We are safe with him because the Father has given him to us, and the Father's power is in him. In that perfect love between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we are united.

This week we pray that Christ our Good Shepherd gaze upon us with a kind and serene countenance. May we lift our hearts, refreshed in eternal pastures. Like the helpless lambs, we, too, are gathered within the loving security of a sheepfold that lasts forever. In baptism we have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. We have been blessed with a permanent mark on our souls and dare call ourselves Christians.

This week let us reflect on the extent to which Christ continues to lay down his life for us. Through his gift of faith we gain the wisdom to understand all these things and hold them as our tenets of life. May we be tenderly held, breathless in wonder and awe, as we encounter the mercy of his Sacred Heart, a heart pure and perfect in kindness and goodness, all the days of our life. Whatever trials life brings, *"...nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell."* Romans 8:38

In contemplation, may you hear his voice and enter into the presence of God with the sure knowledge that you are a Child of God, called to follow Jesus into ever deeper revelations. May you be sustained as eternal life pours into you. And may you bear witness to the reality of his presence in your daily life.

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

Jesus said:

*"My sheep hear my voice.
I know them, and they follow me.
I give them eternal life, and they will never perish.
No one will snatch them out of my hand.
What my Father has given me is greater than all else,
and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand.
The Father and I are one."*

The Gospel of the Lord

