

4th Sunday of Easter

May 3, 2020

Welcome!

United in Spirit and with great joy as we continue our celebration of Jesus' Resurrection from the dead, we at Jesus the Divine Word Church encourage our parishioners to join one another in prayer from our homes, reading and reflecting on the Word of God for this 4th Sunday of Easter and through the live streaming of our Mass at 10 AM (replayed at 12 Noon).

Living the Word

Theme: *Follow His Voice, the Clear Choice*

Hearing the Shepherd's voice, followers recognize and know his is God.

Opening Prayer

O God, whose goodness and mercy shall follow us
all the days of our life,
you have made Jesus, whom you raised from the dead,
the gate through which we, the sheep of your flock,
may enter the sheepfold of abundant life.

Pour forth upon us the gift of the Holy Spirit,
so that amidst the corruption of this age
and over the voices of those intent on leading us astray,
we may learn to recognize the voice of Christ,
the good shepherd,
who came that we may have life, life in all its fullness.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God forever and ever. Amen.

(Adapted from Prayer for Sundays and Seasons, Year A Fourth Sunday of Easter)

Gospel

John 10:1-10

“Jesus said: ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as the shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice.’”

But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers.’

Although Jesus used this figure of speech, the Pharisees did not realize what he was trying to tell them. So Jesus said again, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.’”

Reflection

“This chapter of John’s Gospel uses the image everyone loves – Jesus as the Shepherd, going out to the lost sheep and putting it on his shoulders . . . the shepherd who gives his life for his sheep . . . the sheep who know him and he knows them.

The passage for today refers to the gate or door of the sheepfold. The only one who can open the gate and enter the sheepfold is the shepherd.

Everyone has closed doors in their lives. Places inside ourselves where we do not want to go because we are afraid. Behind those doors are things like old hurts, addictions, health concerns, hatred, fears.

Jesus is telling me that he can lead me, one of his flock, through the closed doors in my life to those places where there is trouble so I can deal with it. And then he can lead me out again.

Jesus, my shepherd, is telling me, ‘Don’t be afraid.’” Listen and follow my voice.

(The Little White Book, Diocese of Saginaw, MI, Monday, Fourth Week of Easter 2020)

Challenge: Which “voice” in your life belongs to the Good Shepherd? How are you staying in touch with Christ’s voice while sheltering in place?

Let Us Pray

For the Church, for Francis our Pope, Wilton our bishop and for all who make up the body of Christ on earth: May we always follow the voice of the Good Shepherd who opens the gate to all who believe . . . we pray to the Lord . . . Lord, hear our prayer.

For government leaders: May God inspire and give them insight as they develop plans for safe and prudent methods to reopen public spaces as the pandemic subsides . . .we pray to the Lord . . . Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who work to restore life and bring healing, for medical personnel, for counselors, and for chaplains: May God lead them as they journey with those in pain and preserve them from harm . . . we pray to the Lord . . . Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who are facing hunger: May God speed the assistance they need and open the hearts of many to assist them ... we pray to the Lord ... Lord, hear our prayer.

For the children of the parish who were to receive First Communion yesterday: May they experience the joy of God's closeness as they look forward to receiving him for the first time soon ... we pray to the Lord ... Lord, hear our prayer.

For young men and women: May they hear the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow in the way of ordained priesthood or religious life ... we pray to the Lord ... Lord, hear our prayer.

For the sick: May they be led to "restful waters," where the Lord promises refreshment for the bodies and souls; we pray for Art Campbell, Shirley Clements, Jimmie Gorski, Nancy Harvey, David Kemeza, Father Michal Sajnog, Julia Small, Dave Thacker and for all suffering from COVID-19 ... we pray to the Lord ... Lord, hear our prayer.

For all our deceased relatives and friends, for Father Charles Green, Emiliana Erilla, William "Buddy" Watkins, and for Jeff Lane, for whom this Mass is celebrated: May they have life, and have it abundantly ... we pray to the Lord ... Lord, hear our prayer.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name...

Closing Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful
and enkindle in us the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created and
you will renew the face of the earth.

O God, who has instructed the hearts of your faithful by
the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the same
Holy Spirit we may have right judgment in all things
and evermore rejoice in his consolations.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.