

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



Our Shepherd

Faithful Shepherd,
you know each member of your flock.
Open our hearts and minds
to see your presence in the world.
As the Good Shepherd,
you hear and answer our prayer.
May we allow your voice to resound
in our hearts.
Guide us to understand
that no matter who we are
or where we are in this world,
we are all members of your flock.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, May 8, 2022
Accompanying One Another



Today's readings: Acts 13:14, 43–52; Psalm 100:1–2, 3, 5; Revelation 7:9, 14b–17; John 10:27–30. Why does it seem that differences in culture, religion, or preferences frighten people? This appears to be the situation in the first reading today. The Jews grew jealous when Paul and Barnabas included the Gentiles in a Sabbath gathering. One group saw themselves as more deserving than the other and grew angry and violent. They wanted to keep the faith contained among those like themselves.

In the Gospel, Jesus identifies his sheep as those who “hear my voice” and “follow me.” Jesus gives them “eternal life.” Jesus’ sheep only need to hear his voice and follow him. It seems so simple, yet often people complicate

Christianity as they judge by appearances. Fear can lead to anger and ultimately to excluding people who have many gifts and talents to offer our communities.

When fearful of others, it is essential to pray for the grace to see people as God sees them, to recognize the presence of God within those who come to us seeking to join our journey of faith. Our prayer should lead us to treat each person with dignity and respect. May we strive to imitate the reverence for others that is apparent in Pope Francis’ statement: “The Church will have to initiate everyone—priests, religious and laity—into this ‘art of accompaniment’ which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other” (*The Joy of the Gospel*, 169).



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, May 9

The Voice of the Shepherd

Think of the people you love and how it feels when you hear one of them say your name. Often, the voice of a loved one is soothing. Jesus knows and calls us by name; if we are listening, comfort and security will be found even while facing challenges. Today, allow yourself a few moments of silence to hear your name being called by the Good Shepherd, and know the gift of peace. Consider meditating on the words of Sunday's responsorial psalm: we are his people, the sheep of his flock. *Today's readings: Acts 11:1–18; Psalm 42:2–3; 43:3–4; John 10:1–10.*

Tuesday, May 10

A Hand to Hold

Jesus lets his doubters know that his followers, his sheep, are secure with him. “No one can take them out of my hand,” he says, “and no one can take them out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one.” No matter the situation or adversary, Christians can rest assured that God cares for them. *Today's readings: Acts 11:19–26; Psalm 87:1b–3, 4–5, 6–7; John 10:22–30.*

Wednesday, May 11

Light in Darkness

“I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in darkness,” Jesus states in today's Gospel. Unable to see in the dark, people often become afraid. The darkness we find ourselves in can be as literal as when the electricity is out during a storm, or figurative such as when the future seems uncertain. When you feel enveloped by darkness, remember to look for Jesus to light your path. *Today's readings: Acts 12:24–13:5a; Psalm 67:2–3, 5, 6 and 8; John 12:44–50.*

Thursday, May 12

God Is Good

“For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord,” we sing in today's responsorial psalm. What are the blessings in your life? Love, faith, family, friendship, a place to call home, our health, a job are some of the blessings that might come to mind. Many of these we take for granted. Grace, mercy, and faithfulness are God's promise to us. Even a moment of gratitude opens us to the fullness of this promise. *Today's readings: Acts 13:13–25; Psalm 89:2–3, 21–22, 25 and 27; John 13:16–20.*

Friday, May 13

Have Faith

Just as Jesus tells the disciples, he also tells us, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me.” How often we allow our hearts to be troubled. It seems as though worry and fear can become a way of life. Spend time with the Gospel, placing yourself in Jesus' hands as you contemplate that he is “the way the truth and the life.” *Today's readings: Acts 13:26–33; Psalm 2:6–7, 8–9, 10–11ab; John 14:1–6.*

Saturday, May 14

Faithful and Kind

In today's Gospel, Jesus asks his followers to come to him in prayer. “Whatever you ask in my name, I will do so that the Father may be glorified in the Son,” he says. Not only does Jesus desire to answer his followers' petitions, but he seeks to draw them to the Father. As we come to know Jesus, we come to know the Father. Spend time in a conversation with God and tell him your deepest concerns. Allow for quiet time to listen to God in your heart. *Today's readings: Acts 1:15–17, 20–26; Psalm 113:1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8; John 15:9–17.*

