

“The End” Notes

- [1] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 2, 68.1
- [2] In Evangelia homiliae, 14
- [3] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 2, 68.1
- [4] Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) #753
- [5] Divine Intimacy Vol. II pg. 176
- [6] St. Jose Maria Escriva wrote in Christ is Passing By, page 34
- [7] The Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 234
- [8] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 2, 68.1
- [9] NAB Jn. 10, 1-21 footnotes
- [10] Blessed John Paul II; St. Louis; January 26, 1999
- [11] Divine Intimacy Volume II pg. 174
- [12] Divine Intimacy pg. 174
- [13] CCC 606
- [14] Divine Intimacy pg. 176
- [15] CCC 614
- [16] CCC 609



The Good Shepherd
4th Sunday of Easter

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Lessons and Discussions

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“...there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

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“I am the good shepherd.”

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“This is why the Father loves me.”

Communion Antiphon (Jn 20:14) – Simple English Propers

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.

11
I am the good shepherd, al-le-lu-ia; I know my
sheep and my own know me, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia.

Source: <http://www.ccwatershed.org/>

Collect –Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Almighty ever-living God,
lead us to a share in the joys of heaven,
So that the humble flock my reach
Where the brave Shepherd has gone before.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God, for ever and ever.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Gospel Reading – John 10:11-18 – Daily Roman Missal

NOTE: *This Gospel is read in the Tridentine Lectionary on the feast of St. Thomas Becket (12/29) and the Second Sunday after Easter.*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
- Glory to you O Lord

Marian Antiphon – Regina Caeli – Simple Tone

6.
R
Egína caéli *laetare, alle-lú-ia : Qui-a quem me-
ru-ísti portare, alle-lú-ia : Resurrexit, sic-ut dixit, alle-
lú-ia : Ora pro nó-bis Dé-um, alle-lú-ia.

V. Guade et laetare, Virgo Maria, alleluia.

R. Quia surrexit Dominus vere, alleluia

Let us pray. O God, who by the Resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, didst vouchsafe to make glad the whole world; grant, we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may lay hold of the joys of eternal life. AMEN

English Translation

Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia; For He whom thou didst merit to bear, alleluia, has risen as He said, alleluia: Pray for us to God, alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia!

R. Because the Lord is truly risen, alleluia!

video, the son says that he would also be willing to do anything for his father. This is a glimpse on earth of the love between God the Father and God the Son.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Prayers to Christ, the Good Shepherd

This prayer is from one of our Church Fathers, St. Gregory Nazianzen from his prayer book.(Prayer 45:26, 28)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

O Christ, good Shepherd, who gave your life for your flock, you went looking for the lost lamb over mountain and hill...and found it. After finding it, you carried it on those same shoulders that were to bear the wood of the cross, and, taking it along with you, you brought it back to the life of heaven...

O God, we needed you to take our flesh and to die for us in order to give us life. We died with you in order to be justified; we are risen again with you, because we were crucified with you. And since we rose again together, we are glorified with you. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Jesus said:

"I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father."

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading

From St. Gregory the Great

O Lord, you say: "As the Father knows me, I know the Father, and I give my life for my sheep" (Jn. 10:15). It is as if you said: the fact that I give my life for my sheep makes it clear that I know the Father and that I am known by him...The charity that makes you die for your sheep, shows how much you love the Father...

Again you say: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life" (ib. 27-28). Shortly before that you had said: "If any one enters by me he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture" (ib. 9). He will enter through faith, and then go out, passing from faith to vision, from ease in believing to contemplation, and will find pasture in the eternal feast.

Your sheep will find pasture, because whoever follows you with a simple heart is nourished by eternally fruitful pasture. And what indeed is the pasture of these sheep if not the intimate joys of a forever verdant paradise? In truth, the pasture of your elect is the face of the ever-present God. While we contemplate him

without ceasing, our minds are fully satisfied with the food of life...

O Lord, make me seek these pastures to enjoy them with all the heavenly citizens...Fill me with ardent longing for the things of heaven, that I may love them and really set out on my way.

Responsory – Office of Readings (Galatians 3:24-25, 23)

The law was our guardian until Christ came and made it possible for us to be reconciled to God by faith.

- And now that the time of faith has come, we are under that guardian no longer.

Before the time of faith came, the law kept us strictly in check, watching us closely until faith should be revealed.

- And now that the time of faith has come, we are under that guardian no longer.

“This is not a matter of simple theoretical knowledge, but of a vital consciousness which implies relations of love and friendship between the good Shepherd and his sheep, a relation that Jesus does not hesitate to compare to that which exists between the Father and himself. From the humble rustic simile of the shepherd and his sheep, Jesus rises to his life in communion with the Father, and inserts his own relationship with us into such a perspective. This is the true love of God’s children; it begins here on earth, in faith and love, and culminates in heaven where ‘we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is’ (1 Jn. 3:2).”[14]

Why does the Father love Jesus for laying down His life?

Jesus speaks five (5) times of laying down His life. Jesus, understanding and willing, accepts His role as the shepherd by laying down His life. He is perfectly following what the Father commanded Him. “The sacrifice of Christ is unique; it completes and surpasses all other sacrifices.” (cf. Heb 10:10) First, it is a gift from God the Father himself, for the Father handed his Son over to sinners in order to reconcile us with himself. At the same time it is the offering of the Son of God made man, who in freedom and love offered his life to his Father through the Holy Spirit in reparation for our disobedience.”[15]

Jesus preaches of His death and Resurrection and to go even further, He shows the perfect unity of love between the Father and the Son. The Catechism says, “By embracing in his human heart the Father’s love for men, Jesus ‘loved them to the end,’ for ‘greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.’(Jn. 13:1; 15:3) In suffering and death his humanity became the free and perfect instrument of his divine love which desires the salvation of men. (Cf. Heb. 2:10, 17-18; 4:15; 5:7-9) Indeed, out of love for his Father and for men, whom the Father wants to save, Jesus freely accepted his Passion and death: ‘No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.’(Jn. 10:18) Hence the sovereign freedom of God’s Son as he went out to his death.(Cf. Jn. 18:4-6; Mt. 26:53)”[16]

VIDEO – Dick & Rick Hoyt – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 6:40

<http://youtu.be/dDnrLv6z-mM>

This video shows the epitome of love between a father and son. The father is willing to do marathons and triathlons with his son as his arms and legs, yet as the father says in the video, it is his son who is the true athlete and competitor. At the end of the

shepherds carry a crosier, or staff. The sheep dogs take the shepherd's orders keeping the sheep on the right path and going toward their destination. The priests who are servants of the local Bishop are like the sheep dogs. The sheep are united and stay in the herd; these are the faithful that are one in liturgy, doctrine and morals. At the end of this video, the sheep are successfully led through the gate. The gate is Jesus Christ. The shepherds, priests and other faithful lead us to Christ, our destination. It is only in Christ that we find protection, rest and nourishment. Our life is hilly, winding, long, and dangerous. It is only through the guidance of the shepherds, the priests, and the faithful (The Church) that we make our way to Christ both temporally (on earth) and for all eternity (in heaven). We have the guidance not only of those who are part of the Church Militant (Pope, Bishops, Priest and Lay Faithful) but also the Angels and the Church Triumphant (The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints).

AUDIO – Audio Sancto - Sacramentals: Good Shepherd Sunday – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – [listen to first 4:00]
<http://www.audiosancto.org/auweb/20060430-Sacramentals-Good-Shepherd-Sunday.mp3>

The reality of sheep and shepherds can be better understood by listening to the first four (4) minutes of this homily. After listening we can read John 10:10. Satan is the coyote, wolf, eagle or bear that wants to mutilate us. It is Jesus the Good Shepherd that is our life and enables us to have life to the full.

Love Between God the Father and the Son - Lesson and Discussion

“This is why the Father loves me...”

After centuries of God asking shepherds to lead His people, He took pity on us and sent His Son, “the one true shepherd who was the incarnation of all his love for me.”[12] Christ's whole mission was to do the will of the Father out of love. “The sacrifice of Jesus ‘for the sins of the whole world’ (1 Jn. 2:2) expresses his loving communion with the Father. The Father loves me, because I lay down my life,’ said the Lord, ‘[for I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.’(Jn. 10:17; 14:31)”[13]

One Flock, One Shepherd - Lesson and Discussion

“...there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

Before his ascension into heaven, Jesus placed Peter as the shepherd of His flock. (cf. John 21:15-17) Jesus asked Peter three times to feed His sheep, signifying the number of times that Peter denied Jesus. “In this way the prophecy made to Peter before the Passion was fulfilled: but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren.” (Lk. 22:32)[1] St. Peter, as the good shepherd to the Church on earth, tells us in his first letter, “By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.” (1 Pt. 2:25)

What does Jesus mean by “A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep”?

Jesus is speaking of His death on the Cross. St. John Chrysostom writes: “.he is speaking of his passion, making it clear this would take place for the salvation of the world and that he would go to it freely and willingly”. Pope St. Gregory the Great comments on this passage saying, “He did what he said he would do; he gave his life for his sheep, and he gave his body and blood in the Sacrament to nourish with his flesh the sheep he had redeemed.”[2] St. Peter, along with every Pope after him, carries out this example in his willingness to die for the Church. The symbol of the shepherd that Jesus takes is passed on to St. Peter who is to feed and guard Jesus' flock.

What is the mission of the shepherd? “Peter's mission is one of guarding Our Lord's whole flock without limitations. *Feed* is equivalent to ‘direct and govern’. Peter is made the shepherd and guide for the whole Church. As the Second Vatican Council points out, Jesus Christ ‘put Peter at the head of the other Apostles, and in him he set up a lasting and visible source and foundation of the unity of both faith and communion’.[3] *Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia* is a phrase that means where Peter is, there is Christ's Church.

In the first reading and responsorial psalm, we hear of Jesus as the “cornerstone”. “He is ‘the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone’” (Acts 4:11) While the images of a cornerstone and shepherd are different, they convey the same message, that Jesus is the only way to salvation. “For there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12)

Where do we, the Church, fit in this image of the Good Shepherd?

We are the sheep and the flock. “The Church is, accordingly, a sheepfold, the sole and necessary gateway to which is Christ. It is also the flock of which God himself foretold that he would be the shepherd, and whose sheep, even though governed by human shepherds, are unfailingly nourished and led by Christ himself, the Good Shepherd and Prince of Shepherds, who gave his life for his sheep.”[4]

[See also [Link to Liturgy Lesson - The Dignity of Man](#)]**What does Jesus mean when He says that there are other sheep?**

Jesus is speaking of the Gentiles. He is also calling attention to the need for all of God’s people to be brought into one flock. “In very truth, there are still innumerable sheep who are far from the fold, but it was just these whom Jesus meant when he said: ‘They will heed my voice’ (Jn. 10:16). Yet how can they heed unless there is someone to preach the gospel to them?” This task starts with the head of the flock on earth, the Pope, but also, “Every believer is involved in this pressing duty: each must work with prayer and sacrifice to lead to Christ’s fold the sheep who are ignorant, far-off, scattered, and wandering, so that all may become ‘one flock’ and all may have ‘one shepherd’ (ib.)”.[5]

Who are the wolves? Satan is the wolf who tries to separate Christ’s sheep from Him.

What are other examples of “wolves” in the history of the Church? One example is from the Protestant Reformation when unfaithful priests, religious, and laity scattered the “sheep” all across Europe. Other examples are Catholic politicians, who vote in favor of abortion and gay marriage; Catholic priests, religious, and/or laity who teach false doctrine or stand in opposition to the teaching of the Magisterium, or governments that openly persecute Catholics.

[See also [Link to Liturgy Lesson - Leaving Us with Shepherds](#)]**VIDEO – United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) President Sharply Criticizes HHS Mandate - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:59**

<http://bcove.me/ob5itz9v>

See also: Ex. 34; Gn. 48:15; 49:24; Mi. 7:14

MUSIC – “The House of God, Forever” by Jon Foreman – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 4:45

<http://youtu.be/uoXWIK1lfyo>

One of the most famous Psalms is Psalm 23. This song is about God as our “Good Shepherd”, and because He is our “Good Shepherd”, we should never be afraid, even when going through the dark valley.

Why is Jesus as the “Good Shepherd” important? Jesus’ whole discourse in today’s Gospel reading and in the tenth chapter of John reveal that by accepting death and rising on the third day, He is both the shepherd and the gate (cf. Jn. 10:7). “By accepting death in order to save his flock, Jesus is at the same time both shepherd and door for his sheep. ‘I am the door’ – he said – ‘If any one enters by me he will be saved and will go in and out, and find pasture’ (Jn. 10:9). No one enters the sheepfold of Christ – the Church – without believing in him, without passing through the mystery of his death and resurrection. Baptism is precisely the sacrament which, immersing us in Christ’s Easter mystery, leads us into his sheepfold, where we shall find salvation.”[11]

VIDEO – Sheep Herding – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 7:04

<http://youtu.be/VdrBX3cqF6U>

It is easy to think, “So Jesus is a shepherd and we are sheep, who cares?” We are not familiar with shepherders so we don’t understand the difficulty in herding sheep. This video shows the diligence of the shepherd, the usefulness of the sheep dogs, the necessity of the sheep to stay united, and the refuge and safety of the gate. The goal of this 6-mile herding is to get 250 sheep into the safety of the gate where they are protected and well fed.

ACTIVITY – PSALM 23

After watching the “Sheep Herding” video another option is to have someone read Psalm 23. Lead a discussion of how the “Good Shepherd” is similar to the video that was just shown, and how Christ brings us protection and feeds us well.

In our life who are the shepherd, the sheep dogs, the other sheep and the gate? What do these images mean to our life?

The shepherd must continue to give directions to both sheep and dogs; the shepherd represents Christ and the Bishops, to whom He gave His authority. Like the shepherd in this video, the

3-4 other volunteers. These volunteers will be “other voices” in the world. Once person B begins reading to person A, have one of the “other voices” approach person A and offer them a cell phone or iPod so they can listen to a popular song. Person B continues to read the whole time despite the distractions. Have a second person from the “other voices” approach person A and begin to gossip. Person B continues to read the whole time. Have a third person from the “other voices” approach person A and begin to show them a new YouTube video, asking them if they saw it yet and then playing it for them. Person A will be bombarded with music, video and gossip and in the midst of the bombardment the “Voice of the Shepherd” will continue. Try to time the skit so that the “other voices” do their bombardment within the same amount of time that it takes person B to read John 10:1-11. After the skit ask person A if they remember or heard anything from the reading. This can lead into a discussion about John 10:1-11 as well as a discussion on why we are distracted and bombarded with so many voices, and how it can be hard to hear the Voice of the Shepherd. At the beginning of the skit, you can ask person A to try to listen to person B as person B reads the Gospel. At the end of the skit, ask person A how much they comprehended.

Where else in scripture do we see the image of a shepherd?

The image or occupation of a shepherd is seen throughout the entire Bible. Abraham and David were both shepherds. The image of God as a shepherd is also seen throughout the scriptures. Here are some examples:

Ezekiel 34:1-12: “The Lord Yahweh says this: ‘Look, I am against the shepherds. I shall take my flock out of their charge and henceforth not allow them to feed my flock. And the shepherds will stop feeding themselves, because I shall rescue my sheep from their mouths to stop them from being food for them. For the Lord Yahweh says this: Look, I myself shall take care of my flock and look after it. As a shepherd looks after his flock when he is with his scattered sheep, so shall I look after my sheep.’”

Psalms 23:1: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want”

Psalms 80:1: “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!”

Psalms 100:3: “We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture”

Isaiah 40:11: “He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms”

President Obama, along with HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius a Catholic, mandated in January 2012, that within one year all Catholic institutions (hospitals, universities, schools, etc.) must provide birth control, contraceptives, sterilizations, and Abortifacient in their health care services. This is diametrically opposed to the teachings and beliefs of the Catholic Church. Cardinal Dolan, President of the USCCB, speaks against this attack on religious freedom. He is being the shepherd of his sheep.

On the USCCB website the Bishops have an article entitled “Six Things Everyone Should Know About the HHS Mandate”. If you would like to read more, go to the following link: <http://usccbmedia.blogspot.com/2012/02/six-things-everyone-should-know-about.html?spref=tw>

1. The mandate does not exempt Catholic charities, schools, universities or hospitals.
2. The mandate forces these institutions and others, against their conscience, to pay for things they consider immoral.
3. The mandate forces coverage of sterilization and abortion-inducing drugs and devices as well as contraception.
4. Catholics of all political persuasions are unified in their opposition to the mandate.
5. Many other religious and secular people and groups have spoken out strongly against the mandate.
6. The federal mandate is much stricter than existing state mandates.

ACTIVITY – The Bishops (shepherds) speak.

<http://www.catholicvote.org/discuss/index.php?p=25591>
ALL United States Bishops have spoken publically against the HHS Mandate. Find out what your shepherd has written to each Catholic. Use the link above to locate the individual province and diocese, then read that Bishop’s letter.

The Catholic Church is organized with such a structure and hierarchy, that we can speak and mobilize the Body of Christ – Church Militant - against the evils of our time. Will we march with our shepherds? Not only does the Catholic Church have the hierarchy, but it also has the ability to gather en masse. We have shrines and cathedrals located around the nation. We have common liturgies and prayers. We are one in prayer, beliefs and morals.

How do we stay away from the wolves and remain close to Jesus? We stay close to Jesus by hearing and heeding His voice. The Gospel says that the sheep know His voice. **Where do we hear Jesus' voice today?** We hear it through Sacred Scripture, the Magisterium, and Sacred Tradition. The best way to become familiar with Christ's voice and to recognize it, is to study the Scriptures through the teaching authority of the Magisterium and to faithfully receive the Sacraments. Remember that Jesus left us with shepherds, our Bishops who can be traced back to the apostles, along with the head of the Bishops, Peter's successor, the Pope, who helps guide, feed and tend Jesus' flock. "Christ has given his Church sureness in doctrine and a fountain of grace in the Sacraments. He has arranged things so that there will always be people to guide and lead us, to remind us constantly of our way. There is an infinite treasure of knowledge available to us: the word of God kept safe by the Church, the grace of Christ administered in the Sacraments and also the witness and example of those who live by our side and have known how to build with their good lives on a road of faithfulness to God." [6]

The Image of the Good Shepherd- Lesson and Discussion

"I am the good shepherd."

What does the title "Good Shepherd" mean? It is "The title of Christ, which he gave himself, in so many words and in the Parable of the Good Shepherd (John 10:17-18; Luke 15:3-7). The theme is then taken up later in the New Testament (Hebrews 13:20; I Peter 2:25, 5:4). Implicit in the title is God's mercy on sinners and his concern for the weak and lowly." [7]

The image of the "Good Shepherd" is one that was not lost on the early Christians. From Abraham to David to Jesus, the image of a shepherd is very important. "The early Christians had a special affection for the image of the Good Shepherd, and have left us countless testimonies of it in the catacombs and on many well-known ancient buildings through murals, reliefs, gravestone etchings, mosaics, and sculptures." [8]

There is great fondness between Jesus and His sheep. He knows and calls each one by name (Jn. 10:14), and while Jesus has appointed other shepherds to tend His flock, i.e. the Pope, He is

the "chief Shepherd" (1 Pt. 5:4).

Why does Jesus bring up the image of the "Good Shepherd" now? Jesus is driving home the point of what He spoke against in chapter nine of John's Gospel when He heals the blind man. "The good shepherd discourse continues the theme of attack on the Pharisees that ends chapter 9 [of John's Gospel]. The figure is allegorical: the hired hands are the Pharisees who excommunicated the cured blind man. It serves as a commentary on chapter 9." [9] In chapter nine Jesus uses the sense of sight, healing the blind, in chapter ten Jesus uses the sense of hearing when He states that He is the "Good Shepherd" whose sheep hear His voice. This voice far surpasses the voices of the world including the voice of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Jesus takes great care to make it clear to all that He is the gate and the "Good Shepherd". If we hear Him, we will follow only Christ, and by following Him, we will obtain salvation.

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - The Voice of God "And a voice came from the heavens"]

How do we listen to the voice of the "Good Shepherd"? Saint John Paul II, the great shepherd of the Church said, "You are children of the light (cf. Jn 12:36)! You belong to Christ, and he has called you by name. Your first responsibility is to get to know as much as you can about him, in your parishes, in religious instruction in your high schools and colleges, in your youth groups and Newman Centers. But you will get to know him truly and personally only through prayer. What is needed is that you talk to him, and listen to him. Today we are living in an age of instant communications. But do you realize what a unique form of communication prayer is? Prayer enables us to meet God at the most profound level of our being. It connects us directly to God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in a constant exchange of love. Through prayer you will learn to become the light of the world, because in prayer you become one with the source of our true light, Jesus himself." [10]

ACTIVITY - Listen to His Voice

Chose six (6) volunteers. One person (person A) will go to the front of the group, facing the group. Another volunteer (person B) will stand about 10 feet from person A and will be reading John 10:1-11 to person A. Person B, the one reading the scripture, represents the Voice of the "Good Shepherd". Choose