

**Fourth Sunday of Easter - April 25, 2021**

**Gospel: John 10:11-18**

**The good shepherd**

**Year B**

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Dear Brothers and sisters, in today's First Reading, we heard how Peter responded to questions about the miracle he performed with the crippled man who could now walk.

He showed a remarkable attitude that we cannot ignore.

Peter focused the attention of the assembled leaders and the elders not on the good deed, he had done for the man, but rather that it was done in the name of Jesus Christ and his words are powerful indeed, he says: "There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved." He does not glorify himself for what he has done.

And this invites us to think again about how we react when someone praises us for a job well done? Do we deflect the honour and give recognition to our mentors or to our teammates at work? Do we take all the credit for ourselves? or do we give the praise and glory to our Lord and Savior? We must reflect about this.

The best course of action is the latter, "to not let pride come between us and God". I will repeat it "to not let pride come between us and God".

We need to humble ourselves and give praise and glory to God.

... Besides being correct, it helps reinforce ... his constant presence in our lives, his guiding hand always on our shoulders,

And that the good we are trying to do each and every day in this world is not for our personal gain, but for the greater glory of his kingdom.

Today is the fourth Sunday of Easter and the Church presents us verses from chapter 10 of the Gospel of John, beautiful verses full of love and hope for each one of us.

For the next several Sundays of this Easter season, we will be hearing some familiar themes from the Gospel of John. We will hear Jesus saying: "I am the light." "I am the bread of life." "I am the living water." "I am the way, the truth and the life."

And in this Gospel Jesus said twice: "I am the good shepherd", and this analogy will help us to understand who Jesus Christ is for us, what his role is, and what his mission is in this world.

I invite all of you to read in full chapter 10 and reflect on its contents.

In our culture, there are not many people working as shepherds, so for us, the comparison that Jesus does with a good shepherd isn't very clear for us.

To understand this analogy, the Gospel of John repeats the words of Jesus where he compares the good shepherd with a hired hand or a salaried worker who works just for money.

Jesus clearly explains to us that this worker... is not really interested in the sheep, and he doesn't take any risks for their safety, because he has no bond with the sheep, no love for them. It just works. If there is a threat to the sheep, the salaried worker will leave the sheep alone.

A good shepherd, on the other hand, knows each sheep in his flock "individually" – their needs, strengths and weaknesses.

A good shepherd has a caring relationship with his sheep. He loves his sheep and wants what is good for them. He wants to do anything and everything he can for the good of his sheep. And this bothers and sisters, is love.

God is always present in our lives. like a good shepherd, and he knows his people individually; he calls each by name, and He knows what each person needs and what will make them happy. He knows our challenges and weaknesses and is ready to carry-us through our difficulties. He is the good shepherd who cares for his sheep.

Perhaps, we don't always realize but God... guides each one of us along the path that will lead us to true happiness in this world, and in the end, to eternal life.

And like a good shepherd, if we stray from the path, God will not rest until he brings us home again.

BUT, the reality is that we also hear from other voices than that of God within and around us but we need to be in tune with the Voice of God. – but - How can we do this? ... we need to do something .... We need to work in our spiritual formation and then we will be able to recognize the difference between other voices and that of God.

Brothers and sisters, God will keep calling us and will continue speaking to prevent us from getting lost. There will always be other voices, from within ourselves and from outside. but his voice is different; because, he is the good shepherd and the other voices come from the salaried worker who only has his own interest at heart.

If you reflect you will realize who or where the voices come from that are not from God.

Brothers and sisters, there is only one God and in him only is our salvation, don't allow other voices which are not from the good shepherd to take you away from God's paths .

Amen