

First Reading

4th Sunday of Easter

A reading from the book of Acts.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the gathering.

All: Thanks be to God.

The Fourth Sunday of Easter ~ Good Shepherd Sunday

The Psalm appointed:

Psalm 23

New International Version (NIV)

A psalm of David.

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,

³ he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.

⁴Even though I walk
through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

Second Reading
4th Sunday of Easter

An epistle reflection from Peter's first letter:

What counts is that you put up with it for God's sake when you're treated badly for no good reason. There's no particular virtue in accepting punishment that you well deserve. But if you're treated badly for good behaviour and continue in spite of it to be a good servant, that is what counts with God. This is the kind of life you've been invited into, the kind of life Christ lived. He suffered everything that came his way so you would know that it could be done, and also know how to do it, step-by-step.

He never did one thing wrong,

Not once said anything amiss.

They called him every name in the book and he said nothing back. He suffered in silence, content to let God set things right. He used his servant body to carry our sins to the Cross so we could be rid of sin, free to live the right way. His wounds became your healing. You were lost sheep with no idea who you were or where you were going. Now you're named and kept for good by the Shepherd of your souls.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the gathering.

All: Thanks be to God.

The Fourth Sunday of Easter, Cycle A ~ Good Shepherd Sunday

The Gospel Reading: John 10:1-10

[translation: The Message (MSG, with adaptations by A. Twiddy)]

Calling Us By Our Name

Reader: Calling us by our name. The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John
All: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

10 ¹⁻⁵

Jesus was speaking to some people among the local authorities who were upset with his healing of a blind man. At first, he developed the metaphor of inner, or spiritual blindness, to describe what it is like to miss when something good is happening around you. Then he changed metaphors to talk about sheep and shepherds:

“Let me set this before you as plainly as I can:

If someone climbs over or through the fence of a sheep-pen, instead of going through the gate, you know they are up to no good—a sheep rustler!

The shepherd walks right up to the gate. The gatekeeper opens the gate, and the sheep recognize the shepherd’s voice. Shepherds call their own sheep by name, and lead them out.

When they get them all out, they lead them, and the sheep follow because they are familiar with that voice. They won’t follow a stranger’s voice, but will scatter because they aren’t used to the sound of it.”

6-10

Jesus told this simple story, but they had no idea what he was talking about. So he tried again.

“I’ll be explicit, then. I am the Gate for the sheep.

All those others are up to no good—sheep stealers, every one of them. But the sheep didn’t listen to them.

I am the Gate. Anyone who goes through me will be cared for—will freely go in and out, and find pasture.

A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy.

I came so they can have real and eternal life ~ more life, and better life, than they ever dreamed of.”

Reader: The Gospel of Christ.
All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ