

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Good Shepherd Sunday

As We Gather

“Let us ever walk with Jesus, Follow His example pure.” These poetic words of a favorite hymn, written in the 1600s by Sigismund von Birken, have a special meaning for us each day. Although the author intended that his hymn about following the example of Jesus be sung in the Lenten season, when there is a focus on themes of sacrifice and self-giving, the words fit equally well in Eastertide. No season, even one as joyous and victorious as Easter, is without its challenges that may include some sorts of suffering. There are no times when we are exempted from taking up our crosses and following the Lord. The Good Shepherd stands ready in every season to lead His flock with loving care!

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

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

Versicles

Listen to my prayer, O God, do not ignore my plea;
hear me and answer me.
Evening, morning, and noon
I cry out in distress, and He hears my voice.
Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you;
He will never let the righteous fall.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Introit

Psalm 95:1–3, 6–7a; antiphon: John 10:14, 15b

I am the good shepherd.

I know my own and my own know me, and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

For the LORD is a great God,

and a great King above all gods.

Oh come, let us worship and bow down;

let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

For he is our God,
**and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

I am the good shepherd.

I know my own and my own know me, and I lay down my life for the sheep.

First Reading

Acts 2:42–47

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The life of the first Christians

Psalm

Psalm 23; antiphon: v. 1

¹The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

²He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

³He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness 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 goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Epistle

1 Peter 2:19–25

¹⁹This is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²²He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The example of Christ, who suffered for us

Holy Gospel

John 10:1–10

¹[Jesus said:] “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. ²But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

Jesus is the gate of the sheep.

Kyrie

O Lord,

have mercy upon us.

O Christ,

have mercy upon us.

O Lord,

have mercy upon us.

Hymn: The King of Love My Shepherd Is

LSB 709

Sermon

Rev. Don Coulter

Lord's Prayer

☩ Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer

Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, at this hour You hung upon the cross, stretching out Your loving arms to embrace the world in Your death. Grant that all people of the earth may look to You and see their salvation; for Your mercy's sake we pray.

Amen.

Benedicamus

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn: Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise

LSB 917

Stewardship Sentence

1 Peter 2:21 – *“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.”* Our heavenly Father wants us to grow into the image of His Son, to follow in His steps. Jesus suffered for us not only to redeem us, but also to show us what love looks like – to leave us an example of self-giving, sacrificial generosity. “Let us ever walk with Jesus, follow His example pure.”

Lectionary Summary for Next Week - May 10, 2020

Acts 6:1–9; 7:2a, 51–60; 1 Peter 2:2–10; John 14:1–14

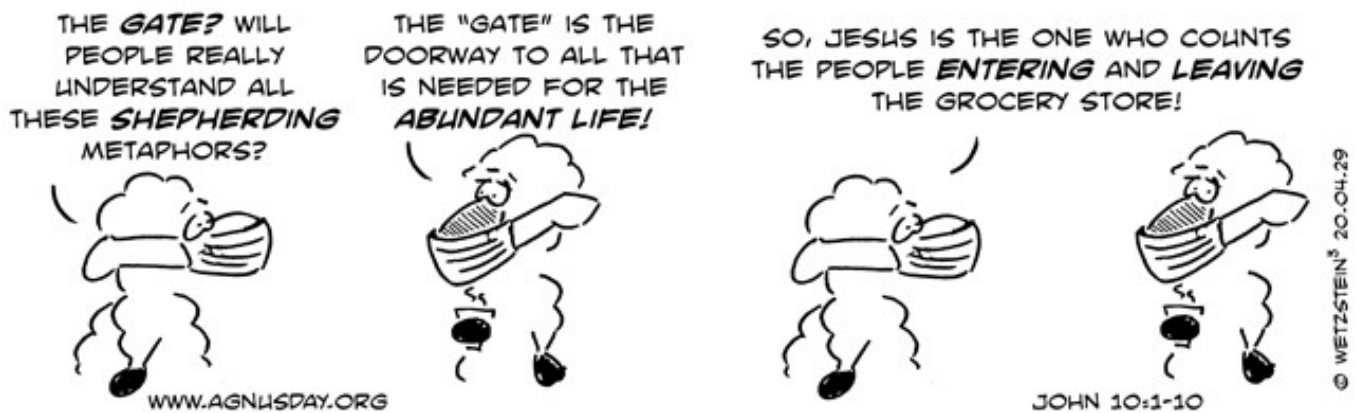
The Lord Jesus Christ Is the Way, the Truth and the Life

The risen Lord Jesus alone is *“the way, and the truth, and the life,”* and we come *“to the Father”* only through Him (John 14:6). God is thus *“glorified in the Son,”* and those who believe in Him will do the works of Christ because He goes to the Father for us (John 14:12–14). Stephen, *“a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 6:5) and *“doing great wonders and signs among the people”* (Acts 6:8), did

the works of Christ. When he was falsely accused and put to death, he “gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:55). Fixing his hope there, he commended his spirit to the Lord Jesus and prayed for his murderers. In the same way, all the baptized are called to follow the example of Christ Jesus by faith. Though He was “rejected by men” in the sight of God, He is “chosen and precious” (1 Peter 2:4). He is the chief cornerstone of the Father’s “spiritual house,” and we are built upon Him as “living stones” (1 Peter 2:5).

Acknowledgments

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Note: In order to comply with social distancing guidelines, Agnus Day has been modified to be a two-panel comic strip until further notice.