

03 MAY 2020
FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

OPENING HYMN

**Walk with me O my Lord
Through the darkest night and brightest day
Be at my side O Lord
Hold my hand and guide me on my way.**

Sometimes the road seems long, my energy is spent,
Then Lord, I think of You and I am given strength.

Just as you calmed the wind and walked upon the sea,
Conquer, my living Lord, the storms that threaten me.

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty ever-living God, lead us to a share in the joys of heaven, so that the humble flock may 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. Amen.

FIRST READING: Acts 2:14, 36-41

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 23: 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

Response: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

or:

R. Alleluia.

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. R.

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort. R.

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. R.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me

all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. R

SECOND READING: 1 Pt 2:20b-25

GOSPEL: John 10:1-10

REFLECTION:

The first reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles and if taken together with that of the following Sunday provides an alternative theme in exploring the preaching of the early Church in the persons of Paul and Barnabas. The mission first to the Jews is now to be placed second to the mission to the Gentiles, — a theme which the reading for next Sunday also explores with the warning of the preachers that those who follow the Lord will necessarily have to endure trial and sufferings.

The second reading is from the first Letter of Peter. In these verses today, St. Peter is giving advice to Christians who were slaves. He tells them to be submissive to their masters with all respect.

The Gospel is from St. John. One of the oldest paintings of Christ, in the Roman catacombs, represents Christ as carrying the injured, straying sheep gently on His shoulders back to the sheepfold. This is an image of Christ which has always appealed to Christians. We have Christ as our shepherd—He tells us so himself in today's gospel—and we do not resent being called sheep in this context. There is something guileless about a sheep, and at the same time a lot of foolishness! But with Christ as our shepherd and the "good shepherd" who is sincerely interested in the true welfare of His flock we have reason to rejoice.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Confident that the Lord's love for us has no end, we bring forward our needs and the needs of the whole world.

Response: ***Lord, hear our prayer***

For those who serve and lead in the Church, that they may follow the example of Christ, the good shepherd. We pray to the Lord.

For all the members of the caring professions, that the Lord's compassion may be visible in them, especially in this time of pandemic. We pray to the Lord.

For people who call on the name of the Lord Jesus in their sufferings, that they may experience God's healing power. We pray to the Lord.

For all who have gone before us in faith (especially N & N), that they may see God, face to face. We pray to the Lord.

Closing prayer: God of beauty and compassion, you love us as a shepherd loves all the flock: continue to support your people with your grace, we pray, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us together by the Saviour's command and formed by Divine teaching, dare to say:
(All say the Lord's Prayer together) Our Father, ...

CLOSING PRAYER

Look upon your flock, kind Shepherd, and be pleased to settle in eternal pastures the sheep you have redeemed by the Precious Blood of your Son. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF FROM THE CORONAVIRUS

Almighty and merciful God, who show Your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the Coronavirus in various parts of the world. We come before You asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for a healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

**My hearts like a flute and I want to play all day,
Jesus Christ is my music master,
Deep from my heart flows a simple melody,
Great is his love, love without end (2)**

He's my shepherd, He is my guide,
Dark be the night, Christ is my light,
Nothing I fear, Jesus is near,
He leads me to the kingdom. **Chorus.**

(or choose an appropriate alternate hymn)