

Fourth Sunday Of Easter, Cycle B, 2024

In Jesus' time and even today in the Middle East, there are watering "holes" for sheep and goats. They consist of troughs thirty feet long and three feet wide from which twenty sheep on each side can drink. There could be as many as twenty troughs at a large station. Therefore, as many as 800 sheep can drink at the same time. At a busy station there could be as many as 2000 sheep. The shepherd brings his flock to the watering station and waits. When he believes that all his sheep have had their fill, he begins to leave and makes his special call and amazingly all his sheep (several hundred) will follow him, leaving the other sheep behind. This is the image that the words of Jesus invoked in his listeners. His disciples will trust him completely and will follow him obediently.

Jesus is the good shepherd who will care for us. Do we listen for his call? Do we trust him enough to follow his commands even when our minds think they will not be beneficial to us?

Do we come to church to fulfill an obligation or to meet someone with whom you have or want to have a close relationship? If you loved your grandmother dearly, a visit to her every weekend would be a joy and something you look forward to do. If however it is more of an obligation, it will be a chore that can become a burden each week.

For Jesus to be present to you, you have to present to him. You will not hear him call you unless you are listening to his words. If teenagers are busy with their electronic gadgets, they will not hear their parents' voice calling them. Therefore we need to remove any distractions, so that we can pay attention to God who speaks to us in the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharist. Sometimes, we may be anxious about a situation or have a serious problem to resolve. We have to place it at the foot of the altar silently, and to stop obsessing about it for a while, so that we can listen to Jesus who will

speak to our hearts. He comes to us in our need, as he came walking on the water to rescue his disciples whose boat was being tossed about by a storm. Believe in the Good Shepherd and trust in him. Listen to his voice and follow his advice obediently. Jesus can only be present to you, if you are present and attentive to him.

We are called to follow the example of Christ. When Jesus said “I am the way” (as in “I am the way, the truth and the life”,) he refers to himself as a role model for us. We too must also be teachers and role-models to others.

Are we good shepherds/leaders? Are we honest, caring, and willing to make **sacrifices for others**? The reason why Saul allowed David to fight Goliath, was because as a young shepherd David fought wild beasts to protect his father’s sheep. He was fearless and was prepared to die.

Are we trustworthy: dependable, reliable, and loyal to our family, friends, neighbors and coworkers?

As leaders are we guided by our faith and not by popular and deceptive ways of the world?

Do we have a good relationship with God to be able to an example of moral leadership?

The blind cannot lead the blind.