



CELEBRATING AT HOME
FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

*The Good Shepherd calls his own by name,
and they recognise his voice (John 10:1-10)*



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

We are gathered with the whole Church in this moment of prayer.

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd,
leading us into everlasting life.

You call us each by name.

May we feel you close to us always.

As you call us to follow you

help us to answer with our whole heart.

Risen Christ,
shepherd us on the journey of life,
that we may be good shepherds to each other.

Amen.

Scripture Reading (*John 10:1-10*)

Jesus said; 'I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them. So Jesus spoke to them again:

'I tell you most solemnly,
I am the gate of the sheepfold.
All others who have come are thieves and brigands;
but the sheep took no notice of them.

I am the gate.
Anyone who enters through me will be safe:
he will go freely in and out

and be sure of finding pasture.

The thief comes
only to steal and kill and destroy.

I have come
so that they may have life
and have it to the full.'

Reflection - *Jesus, Shepherd and Gate*

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is often called "Good Shepherd Sunday" because no matter what reading cycle we are in, the Gospel always focusses on the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd.

This year, the Gospel reading talks about Jesus as the 'gate of the sheepfold', that is, Jesus is the one through whom we truly enter into the fold of God. The reading implies that those who get into the sheepfold some other way bring only disaster and destruction. Those who enter the fold through Christ, the Good Shepherd, will be safe, will be led to good pasture and have life in all its fullness.

Jesus acts towards us like a good shepherd: feeding, nurturing, defending and even laying down his life for us. Our Good Shepherd is deeply concerned about us, the flock and there is a deep sense of warmth and intimacy in the realisation that Jesus knows each one of us by name. Like a good shepherd Jesus is the source of life, nourishment, and safety for the sheep.

Any reflection about Jesus as the Good Shepherd also serves as a reminder that shepherding each other in Jesus' name is part of the vocation of every disciple. We are very used to thinking about Jesus as the Good Shepherd, but we also need to think about being/ becoming good shepherds to each other.

One of the very encouraging things about the pandemic was the number of people who became good shepherds to others, providing safety and security to vulnerable people, supporting health workers, providing meals and companionship. Yes, there were the 'thieves and brigands' too who preyed on others by hiking prices, selling goods which were never delivered and various other online scams.

But, like Jesus, we are called to bring life in all its fullness to one another.

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Prayers of Intercession

Lord, help us to really listen to you
and to one another.

Keep us strong in faith, hope and love
so that the face of Jesus may be seen in us.

We pray for all those mourning loved ones:
bring them comfort and peace.

Bless all those working in creative ways
to care for us and for others.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**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.**

Closing Prayer

Lord, God,
in the resurrection of Jesus
you share with us his risen life.
Transform our darkness, fear and isolation
with your comforting presence
so that we can be your calm, loving,
healing presence to each other.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May your blessing be upon us, O Lord,
and remain with us for ever.

We go in the peace of the risen Christ!
Alleluia! Alleluia!



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when many cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.



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