

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER REFLECTION.

### THE GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY.

3<sup>RD</sup> MAY, 2020.

This Sunday is usually called “Good Shepherd Sunday,” because of the focus of the readings, especially the Gospel, where Jesus Christ calls and addresses Himself as the Good Shepherd. Other places in the Gospels we hear Jesus Christ using the same prototype, taken from ordinary and familiar realities of the time. Jesus was clear in His points and also very concise to His hearers by calling to mind things like sheep and shepherds. The Gospel of today is and specifically address to religious leaders and all of us as Christ followers who knew Jesus through the Gospel, listened to him through His church. The intention of Jesus Christ in today’s liturgy is to give us a better sense of whom He is and how best as His followers to carry ourselves and be able to be our brother’s keeper. During this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, how can we be Christ like in helping the most vulnerable people of our society and most importantly our parish community as good shepherds. Christ continuously in today’s Gospel and always calls us to the ministry of being our brother’s keeper.

Another important aspect of today’s Gospel that is very important is, that Jesus did not only call himself the Good Shepherd, but also calls Himself the Gate for the sheep in the verse 7 of the Gospel. “Gate” also can mean door for proper understanding. In our time of electric and automatic entrances and keys and locks we think of doors and gates to create a barrier against being robbed or violated. But Jesus had more in mind. Imagine yourself in a cruise ship on holiday and you failed into the Mediterranean Sea. Despite your life jacket, you were between life and death. When eventually the rescue operation saved you and pulled you back into the ship you experience a form of a passage. When the ship door is opened from within and you are pulled through it to escape into life, you realize the importance of a door and the meaning of the gate of life. When we struggle in our daily life, when we are faced with the most difficult situations of our life, Jesus in the Gospel reminds us that if you come through Him who is the gate of life you will have respite. Not only that we will have respite, He as our Good Shepherd will protect us and His grace will continue to lead us through.

Jesus adds the warning that all who climb into the sheepfold in some other way than himself is a thief and a marauder. We might think that Jesus is only addressing the Pharisees, not at all. Jesus today addresses us that life without Him is meaningless and that we cannot achieve anything without Him. Today our world is conquered by the COVID-19 pandemic, do our scientists and all of us rely on God’s mercy and help or do we think He does not exist and our science can help us. At this difficult times we need Him more than ever. If we surrender ourselves to the mercy of God, our lives will never be the same again. All we need to do is to have faith in Him. All we need to do is to believe and get ourselves totally pulled back into His sheepfold.

As we celebrate the Good Shepherd Sunday, let us ask Jesus our Master to help us in this our difficult time. May He bless all of us in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.