

Liturgy Alive of 4th Sunday of Easter - C -

Greetings *(See Second Reading)*

The Lamb on the throne will be our shepherd
and will lead us to springs of living water.
God will wipe away all tears from our eyes.
May this Lamb of God, Jesus our Lord,
be always with you.

R/ And also with you.

Introduction by the Celebrant

A. I Call Them by Their Name

It is very reassuring to know that our guide or community leader knows us personally and calls us by our name. It makes us say or think: He knows me and I know him. This calls for deeper trust and loyalty and love. On the Sunday of the Good Shepherd Jesus himself reminds us how he knows us personally. At the same time the fact that we know him too, at least a bit, changes our whole life. For knowing him, we know God. We experience in him God's goodness and care and close presence in everyday life. Would that we could also be near to one another and Jesus' pastors and shepherds could be close to their people.

B. The Voice of the Shepherd

Who are the pastors, the shepherds, whom people trust and listen to? As if instinctively they entrust themselves to priests who do not preach themselves but the Lord Jesus and his Good News. They listen to and confide in priests who know them and who also take the time to listen to them and their problems and hopes.

For in them they recognize something of Jesus, the Good Shepherd and model of all shepherds. Let us join our Good Shepherd in his thanks to the Father.

Penitential Act

"The sheep that belong to me
listen to my voice," says our Good Shepherd.
Have we listened to him and followed him?
Let us examine ourselves before the Lord.
(PAUSE)
Lord Jesus, you know us
and you call each of us by name.
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*

Jesus Christ, you reassure us
that we will never be lost or deserted by you.
Christ, have mercy. *R/ Christ, have mercy.*

Lord Jesus, the Father entrusted us to you
and you give us life that lasts for ever.
Lord, have mercy. *R/ Lord, have mercy.*

Have mercy on us, Lord,
and never let sin separate us from you.
Forgive us, make us follow you all the way
and lead us to everlasting life. *R/ Amen.*

Opening Prayer

Let us pray
that we may truly know and love the Lord Jesus
(PAUSE)
Our loving God and Father,
you have let us experience
how much you care for us
by giving us Jesus as our Good Shepherd.
He knows us, for he carries us in his heart.
May we be ever close to him,
so that we may know him too,
hear his voice and follow him without reserve.
Like his love, may our care overflow
on the people you have placed on our way.

We ask this in the name of Jesus our Lord. *R/ Amen.*

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading Introduction: Pastors Are Taking Risks

Jesus' Good News was first to be brought to the Jews, but it cannot be restricted to one group; it is destined for all. The conflict of Paul and Barnabas with the Jews becomes the occasion to preach directly to the pagans.

Second Reading Introduction: The Lamb Will Be Their Shepherd

People from every race, color, and culture will follow the Lamb as their Shepherd and be guided by him to eternal life.

Gospel Introduction: Those Who Hear My Voice Follow Me

Jesus is our Good Shepherd; he knows us personally, and leads us to the fullness of life if we are willing to go his way.

General Intercessions

Let us pray to Jesus, the Lamb of God and our shepherd, that he may lead all to the springs of life. Let us say: *R/ Our Lamb and Shepherd, unite us all.*

- Lord, you call an immense crowd from every nation, race and language. May they hear your voice and follow you. And so we pray: *R/ Our Lamb and Shepherd, unite us all.*
- Lord, those who recognize you are few. Let none of them be lost and keep them faithful to you. And so we pray: *R/ Our Lamb and Shepherd, unite us all.*
- Lord, many are still going through persecutions. May they keep serving you day and night and be united with you in their trials. And so we pray: *R/ Our Lamb and Shepherd, unite us all.*
- Lord, too many suffer from hunger and many thirst for justice and truth. Let the earth yield its fruit and let your people work for justice. And so we pray: *R/ Our Lamb and Shepherd, unite us all.*
- Lord, see the misery of those who suffer, wipe away all tears from their eyes and bring them the joy of your and our love. And so we pray: *R/ Our Lamb and Shepherd, unite us all.*
- Lord, see the riches of heart of many who are willing to serve you and your people in ministries of love and service. Call them and let them lead your people. And so we pray: *R/ Our Lamb and Shepherd, unite us all.*

Lord Jesus, call us by our names and unify us as your one people, for you are our Shepherd and Lord for ever. *R/ Amen.*

Prayer over the Gifts

God, our Father who cares,
you set for us the table of life
and offer us the cup of joy
of Jesus, your Son and our Shepherd.
Let him make us more and more
your faithful people;
and let him help us to proclaim
by what we are and do
that his message of life and joy
is destined for everyone
everywhere in the world.

For he is our Lord for ever. *R/ Amen.*

Introduction to the Eucharistic Prayer

We thank our Father for giving us his own Son as our Shepherd and guide. As Jesus offered himself for us, we offer ourselves with him, that others might live and be happy.

Invitation to the Lord's Prayer

The Father has placed us in the care of Jesus.
With our Good Shepherd we pray

our prayer of filial trust: *R/ Our Father...*

Deliver Us

Deliver us Lord, from our factions and division
and bring us together under the leadership
of Jesus, our Good Shepherd.
Let us share in the peace
of his caring and forgiving love
and save us from all anxiety,
for we are sure that he will bring us
to the source of living water,
for he is our Shepherd and Savior Jesus Christ:

R/ For the kingdom...

Invitation to Communion

This is the Lamb on the throne
who leads us to the springs of life,
that we may never hunger or thirst again.
Happy are we to be invited

to the table of our Good Shepherd. *R/ Lord, I am not worthy...*

Prayer after Communion

Father, we have listened to the voice of your Son
speaking to us here in this Eucharist.
May we keep belonging to him
and following him wherever he leads us.
Let no fear or enticement ever overcome us
to snatch us away from your love.
As he has given us himself as the bread of life,
may we also give ourselves to one another.
Let our Good Shepherd lead us
to the fresh pastures of your eternal joy.

Grant us this through Christ our Lord. *R/ Amen.*

Blessing

In this Eucharistic celebration
Christ has been with us as our Good Shepherd.
May he also stay with us in life
and guide us through his Holy Spirit.
May he make us shepherds to one another,
people who care, who support and uplift.
May we thus become to the world
a sign of God's caring, faithful love,
with the blessing of Almighty God
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *R/ Amen.*

Let us go in the peace and the joy of the Lord.

R/ Thanks be to God. Alleluia.