



21 April 2024

4th Sunday of Easter

Year B

GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

Called to Shepherd God's People

Today is "Good Shepherd Sunday," a day of special prayer for priestly, religious and missionary vocations. We honor and thank, first of all, Jesus, the "Senior Good Shepherd" who laid down his life for the salvation of all human beings. But we also honor, thank and pray for the "junior good shepherds" who were chosen and sent by Jesus himself to minister to our spiritual needs. It is also our duty to pray that many more may heed the invitation of the Senior Good Shepherd and respond to it with generous faithfulness.



INTRODUCTORY RITES



Entrance Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Entrance Hymn is sung.)

The merciful love of the Lord fills the earth; by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, alleluia.

Greeting

P – In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

All–Amen!

P –May the grace and peace of Jesus, the Divine "Good Shepherd," be with you all!

All–And with your spirit!

Penitential Act

P –Gathered together as God's flock around our Divine Leader, let us realize that every time we commit sin, we behave like the sheep that go astray from God's

flock. In all humility, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask His forgiveness. *(Pause)*

P –You are the good shepherd who laid down your life for us. Lord, have mercy!

All–Lord, have mercy!

P –We are the sheep that have often gone astray. Christ, have mercy!

All–Christ, have mercy!

P –We have sometimes failed to appreciate and support the junior shepherds you sent to guide us. Lord, have mercy!

All–Lord, have mercy!

P –May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All–Amen!

Gloria

All–Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you

thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen!

Collect (Opening Prayer)

P –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, God, for ever and ever.

All–Amen!

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LITURGY OF THE WORD



1st Reading *Acts 4:8-12*
Speaking to the members of the Sanhedrin, as he had done earlier in addressing the crowd, Peter proclaims that the crucified and risen Christ is the only source of healing and salvation.

R – A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said: “Leaders of the people and Elders: If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved, then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene whom you crucified, and whom God raised from the dead. It is in his name that this man stands before you healed.

He is *‘the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.’* There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved.”

The Word of the Lord!
All—Thanks be to God!

Responsorial Psalm *Ps 118*

R —*The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone!*

R. M. Velez



* **Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes.** **R.**

* **I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me and have been my savior. The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. By the Lord has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes.** **R.**

* **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; we bless you from the house of the Lord. I will give thanks to you, for you have answered me and have been my savior. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his kindness endures forever.** **R.**

2nd Reading *1 Jn 3:1-2*
Our being adopted children of God in Christ should be the source of our greatest happiness in this life and of hope for the life to come.

R —A reading from the First Letter of John

Beloved: See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

The Word of the Lord!
All—Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation *Jn 10:14*

All—Alleluia! Alleluia!
“I am the good shepherd,” says the Lord;
“I know my sheep, and mine know me.”
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel *Jn 10:11-18*
The image of the “Good Shepherd” has been used since the early times of the Church to express Jesus’ tenderness and love for all. In today’s Gospel passage, this image is even brighter as it is contrasted with that of the hired man who does not care for the sheep.

P —The Lord be with you!

All—And with your spirit!

P —A reading from the holy

Gospel according to John
All—Glory to you, O Lord!

Jesus said: “I am the Good Shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep.

I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father.”

The Gospel of the Lord!
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Homily

Profession of Faith (Apostles’ Creed)

All—I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen!

Prayer of the Faithful

P –We are the flock guided and protected by Jesus, the Good Shepherd who gave his life for us. Full of confidence in his compassionate love, let us pray to him:

All—**Jesus, Good Shepherd, hear our prayer!**

C –For the Church, God’s flock on earth: May she always be an example of unity, solidarity, and love under the care of God’s representatives. Let us pray! **R.**

C –For all the leaders of the Church – the Pope, the bishops, the priests: May they be good shepherds, totally devoted to the welfare and eternal salvation of their flock. Let us pray! **R.**

C –For all the lay faithful: May they love their shepherds and experience God’s loving care through them. Let us pray! **R.**

C –For all parents, teachers, and other people responsible for others: May they always be conscious of the importance of their role and fulfill it with generous dedication. Let us pray! **R.**

C –For the young Catholics called to the priesthood or the religious life: May they respond generously to the Lord’s invitation and devote their lives to the good of God’s people. Let us pray! **R.**

P –Most loving Jesus, you laid down your life to protect us from the attacks of the Evil One, and to lead us to the pasture of eternal life. Grant that we may be appreciative of the salvation you earned for us. May we always follow you, our Divine Shepherd, who live and reign for ever and ever.

All—**Amen!**



Preparation of the Gifts

P –Pray, brethren . . .

All—**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

Prayer over the Offerings

P –Grant, we pray, O Lord, that we may always find delight in these paschal mysteries, so that the renewal constantly at work within us may be the cause of our unending joy.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—**Amen!**

Preface of Easter III

P –The Lord be with you!

All—**And with your spirit!**

P –Lift up your hearts!

All—**We lift them up to the Lord!**

P –Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

All—**It is right and just!**

P –It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, but in this time above all to praise you yet more gloriously, when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.

He never ceases to offer himself for us but defends us and ever pleads our cause before you: he is the sacrificial Victim who dies no more, the Lamb, once slain, who lives for ever.

Therefore, overcome with paschal joy, every land, every people exults in your praise and even the heavenly Powers, with the angelic hosts, sing together the unending hymn of your glory, as they acclaim:

All—**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!**

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Memorial Acclamation

P –The mystery of faith!

All—**We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again!**



All—**Our Father . . .**

P –Deliver us, Lord . . .

All—**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.**

Sign of Peace

Breaking of the Bread

All—**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. (2x)**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Communion

P –This is Jesus, the Good Shepherd, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb.

All—**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Communion Hymn is sung.)

The Good Shepherd has risen, who laid down his life for his sheep and willingly died for his flock, alleluia.

Prayer after Communion

P –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.

All—**Amen!**



P –The Lord be with you.

All—**And with your spirit!**

P –Bow your heads and pray for God’s blessing. *(Pause)* –Through the resurrection of His Son, God has redeemed you and made you His children. May He fill you with joy.

All—**Amen!**

P –The Redeemer has given you lasting freedom. May you inherit his everlasting life.

All—**Amen!**

P –By faith you rose with Christ in baptism. May your lives be holy, so that you will be united with him for ever.

All—**Amen!**

P –May almighty God bless you: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
All–Amen!

P –Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
All–Thanks be to God!



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SUTIL?

Kalakbay at Katoto

Sutil is an interesting word in Tagalog, at least for one like me who loves languages in general. As a word that describes persons (usually children), *sutil* is negative in tone, suggesting the idea of being headstrong, stubborn, strong-willed, obstinate, and plain disobedient. I suspect that, like many other “palabrazas” from Spanish, *sutil* is among those words borrowed from Spanish which, in time, transformed its meaning in Philippine context, exactly like the word “Seguro” which literally means “sure” in the original, but which became “maybe” in many Philippine dialects.

Sutil is the opposite of sheeplike. Sheep are obedient animals, gentle, patient, and sociable. They have very good memories and they can recognize shepherds who treat them well, and will also remember bad shepherds who mistreat them.

But I seem to digress. **The liturgy today focuses on the image of Christ as the Good Shepherd.** There is neither doubt nor a need for deeper discussion about that truth.

Today, though, I would like to focus on that singular capacity of sheep for recognition. They can recognize shepherds who are good. They can remember faces of those who are mean. Being social animals, they do not do well alone. They

need to congregate. They need to be herded together and they find safety and solace in the company of other sheep. **A lost sheep is simply and plainly that – a poor, lost, helpless and hopeless sheep.** A lone sheep might just as well be a lost one.

A child – or an adult person for that matter – who chooses and decides to go it alone and veer away from the paths of righteousness is referred to by a phrase that represents something that does not exist – a black sheep. **A black sheep is much more than just lost. A child who is sutil can sometimes be considered and cast away as black sheep.**

We humans are very capable of doing just that. We can give up on people as a case of bad job! This is what death penalty really means. By killing criminals, what we really mean is they are so *sutil* and hopelessly incorrigible that there is not much else we can ever do, to transform wolves into lambs.

But not the Good Shepherd. He is one for whom the word sutil does not connote hopelessness. Let this be a recurring refrain for us today and the rest of our lives: *“I am the Good Shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”*



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