

4th Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:8-12
Ps 118:1,8-9,21-23,26,28-29
1 John 3:1-2
John 10:11-18

Monday April 23

Acts 11:1-18
Ps 42:2-3; 43:3-4
John 10:1-10

Tuesday April 24

Acts 11:19-26
Ps 87:1b-7
John 10:22-30

Wednesday April 25

Saint Mark

1 Peter 5:5b-14
Ps 89:2-3,6-7,16-17
Mark 16:15-20

Thursday April 26

Acts 13:13-25
Ps 89:2-3,21-22,25,27
John 13:16-20

Friday April 27

Acts 13:26-33
Ps 2:6-11ab
John 14:1-6

Saturday April 28

Acts 13:44-52
Ps 98:1,2-3ab,3cd-4
John 14:7-14

Jesus is our Good Shepherd. We are the sheep for whom he has laid down his life. He put everything aside for our sake – his human desire for an easy life, the security and familiarity of a home of his own, his time, his sleep, his tiredness, and his natural preference to avoid persecution, torture and death.

We are the sheep who recognize our Shepherd's voice and willingly follow him to better pastures. We want him to be our Good Shepherd. We want his protection, his guidance, and his love.

However, sometimes we forget to listen for his voice. This usually happens when life doesn't go as planned, the way we want it to. In frustration and fear, we assume that Jesus has left the sheepfold. We think he's gone after the lost sheep and left us behind to fend for ourselves, and – oh no! – this is surely when

the wolves attack! Doesn't he realize that? How could he do this to us if he really cares as much about us as he says he does? Why is he more concerned about the sheep who strayed than he is about us who are good sheep?

However, no matter how busy Jesus gets and no matter how far he has to go to rescue lost sheep, he never leaves our side. He is always with us. When the path of life takes us to dead ends or dangerous cliffs, it's not



because he's abandoned us. The pain we feel is his shepherd's staff tapping and prodding us to get us to move in a different direction, and we just haven't understood.

We don't want to go in that other direction. We like the familiarity of this old pasture. We're getting annoyed at the tap-tap-tapping of the staff on our heads. And we won't discover the blessing of this discipline until we turn again to Jesus with eyes of trust and ears that are attentive to everything he says, even if at first we don't like what he's saying.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. In what areas of your life do you feel lost and alone or abandoned?
2. What activities can you do that will restore your vision and your hearing so you can recognize the presence of your Good Shepherd?
3. Name some of the ways that the Good Shepherd's voice calls out to us.
4. Share the story of a time when Jesus prodded you but at first you didn't realize it was him. When did something feel painful until you realized that you were going in the wrong direction? What helped you recognize the voice and the staff of the Good Shepherd?