

Fourth Sunday of Easter

FutureChurch Online Liturgy of the Word

Introductory Rites

Sign of the Cross

Leader:

In the name of God, who loves us into being,
Of Christ Jesus, who calls us to fullness of life,
and the Spirit, who gifts and guides us on our journey
(making the sign of the cross)

ALL: AMEN

Greeting

Leader:

May the healing peace of Jesus,
the abundant Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you,

ALL: And also with you.

Introductory Remarks

Prepared by the Leader

Opening Prayer

Leader:

Let us pray.

God of lasting love.,

You never cease to seek us out, to call out to us,
For it is your will that we all be drawn together as one fold,
one community of caring.

Attune our ears to the voice of Christ, the Good Shepherd,
who leads us to you, that we may all find life in its fullness, together,
under your tender protection.

We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, the Good Shepherd,
Who lives and thrives with you, with us all,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

ALL: AMEN

LITURGY OF THE WORD

****Texts have been adapted for inclusive/expansive language****

First Reading

Lector: A reading from the Acts of the Apostles,

Then Peter stood up with the others and proclaimed in a loud voice:
“Let the whole house of Israel know for certain
that God has made Jesus – who was crucified – both Messiah and
Sovereign.”

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart,
and they asked Peter and the others,
“What, then, are we to do?”

Peter said to them,
“You must repent and be baptized, each one of you,
in the name of Jesus the Messiah, that your sins may be forgiven;
then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
For the promise is made to you and to your children
and to all those far off,
whomever God calls.”

Peter testified with many other arguments, and was exhorting them,
“Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”
Those who accepted what Peter said were baptized,
and about three thousand persons were added that day.

All: The Word of God
Thanks be to God

Psalm

Psalmist: The response is: “God is my shepherd; I shall not want”
R **“God is my shepherd; I shall not want”**

You are my shepherd, O God; there is nothing I shall want.
In verdant pastures you give me repose;
Beside restful waters you lead me;
You refresh my soul. **R**

You guide me in right paths
for your name's sake.
Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side,
With your rod and your staff
That give me courage. **R**

You spread a table before me
In the sight of my foes;
You anoint my head with oil
My cup overflows **R**

Only goodness and kindness follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in your house, O God,
For years to come. **R**

Second Reading

Lector: A reading from the First Letter of Peter,

Beloved:

If you put up with suffering for doing what is right,
This is acceptable in God's eyes.
It was for this that you were called,
since Christ suffered for you in just this way and left you an example.
You must follow in the footsteps of Christ,
who did no wrong, who spoke no deceit,
who did not return insults when insulted,
who when made to suffer, did not counter with threats.

Instead, Christ trusted the One who judges justly.
It was Christ's own body that brought our sins to the cross,
so that all of us, dead to sin, could live in accord with God's will.
By Christ's wounds you are healed.

At one time you were straying like sheep,
but now you have returned to the Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls.

ALL: The word of God
Thanks be to God

Gospel

Leader: Alleluia! Alleluia!
ALL: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Leader: I am the good shepherd, says Christ;
I know my sheep, and mine know me.

ALL: Alleluia! Alleluia!

A reading from the Gospel according to John:

Jesus said:

“Amen, amen, I say to you,
whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate
but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber.
But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep,
The one for whom the keeper opens the gate;
The sheep know the shepherd’s voice, who calls them by name and leads them out.

Having led them all out of the fold,
The shepherd walks in front of them and they follow because they recognize the voice.

But they will not follow a stranger; they will run,
because they do not recognize the voice of strangers.”

Although Jesus used this figure of speech,
the Pharisees did not realize what he was trying to tell them.

So, Jesus said again, “Amen, amen, I say to you,
I am the gate for the sheep.
All who came before me are thieves and robbers,
but the sheep did not listen to them.
I am the gate.

Whoever enters through me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture.

A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy;
I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.”

The Good News of Our Salvation
ALL: Praise to you, O Christ.

FAITH SHARING

Reflection

– CWP Video: www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/05032020

Questions for Shared Reflection:

*In the Gospel reading for today, Jesus says that the sheep follow because they recognize the Good Shepherd's voice. **We receive so many messages from different messengers. How do you discern whether or not the message you are receiving is of God?***

*In her preaching, Susan Nagele invites us to consider that God shepherds us through communities that depend upon, support, and provide for each other's needs. **What have you witnessed or learned about community, interdependency, and providing for each other through this experience of pandemic? How might you bring this learning into daily practice, even after this experience is over?***

CONCLUDING RITES

Closing Prayer

Leader: Nourished by God's word and strengthened by this community,
Let us pray together,

**ALL: Loving God, Holy One,
Your desire is for our wholeness and well-being.
We hold in tenderness and prayer the collective suffering of our world at this time.
We grieve precious lives lost and vulnerable lives threatened.
We ache for ourselves and our neighbors, standing before an uncertain future.
We pray: may love, not fear, go viral. Inspire our leaders to discern and choose wisely, aligned with the common good.
Help us to practice physical distancing, revealing to us new and creative ways to hold each other fast, so we may care for each other in tender solidarity.
Call us to profound trust in your faithful presence,
You, the God who does not abandon,
You, the Holy One, breathing within us, breathing among us,
breathing around us, in our beautiful yet wounded world. AMEN**

Adapted from "Prayer during a Pandemic" by Sr. Chris Koellhoffer, IHM

Blessing

Leader: And may the God of hope fill us with every comfort and joy in believing.
May the peace of Christ abound in our hearts and minds.
and may the Holy Spirit gift and guide us
(making Sign of the Cross) now and forever,

ALL: AMEN

Leader: God shepherds us, walking before us, calling us by name as we go forth to love,
to support, to care and provide for, and depend upon one another. Alleluia!
Alleluia!

ALL: Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!