



Bringing Home the Word

Fourth Sunday of Easter (A)
May 3, 2020

Our Good Shepherd's Voice

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

Saint Peter, the first pope, zealously preached the word of God, challenging the Romans and the Jews to believe. Astoundingly, on various occasions their hearts were moved and they asked, "What are we to do?" The answer from the apostles was often twofold: be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit. Both are necessary first steps.

The same is true today: We receive baptism and confirmation. We keep cultivating this gift of faith and life in the Holy Spirit, listening to Jesus and the

Spirit's promptings so they blossom and take over all of our life.

The Good Shepherd verses in John 10 reveal there are many messengers who promise fulfillment and happiness. Jesus warns that these others try to slip in the back door of our souls and trick us into following them. Initially their message is only slightly different than Jesus' message, but once they lead us out of his fold, we can end up in very distant fields, and it is a long, hard path back home.

How do we distinguish Jesus' voice from the others? Compare their words with the words of Jesus and his Church. If they don't align, beware. Another criterion is to see if there is an element of the cross and true peace. Jesus reminds us that the shepherd lays down his life for his sheep and leads them to pasture and rest. The cross, although not everything, is always a part of the shepherd's path. +

Sunday Readings

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Peter [said] to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 2:20b-25

For you had gone astray like sheep, but you have now returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

John 10:1-10

[Jesus said,] "The sheep hear his voice, as he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out."

Compare other messenger's words with the words of Jesus and his Church. If they don't align, beware.

A Word from Pope Francis

We should never forget: the Church is not a static reality, inert, an end in herself, but is on a continual journey through history, toward that ultimate and marvelous end that is the kingdom of heaven, of which the Church on earth is the seed and the beginning.

—General audience, November 26, 2014



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How often do I listen to the Good Shepherd over the other messages around me?
- How do I stay informed of what the pope and other shepherds of the Church are saying?