



“The smell of 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.”

It's obvious from these words that our role as disciples of the Gospel is, first and foremost, that of reconciling, healing and uniting our people. We are to do that, not by using the power of the Gospel to instill fear and trembling; not to denigrate people who have differing points of view or belief-systems. Nor is it to exclude others, just because their expression of faith doesn't live up to what we believe to be the norm. In short,

we are all shepherds; we need one another.

In Pope Francis Apostolic Exhortation, *Gaudete Et Exsultate* - (On The Call to Holiness in Today's World), Pope Francis reaffirmed our call to discipleship and what it means to be a shepherd: "God is eternal newness. He impels us constantly to set out anew, to pass beyond what is familiar, to the fringes and beyond. He takes us to where humanity is most wounded, where men and women, beneath the appearance of a shallow conformity, continue to seek an answer to the question of life's meaning. God is not afraid! He is fearless! He is always greater than our plans and schemes. Unafraid of the fringes, He Himself became a fringe (cf. Phil 2:6-8; Jn 1:14). So if we dare to go to the fringes, we will find him there; indeed, he is already there. Jesus is

already there, in the hearts of our brothers and sisters, in their wounded flesh, in their troubles and in their profound desolation. He is already there." (135)

Together we must find new ways to assure that all of God's people will never be without good shepherds.



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