

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

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

GLORIA

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

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,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 4:8-12

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.
Filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter said:
"Rulers of the people, and elders! If you
are questioning us today about an act of
kindness to a cripple, and asking us how he
was healed, then I am glad to tell you all, and
would indeed be glad to tell the whole people
of Israel, that it was by the name of Jesus
Christ the Nazarene, the one you crucified,
whom God raised from the dead, by this
name and by no other that this man is able
to stand up perfectly healthy, here in your
presence today. This is the stone rejected by
you the builders, but which has proved to
be the keystone. For of all the names in the
world given to men, this is the only one by
which we can be saved."

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 117

Response:

The stone which the builders rejected has
become the corner stone.
or
Alleluia!

1. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
for his love has no end.
It is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in men:
it is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in princes. (R.)

2. I will thank you for you have given
answer
and you are my saviour.
The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone.
This is the work of the Lord,
a marvel in our eyes. (R.)
3. Blessed in the name of the Lord
is he who comes.
We bless you from the house of the Lord;
I will thank you for you have given
answer
and you are my saviour.
Give thanks to the Lord for he is good;
for his love has no end. (R.)

SECOND READING

1 John 3:1-2

A reading from the first letter of St John.
Think of the love that the Father has lavished
on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.
Because the world refused to acknowledge
him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.
My dear people, we are already the children
of God
but what we are to be in the future has not
yet been revealed;
all we know is, that when it is revealed
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my own sheep and my own know me.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

John 10:11-18

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
John.

Jesus said:

"I am the good shepherd:
the good shepherd is one who lays down
his life for his sheep.
The hired man, since he is not the shepherd
and the sheep do not belong to him,
abandons the sheep and runs away
as soon as he sees a wolf coming,
and then the wolf attacks and scatters the
sheep;
this is because he is only a hired man
and has no concern for the sheep.
I am the good shepherd;
I know my own
and my own know me,
just as the Father knows me
and I know the Father;
and I lay down my life for my sheep.
And there are other sheep I have
that are not of this fold,
and these I have to lead as well.
They too will listen to my voice,
and there will be only one flock
and one shepherd.
The Father loves me,
because I lay down my life
in order to take it up again.
No one takes it from me;
I lay it down of my own free will,

and as it is in my power to lay it down,
so it is in my power to take it up again;
and this is the command I have been given
by my Father."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

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.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.
Amen.



THE MODEL SHEPHERD

(JOHN 10:11-18)

The image of the shepherd is often used in the Bible to describe the kings or other leaders of the people of Israel.

However, it is frequently used in a negative sense to accuse such people of abusing their position of authority and trust to exploit the people to their own advantage. Jesus here is contrasting himself with those who really do not care for the flock and abandon their post when the going gets tough.

Jesus describes himself as the model shepherd, one who has a deep, intimate relationship with each of the members of the flock. His commitment to the flock goes to the supreme sacrifice of laying down his life for them. The relationship between Jesus and the flock is that Jesus will freely die a violent death but take up his life again because the Father loves him. The prophet Ezekiel had looked forward to a shepherd-messiah like David, who would gather the people as one flock under one shepherd. Jesus presents himself as the one who fulfils this scripture by his unconditional self-giving and taking up his life again. But all this is at the command of the Father: in all things Jesus is obedient to the Father's will. There is also a broader dimension to the mission of Jesus: it encompasses also sheep who are not of the fold of Israel. The idea of who the Messiah is and what his mission is broadened well beyond what the people of the time were expecting. ■

LEARN

The Lord is called *The Shepherd of Israel* in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The kings and leaders of the people of Israel are described as the shepherds of the people.

The fourth Gospel presents Jesus as very much aware of the close relationship between himself and the Father.

The only commandment in the Fourth Gospel is that the disciples love one another as Jesus has loved them.

SAY

I know my own sheep and my own know me.



DO

Make a list of what you expect a model shepherd to be. Discuss this with other parishioners. Make your views known the next time a vacancy for a priest for your parish or bishop for your diocese arises.

REFLECT

Some words are used so often and in so many different contexts that they lose any real meaning. One such word is the adjective *good*. What do we mean if we describe Jesus as 'the good shepherd'? The word used in the Gospel has more the sense of *model*, *ideal* or *authentic*. What Jesus is saying is that he is the model shepherd for his disciples.

In this part of the world, the shepherd walks behind the flock, which is kept in line by a dog. In the biblical world, the shepherd walks in front and the

sheep follow. In the Gospel reading the relationship between Jesus and the disciples is compared with that of Jesus and the Father, which John the evangelist presents as one of close intimacy. Another word for shepherd is *pastor*. Pastors have a responsibility, a 'duty of care' for those members of the Church entrusted to them. Another term for the Church is the *People of God*. Perhaps we need to reflect more on the relationship between the members of the People of God and see authority more in terms

of service and charity than of power. Authority basically means enabling people to grow. If Jesus is described as the model shepherd then he is the yardstick against whom anyone who holds authority in the Church, among the People of God, is to be measured. Someone pointed out once that in our culture the flock is made up of female members controlled by a male with a black coat and white collar: Jesus' image is rather more inclusive, positive and encouraging. ■