

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 13:14.43-52

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Paul and Barnabas carried on from Perga till
they reached Antioch in Pisidia. Here they
went to the synagogue on the sabbath and
took their seats.

When the meeting broke up, many
Jews and devout converts joined Paul and
Barnabas, and in their talks with them Paul
and Barnabas urged them to remain faithful
to the grace God had given them.

The next sabbath almost the whole town
assembled to hear the word of God. When
they saw the crowds, the Jews, prompted by
jealousy, used blasphemies and contradicted
everything Paul said. Then Paul and Barnabas
spoke out boldly, “We had to proclaim the
word of God to you first, but since you have
rejected it, since you do not think yourselves
worthy of eternal life, we must turn to the
pagans. For this is what the Lord commanded
us to do when he said:

“I have made you a light for the nations,
so that my salvation may reach the ends of
the earth.”

It made the pagans very happy to hear this
and they thanked the Lord for his message;
all who were destined for eternal life became
believers. Thus the word of the Lord spread
through the whole countryside.

But the Jews worked upon some of the
devout women of the upper classes and the
leading men of the city and persuaded them
to turn against Paul and Barnabas and expel
them from their territory. So they shook the

dust from their feet in defiance and went off
to Iconium; but the disciples were filled with
joy and the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 99

Response:

We are his people, the sheep of his flock.
or
Alleluia!

1. Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before him, singing for joy. (R.)
2. Know that he, the Lord, is God.
He made us, we belong to him,
we are his people, the sheep of his flock. (R.)
3. Indeed, how good is the Lord,
eternal his merciful love.
He is faithful from age to age (R.)

SECOND READING Apocalypse 7:9.14-17

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse.

I, John, saw a huge number, impossible to
count, of people from every nation, race,
tribe and language; they were standing in
front of the throne and in front of the Lamb,
dressed in white robes and holding palms
in their hands. One of the elders said to
me, “These are the people who have been
through the great persecution, and because
they have washed their robes white again,
in the blood of the Lamb, they now stand in
front of God’s throne and serve him day and
night in his sanctuary; and the One who sits
on the throne will spread his tent over them.
They will never hunger or thirst again; neither
the sun nor scorching wind will ever plague
them, because the Lamb who is at the throne
will be their shepherd and will lead them to
springs of living water; and God will wipe
away all tears from their eyes.”

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 10:27-30

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
John.

Jesus said:

“The sheep that belong to me listen to my
voice;
I know them and they follow me.
I give them eternal life;
they will never be lost
and no one will ever steal them from me.
The Father who gave them to me is greater
than anyone,
and no one can steal from the Father.
The Father and I are one.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

(all bow during the next two lines)

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living
and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
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.

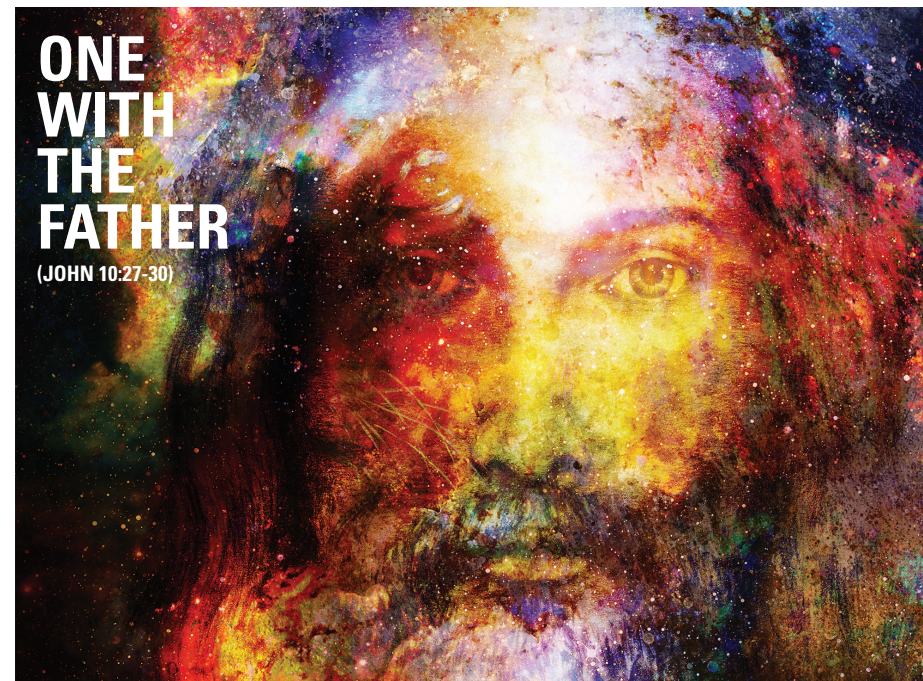
12 MAY 2019

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year C • Season Colour: White • Psalter Week 4



In our Gospel passage today, the evangelist presents us with the picture of the true disciple of Jesus: this is the person who listens to his voice, follows him, has eternal life and will never be lost.

It is through committing ourselves to Jesus that believers receive that life which is a gift of the Father. Jesus is speaking to the religious authorities at the time of the Feast of Dedication, when they celebrated the special presence of God in the Temple. Jesus tells them that he is now the visible presence of God among the people, and that it is his word which binds the person who believes not only to him, but also to God, because he and the Father are one. This statement emphasises the oneness of purpose which exists between Jesus and the One who sent him, and this is based on the bond of love and obedience between them.

This extract occurs in the wider context of the Feast of Dedication, which celebrated the re-dedication of the Temple altar after its desecration, so the theme of the presence of God runs through the section. The climax is Jesus’ declaring that now in him God is truly present to the people because he and the Father are one. In another place, Jesus tells Philip that to see him is to see the Father, which is saying the same thing in a different way. ■

DO

Look at the tabernacle in the church. Jesus is not confined there, but is present in different ways to us. If we are disciples, we will listen to his voice each day. Set some time aside to be with Jesus, remembering that anywhere will do.

SAY

Speak, Lord, I am listening.

LEARN

The Temple in Jerusalem was the place where God was regarded as being present to Israel in a special way.

The Feast of Dedication is known today as *Hannukah*.

Hannukah is celebrated in December: John the Evangelist notes that it occurs in winter.

In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus replaces the Temple as the focus of God’s presence in the world.

REFLECT

In certain western cultures, the image of *sheep* is not a particularly positive one. We hear talk of people *behaving like sheep*, or being as *silly as sheep*: the animal has become a symbol of something without a mind of its own. However, in the Gospel, this is far from the case. In using this figure, Jesus presents his disciple as someone active and decisive. First of all, the person listens to his voice: there is a difference between *hearing* something and *listening* to it. It is on the basis of this listening that the person makes the *decision to follow Jesus*. No-one is driven to become a disciple, and no-one is compelled to continue as one: the shepherd walks in front, and the sheep follow, if they wish. The passage today suggests that they follow because they know what is good for them, not in a calculating, selfish way, but because they have accepted Jesus as the Messiah and committed themselves to him in a relationship of love and obedience, a relationship which mirrors that of Jesus and the Father. The evangelist is telling us that now we meet God in the person of Jesus, not in a particular place. Jesus is present to us in many different ways, especially when we celebrate the Eucharist together and listen to the Word of God and receive the Lord in Holy Communion. Sheep are social animals, and there is one shepherd, Jesus. Anyone who holds the office of shepherd in the church today is still one of the flock and holds the staff as a delegate. We are all called to listen, to follow and to obey Jesus first and foremost. ■

