

# Getting Ready for Sunday!

21 April 2024



# The Fourth Sunday in the Season of Easter

This Sunday is called Good Shepherd Sunday



It is a day on which we pray for vocations so that people may go out to all with the Good News of God's love for them.

The message of the Gospel is spread by us when we teach people about God and also when we share the gift of God's love with one another as Jesus does in the Gospel.



## Why does Jesus compare Himself with a shepherd?

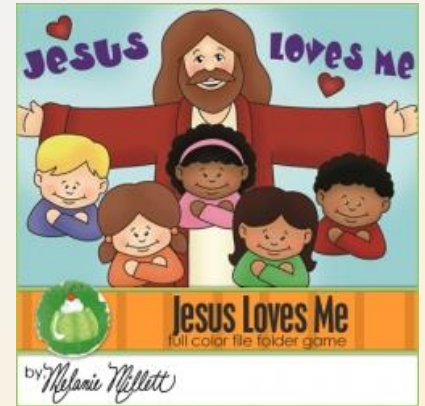
Jesus was speaking to people who were shepherds. They devoted their lives to caring for their sheep and protecting them from wild animals and disease.

The shepherds depended on their sheep for wool for clothes and for meat.

The shepherds grew to know each sheep very well as they spent all their days with them and sometimes they slept in the fields at night to protect them from harm.



# How is Jesus our Shepherd?



- Jesus cares for us.
- He knows us better than we know ourselves.
- Jesus loves us even when we stray away from Him and forget to love Him by loving one another.
- Jesus depends on us to share God's love with one another.
- Jesus shows love through us every time we allow Him.
- God counts on us to share the Good News of Love with one another!

On Good Shepherd Sunday we think about how much God loves us.

We thank God for creating us and loving us.

We allow God to depend on us when we listen to Him speaking to us in our hearts guiding us on the path of love.

We are faithful to the One who loves us when we have the courage to speak the truth about what we really believe.

Read the passage from the Gospel of St John.

As the shepherd cares for his sheep, God cares for us.

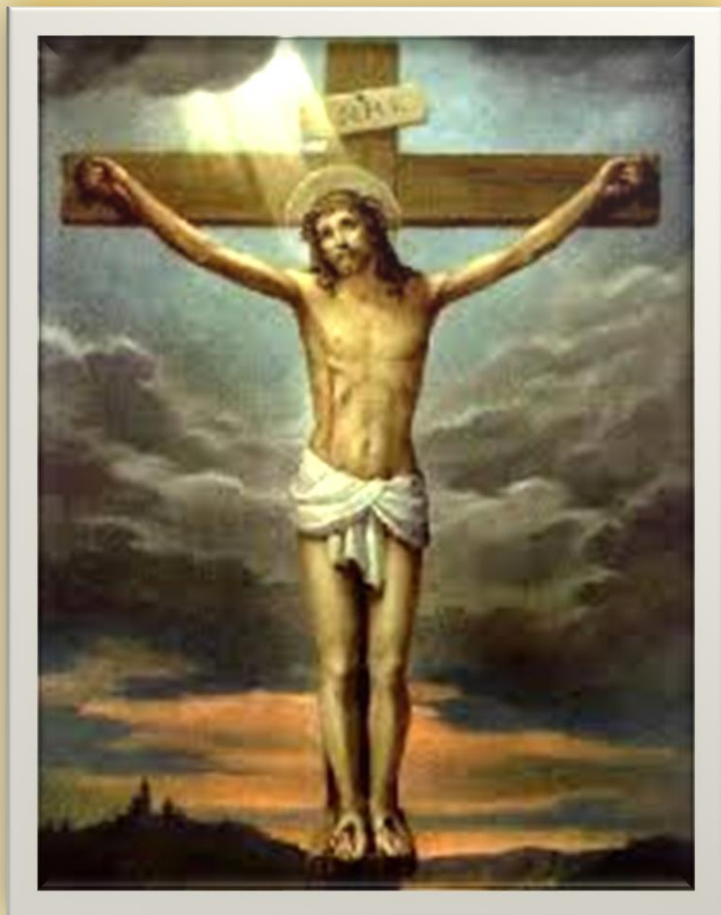
We just need to trust that God is really looking after us!

John 10:11-18

‘I am the good shepherd.



The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.



Jesus first concern is about us.  
Jesus gave His life for us and  
gives Himself for us and to us  
each day.

As followers of Jesus we are  
each called to shepherd  
others and care for others.

We are all called to love!

The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away — and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep.



Do you really know how precious you are to God?

Do you behave as a follower of Jesus at all times?

At home, school, work, on the street.....



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 the sheep.



I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice.



Every person who has been created is offered a place in God's kingdom!

So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.



Jesus chooses to walk  
with us every day of our  
lives – even on days  
when we don't see Him!

I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again.

I have received this command from my Father.’



# Bible Search

Read John 10:10-18 in your family Bible - this is the Gospel reading at Mass this Sunday.



# SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

## John 10:11-18

Our relationship with those ‘in charge’ of us changes when we sense that not only are they in charge, but they care. Remember the difference that made for you as a child, and give thanks for the caring adults who were part of your life.

The good shepherd ‘lays down his life for the sheep’. When has your care for another led you to ‘lay down your life’ for that person, e.g., as a friend, parent, spouse, son or daughter? When you have known another to do this for you?

Jesus speaks of the freedom of the Good Shepherd in laying down his life. Faced with the needs of others, we can at times feel trapped into looking after them, caught by duty, obligation or guilt. We can become like the hired hands who do a job without care for the person. Perhaps you have experienced both attitudes, caring for others under duress and by free choice. What difference did it make when you chose to care for the other, even in circumstances where you had little option?

What do these experiences of love and care in human relationships reveal to you about God’s love for you?

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# Consider



*Are you on the right path to God?*

# Praying to Jesus



Pray for the grace to be open to hearing God's call to you.



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