

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER: GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book Acts of the Apostles 4:8.12 .

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.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 117

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.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone.

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.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone.

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.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone.

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St John 3:1-2

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.

I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me. Jn 10:14
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GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 10:11-18

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.

Below are two prayers related to Jesus the Good Shepherd from Alexandria, Egypt, in the era of the Early Church. What prayer would you compose today in our 21st Century world?

<p>We ask you, Master, be our helper and defender. Rescue those of our number in distress; raise up the fallen; assist the needy; heal the sick; turn back those of your people who stray; feed the hungry; release our captives; revive the weak; encourage those who lose heart. Let all the nations realize that you are the only God, that Jesus Christ is your Son, and that we are your people and the sheep of your pasture.</p> <p>(Clement of Alexandria c. 150 -215 C.E.)</p>	<p>O Sovereign and Almighty Lord, look down from heaven on your Church, on all your people, and on all your flock. Save us all, your unworthy servants, the sheep of your fold. Give us your peace, your help, and your love, and send to us the gift of your Holy Spirit, that with a pure heart and a good conscience we may salute one another without hypocrisy, and with no hostile purpose, but guileless and pure in one spirit, in the bond of peace and love, one body and one spirit, in one faith, even as we have been called in one hope of our calling, that we may all meet in the divine and boundless love, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom you are blessed.</p> <p>(The Divine Liturgy of St. Mark) Alexandria 4th Century)</p>
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