

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

### Sunday, April 21

Acts 4:8-12  
Ps 118:1,8-9,21-23,26,28-29  
1 Jn 3:1-2  
Jn 10:11-18

### Monday, April 22

Acts 11:1-18  
Ps 42:2-3; 43:3-4  
Jn 10:1-10

### Tuesday, April 23

Acts 11:19-26  
Ps 87:1b-7  
Jn 10:22-30

### Wednesday, April 24

Acts 12:24 – 13:5a  
Ps 67:2-3,5-6,8  
Jn 12:44-50

### Thursday, April 25

**St. Mark, Evangelist**  
1 Pt 5:5b-14  
Ps 89:2-3,6-7,16-17  
Mk 16:15-20

### Friday, April 26

Acts 13:26-33  
Ps 2:6-11b  
Jn 14:1-6

### Saturday, April 27

Acts 13:44-52  
Ps 98:1-4  
Jn 14:7-14

As a child, I always loved hearing about Jesus the Good Shepherd and seeing pictures of our Lord holding His staff in one hand, surrounded by a herd of fluffy sheep, and with one wayward sheep always curled around His shoulders. I was comforted by this image of Jesus, who loved all His sheep, even those who lost their way and took off in the wrong direction.

This parable offers a much deeper meaning to me now as an adult. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who laid down His life to help me – a sinner who is so prone to going astray. He suffered, died on the cross, and rose from the dead to lead me and all of God’s children (His sheep) on the right path to heaven.

He knows me by name and restores my soul with grace from the Sacraments. He safeguards my steps from the snares of the Evil One through the guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit alive in the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church. He sometimes allows me to make wrong turns, but because I know and love Him, I can trust that

He is always right there, ready to bring me back into the fold.

Through the living waters of Baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit, Christians are called and empowered to become like Jesus and be good shepherds, too. In His image, we must forgive those who are lost and do our part to bring them back into God’s embrace. We must live our lives in joy and compassion for others – especially the poor, the downcast, and the lost – who most need God’s mercy.



Trusting in the wise voice and directions of the Good Shepherd, we must never be afraid to speak God’s truth and wisdom with love and grace to correct those who are astray and having trouble finding their way. As worthy shepherds, we must pray for courage to stay loyal to Christ, the Good Shepherd, in our everyday thoughts, words, and actions, whether alone, with family, at work, at church, in politics, in science, or interacting with media.

Remember that Jesus and the Church have been associated with controversy from the beginning, but He promises victory in the end. We must hold on tightly in faith, help others know and love Christ, and shepherd them into the loving gate of our Savior.

### Reflect & Discuss:

- † In which areas of your life do you most need shepherding to stay on the right path to heaven?
- † How are you being a good shepherd to the poor, downcast, and lost?
- † What are some ways we can hear the voice of the Good Shepherd? How can we protect ourselves from being snatched by Satan?
- † How do we lay down our lives for others when we are a good shepherd?