

Good Shepherds

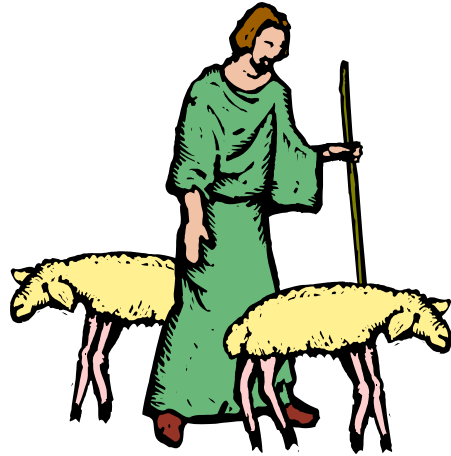
Leader: Let us remember that

All: We are in the Holy Presence of God.

Reading One

Jesus, the healer, is the good shepherd
who teaches us to walk
in the paths of the Beatitudes.
As the healer calls us to heal,
so the shepherd calls us forth
to be shepherds.

The extraordinary role of the shepherd
is to listen to the flock without fear,
to understand their language,
to give to each according to his need,
to be wounded when one of the flock is
wounded,
to be in anguish when one of them is in anguish,
to seek out those who have gone astray and bring them back,
to be firm when it is necessary to be firm . . .



It is when people are *not* taught
to pray and enter into the mystical movement of Christianity,
when they are *not* “called for” to experience real love,
that they turn to other pastures
which do not really nourish.

They turn away because they have not learned from their shepherd
how to communicate with God,
how to listen to the Spirit,
how to discern the things which are God and the things which are not . . .

If there is no real pasture,
people will die of depression, of starvation.
They will die thirsting.

We must learn to grow in shepherdhood.
This cannot be done without the grace of the Spirit.
(Jean Vanier)

Reflection

Reading Two

From John 10 – The Good Shepherd

I came
that they may have life
and have it to the full.
I am the good shepherd;
the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.

I am the good shepherd.
I know my sheep
and my sheep know me
in the same way that the Father knows me
and I know the Father;
for these sheep I will give my life.

The Father loves me for this:
that I lay down my life to take it up again.
No one takes it from me;
I lay it down freely.
I have power to lay it down,
and I have power to take it up again.
This command I received from my Father.

Moment of Quiet

Reading Three

From the Writings of John Baptist de La Salle

Jesus compares those who have care of souls
to a good shepherd who is very careful of his sheep.
One of the qualities which our Lord says distinguishes him
is that he knows them all individually.
That is also one of the essential qualities required
of those who instruct others,
for they must get to know their pupils,
and discern the manner in which to act towards them.

Some require great mildness,
while others need to be directed with firmness.
Some require much patience; others need to be goaded on.
It is necessary to punish and reprehend some,
in order to correct their defects,
whereas others need to be watched continually
lest they should wander and perish.
This varied conduct
must depend upon knowledge and discernment of character,

and this grace you must beg of God most earnestly,
as being one of the most essential for you
in the direction of those over whom you have charge.
If you show the firmness of a father
in withdrawing them from evil,
you should always show the tenderness of a mother
in gathering them together,
and in doing them all the good in your power.
It often happens
that the pupils have not the strength of body or mind
to carry the burdens that often crush them.
They need the light of watchful guides
to lead them on the path of salvation:
guides who have an adequate understanding
of what God expects of young people,
and their usual shortcomings.
You can perform miracles . . .
by touching the hearts
of the children entrusted to your care . . .
These are the miracles
which God gives you the power to perform
and which, indeed, he expects of you.
Do you build on
the affection the children have for you
to attract them to God?

Petitions

Response: My Shepherd is the Lord; nothing, indeed, shall I want.

Our Father . . .

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle

All: Pray for us.

Leader: Live, Jesus, in our hearts.

All: Forever!

(Arranged by Brother Louis Welker)