



For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent* that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.

John was writing his eye-witness account of Jesus some thirty years later than the other three accounts, possibly around 95AD. There had been time for growth, reflection and observation. Many thousands of Christians had by then lost their lives for their faith in the Lord Jesus, both in Rome and in Jerusalem. John himself had been in prison and was now in exile, the last of Jesus' twelve apostles to remain alive.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

## **John 10: 1-17**

Douay Rheims Version

*Christ is the door and the good shepherd. He and his Father are one.*

1. Amen, amen, I say to you: He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber.
2. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
3. To him the porter openeth: and the sheep hear his voice. And he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out.
4. And when he hath let out his own sheep, he goeth before them: and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice.
5. But a stranger they follow not, but fly from him, because they know not the voice of strangers.
6. This proverb Jesus spoke to them. But they understood not what he spoke.

submit to it from love of, and obedience to the Father, and therefore to be loved, honoured, and exalted, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, &c. (Phil ii. 10).

*I lay down My life, i.e., My soul.* So S. Augustine and others, who from this passage prove that Christ had a human soul, in opposition to Apollinarius, who maintained that His Divinity was in the place of a soul. But others understand by it "*life*," which is caused by the union of soul and body. It comes to the same thing. *That I may take it again.* I do not destroy it but only lay it aside for a short time, that I may rise and take it again. S. Cyril refers back to the words "My Father loveth Me." He loves Me not merely because I set My sheep free by My death, but also because I quicken them by My rising again. As S. Paul says, Rom. iv. 25.

love, and is loved with a like love by them in return. But there will be here also a kind of equality, if with Maldonatus you explain it thus: "When Christ says, *I know My sheep*, He speaks as God; but when He says, *The Father knoweth Me, and I know My Father*, He speaks of Himself as man. For just as Christ (as God) knows His sheep, and His sheep as men know Him in return; so the Father, as God, knows the Son as man, and the Son, as man, acknowledges His Father, and calls Him *Father*, as we do ourselves. 'I ascend to My Father, and your Father'" (John xx. 17).

*And I lay down My life for My sheep.* This refers back to verse 14. "I know My sheep," I love them, *i.e.*, most ardently, and therefore I lay down, *i.e.*, I will shortly lay down, My life for them. He put in the words, "as the Father knoweth Me," to represent the source and the intensity of His love for His people, by His love for the Father, for it was this love which urged Him to lay down His life for His sheep. But the words "I lay down" signify that the death of Christ was not compulsory, but voluntary, self-chosen, and even loved for their salvation. So Leontius. And Christ thus expresses Himself below (ver. 18). "No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." And the words also signify, "I lay it down for a time, in order to take it again." The death of Christ therefore was not so much a death as the placing His soul for three days in Limbus.

Ver. 16.—*And other sheep I have, &c. Other sheep, i.e.*, those who will be My sheep. This is spoken by anticipation. He means the Gentiles, and thus predicts their call and conversion, to show that He was to be the King and Shepherd of all nations, just as up to this time He had been of the Jews: and that, consequently, He did not care (comparatively) whether the Jews (few as they were in number) would be unbelieving and rebellious, since He was about to put countless Gentiles in their place. So Rupertus, who adds, "and they will hear My voice," striking quietly at the Jews.

*And there will be one fold, and one shepherd.* Some suppose that in the end of the world, God will convert all the Jews by Elias, and all the Gentiles by Enoch, and thus there will become one Church, made up of them both, and one Pastor, Christ, and His Vicar the Supreme Pontiff, who will be called the Angelic Pastor. (See the list of hopes, described symbolically, in the life of S. Malachi.) But they are in error. For neither will Elias convert all the Jews, nor Enoch all the Gentiles. For there will be then many unbelievers and followers of antichrist. But this is far from being the meaning of Christ. It was, that after His death and resurrection His apostles would be dispersed among all nations, and convert them, so that both Jews and Gentiles would be gathered into one Church of believers, under one Shepherd, Christ, and His Vicar, the Roman Pontiff. This is not to be looked forward to as something future, for it took place in the time of Constantine the first Christian emperor, who christianised nearly all the nations which were subject to him. The Apostle graphically sets this before us (Eph. ii.)

Ver. 17.—*Therefore doth My Father love me, &c.* Lest the Jews should despise Him as a mere man who would die on the Cross, He meets the objection by saying that His death would be glorious, and an object of desire, because He could of His own accord

7. Jesus therefore said to them again: Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.
8. All others, as many as have come, are thieves and robbers: and the sheep heard them not.
9. I am the door. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved: and he shall go in and go out, and shall find pastures.
10. The thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill and to destroy. I am come that they may have life and may have it more abundantly.
11. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep.
12. But the hireling and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep and flieth: and the wolf casteth and scattereth the sheep,
13. And the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling: and he hath no care for the sheep.
14. I am the good shepherd: and I know mine, and mine know me.
15. As the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father: and I lay down my life for my sheep.
16. And other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring. And they shall hear my voice: And there shall be one fold and one shepherd.
17. Therefore doth the Father love me: because I lay down my life, that I may take it again.
18. No man taketh it away from me: but I lay it down of myself. And I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father.
19. A dissension rose again among the Jews for these words.
20. And many of them said: He hath a devil and is mad. Why hear you him?
21. Others said: These are not the words of one that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?
22. And it was the feast of the dedication at Jerusalem: and it was winter.
23. And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch.
24. The Jews therefore came round about him and said to him: How long dost thou hold our souls in suspense? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.
25. Jesus answered them: I speak to you, and you believe not: the works that I do in the name of my Father, they give testimony of me.
26. But you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep.
27. My sheep hear my voice. And I know them: and they follow me.
28. And I give them life everlasting: and they shall not perish for ever. And no man shall pluck them out of my hand.
29. That which my Father hath given me is greater than all: and no one can snatch them out of the hand of my Father.
30. I and the Father are one.
31. The Jews then took up stones to stone him.
32. Jesus answered them: Many good works I have shewed you from my Father. For which of those works do you stone me?

33. The Jews answered him: For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy: and because that thou. being a, man, makest thyself God.
34. Jesus answered them: Is it not written in your law: I said, you are gods?
35. If he called them gods to whom the word of God was spoken; and the scripture cannot be broken:
36. Do you say of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world: Thou blasphemest; because I said: I am the Son of God?
37. If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.
38. But if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works: that you may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in the Father.
39. They sought therefore to take him: and he escaped out of their hands.
40. And he went again beyond the Jordan, into that place where John was baptizing first. And there he abode.
41. And many resorted to him: and they said: John indeed did no sign.
42. But all things whatsoever John said of this man were true. And many believed in him.

Ver. 1.—*Verily, verily* (that is in truth, most truly and most assuredly), *I say unto you, He that entereth not, &c.* He puts forth this parable to show who He is, and who are His rivals and adversaries. The occasion for it was because the Pharisees had cast out of the synagogue for his confession of Christ the blind man whom He had healed. By doing this they signified that Jesus was not the Messiah, but a false prophet; and consequently that they who believed in Him, as the blind man who had been cured did, erred in their belief, and wandered away from the synagogue, and were apostates from their own Church. Christ therefore puts forth the parable of the door of the sheepfold; to show by it, that so far from His being a false prophet, all others who enter not by Him as the door of the sheepfold into the Church of God, are deceivers and counterfeits. And that consequently the synagogue of the Pharisees was not the synagogue of God, but of Satan. Whereas the true Church of God is the Christian Church which Christ founded and substituted for the Jewish Church, and consequently the blind man when excommunicated from the synagogue, entered by faith in Christ into the true, *i.e.*, the Christian Church.

In order that the reader may easily comprehend the whole parable, I will here give a summary of it. (1.) The sheepfold is the Church of God. (2.) The owner is God the Father. (3.) The door is Christ, or faith in Him, who is inclosed by the Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets as by a door firm-fastened with its bolts. (4.) The porter is the Holy Spirit. (5.) The sheep are not merely the predestinated, as S. Augustine held, but all the faithful that are within the Church. (6.) The true Pastors and Prelates are those who enter through Christ. (7.) To these the porter, *i.e.*, the Holy Spirit, openeth, because faith in Christ, by the which they enter, is the gift of the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit gives them true and lawful power, so that what they do is ratified by God. (8.) They lead out the sheep, *i.e.*, the faithful, into the pastures of sound doctrine, grace, and virtues, go before them by their own example of a good life, and call them by their names, because they have a care for them severally, and exhort, stimulate, and compel them one by one to better things. (9.) He who enters not into the

S. Matt. x. 23. Also S. Augustine (*Epis. clxxx. ad Honoratum*). I use on this matter the words of S. Gregory the more freely, because he had full experience of those things in his own person.

Ver. 13.—*The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.* As though it were said directly, he who loves not the sheep, but worldly gain, cannot stand firm when the sheep are in danger. For while he is aiming at honour, and rejoicing in worldly gain, he is afraid of exposing himself to danger, lest he should lose that which he loves. For no one takes such diligent care for that which is another's as he does for his own. And therefore the hireling cares more for his own life than for the sheep which are not his; and flies when the wolf comes, as caring more for his own life than for the sheep.

Ver. 14.—*I am the good shepherd, and know My sheep.* Christ knows His sheep not merely with the watchful and tender eyes of His Godhead (as 8. Cyril says), but also with the eyes of His manhood (for it is as man that He is the Pastor of His Church). He knows who are His faithful ones, what are their gifts, and also what are their weaknesses, that He may increase the one, and heal the other. He knows them therefore not merely speculatively, but practically, and heaps on them all His gifts, benefits, and graces.

*And am known of Mine,* with the eyes of faith, hope, and charity, because they believe in Me, hope in Me, and love Me above all things. "Because I love them, they love Me in return, for love is the loadstone of love: if thou wishest to be loved, thou thyself must love. Love is the powerful allurement of love." So Theophylact. And besides this His love of us, He inspires in us love for Him in return. And this love is our highest good, leading us to heaven and making us blessed.

Ver. 15.—*As the Father knoweth Me, &c.* By this comparison Christ points out both the origin and also the greatness of the love which He bestows on His sheep. The boundless knowledge and love which exists between the Father and Myself, is the source of the love which exists between Myself and My faithful ones. Both because divine and uncreated love is the source of all human and created love; and also because it is the Father's will that I should love My faithful ones with great and special love, as He loves Me, and I love Him with boundless affection; for He wishes to adopt My faithful ones through Me who am His Son by nature, and He therefore loves them supremely as His children. And I do the same, because I submit in all things to the love and will of the Father; nay more, My love is the same as the Father's, as our will, our nature, and our Godhead is the same.

But here note the word "as" signifies similarity, not equality. For the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father with uncreated, and therefore infinite love. But the Son, as man, loves His own with a created and finite

some other qualified person to administer the sacraments to the sick, as did S. Charles Borromeo: and for this reason was canonised. And so also all the apostles, excepting S. John, suffered martyrdom for the sake of the faithful committed to their care. And so also nearly all the Roman Pontiffs down to S. Sylvester. But the leader of them all was Christ, who alone, as the best of Shepherds, laid down His life as a ransom, while all the others did so merely to manifest their faith, and as a pattern of virtue.

Ver. 12.—*But he that is an hireling, &c.* An hireling seeks not the good of the sheep but merely his own profit. “Hirelings are they,” says S. Augustine, “who seek their own things, and not the things of Christ and of the sheep.” So too S. Basil. But the apostles, though they fed not their own sheep, but the sheep of Christ, were not hirelings, because they sought not their own temporal gain, but the spiritual and eternal gain of the faithful. “He is called a hireling, and not a shepherd,” says S. Gregory (*Hom. xiv.*), “who feeds the Lord’s sheep, not from deepest love, but for worldly gain. The hireling is he who holds the post of a shepherd, but seeks not to gain souls; is eager for earthly advantages, rejoices in the honour of the prelacy, feeds on temporal gains, delights in the reverence paid to him by men.”

*Seeth the wolf coming.* “For in a time of tranquillity,” says S. Gregory, “very often the hireling, as well as the true shepherd, stands on guard over the flock. But the approach of the wolf shows the temper of mind with which they did so. The wolf attacks the sheep when the violent and the spoiler oppress those who are faithful and humble. But he who seemed to be a shepherd and was not, leaves the sheep and runs away, because through fear for himself he does not venture to withstand his injustice.”

*Fleeth:* “Not by change of place,” says S. Gregory, “but by withdrawing support. He flies, because he saw injustice and held his peace: he flies, because he conceals himself by silence. To whom the prophet well says, “Ye have not gone up against him, nor raised up a wall for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord” (Ezek. xiii. 5).

*And the wolf catcheth them, i.e.* A heretic, or any wicked man, who strives to pervert the faithful by word or example, or (as S. Gregory says) “the devil, who seizes them when he draws away this man to luxury, inflames another with avarice, puffs up another with pride, parts asunder others through anger, stimulates another with envy, supplants another by deceit. The devil therefore scatters the flock when he kills the faithful by temptations. But the hireling is not inflamed by zeal against such attacks, is not enkindled by any warmth of love. Because by looking after mere outward advantages, he carelessly takes no account of the inward injury which is done to the flock.”

And hence, Christ leaves it to be gathered by contrast that the good shepherd when he sees the wolf coming neither flies nor forsakes his sheep, but stands firm and fights for them even to death, and in this way lays down his life for them. But when it is allowable for a pastor to fly when persecuted, and when not, see notes on

sheepfold through Christ, but by leaping over the wall, or breaking through a window or wall, is a thief and robber of the sheep, that is, of the faithful: for he is busy in killing and destroying them. The other matters are mere ornamental additions, and are not to be applied in illustration of the subject.

Let us consider these points one by one, and review them again.

*He that entereth not by the door, &c.* Such were Judas of Galilee and Theudas (Acts v. 36, 37), and others who pretended that they were the Messiah, or endeavoured to arrogate to themselves that which specially belonged to the Messiah. And such, too, the Scribes and Pharisees were beginning to be, who before this had received legitimate authority from God through the merits of Christ, to teach and govern His people; and were therefore His true Pastors and Teachers. But by opposing themselves to Christ, now present among them, and by turning away the people from Him, they became wolves, nay thieves and robbers of the faithful. So S. Augustine, and from him the Gloss. Against the arrogance of the Pharisees, who boasted they could see, He brings forward this similitude, which shows that neither wisdom nor a good life can avail aught except through Him. And S. Chrysostom says: “By the phrase, *another way*, He signifies the Scribes who taught the doctrines and commandments of men, and transgressed the law.” Such were the false prophets of old, and heretics now, of whom Jeremiah writes (xxiii. 21). Hear S. Augustine, “Let pagans, or heretics, or Jews say, ‘We live well;’ if they enter not by the door, what does it profit them? And they are to be said not to live well who either know not the end of good living through blindness, or else contemn it through pride of heart.”

Tropologically:—S. Augustine, “Lowly is the door, even Christ. He who enters by this door must needs be humble, in order that he may be able to enter without hurting his head by striking it against the lintel. But he who humbly enters not himself, but wishes to climb up by the wall, is exalted only that he may fall.” And the same S. Augustine (*Serm. xlix., de Verb. Dom.*) says, “He enters by the door who imitates Christ and His humility. He is a ‘thief’ who strives to steal away the sheep from Christ, and claim them for himself. He is also a ‘robber,’ because he kills the souls of the faithful, and hands them over to hell.” And so S. Augustine (*in loc.*), “He is a thief who calls ‘his own’ that which is another’s.” “By making the sheep of God his own,” says the Gloss. “He is a ‘robber’ because he kills what he has stolen,” says S. Augustine.

Tropologically:—Salmeron says humorously (*Tract*, p. 88), “Men enter ecclesiastical benefices by various means. (1.) By the royal gate, courtiers as recommended by great men. (2.) By the golden gate. (3.) By the gate of consanguinity. (4.) By the gate of gifts (simony). (5.) By the gate of doing service, those who by their obsequiousness are promoted by bishops to

benefices. They lie in sickness and wait for the moving of the waters, that is for the vacant post. For he who is first gains favour with the successor, and obtains the benefice.”

Ver. 2.—*But he that entereth*, &c. By the door S. Chrysostom understands the Holy Scriptures. “For these,” he says, “lay open the knowledge of God, protect the sheep, drive away wolves, by precluding access to heretics.” So also Theophylact, Leontius, and Euthymius. And also Theodorus of Heraclea (*in Cat.*), who gives also a further reason. “Scripture is the door, because he is a true pastor to whom the door gives ingress, that is on whom Scripture confers authority, and thus secures his acceptance.” Other fathers regard Christ as *the door*, as He Himself says expressly. But you will say, Christ is the shepherd of the sheep, therefore He cannot be a door. For the shepherd enters by the door, therefore He cannot Himself be the door. S. Augustine replies; “The Lord Himself is the pastor and the door. He opens Himself who expounds Himself, and the porter is the Holy Spirit, of whom the Lord says, ‘He will teach you all truth.’ Christ therefore, who is the truth, is the door, and He who teacheth the truth openeth the door.” And the Gloss says, “All who hold and teach the truth are one shepherd in Christ the Shepherd.” Christ retained for Himself alone the name of *door*, for the sheep to enter in to God. But the shepherd entereth the door. For Christ Himself and other preachers preach Christ. But you may say more simply with Maldonatus, that Christ the shepherd enters by the door, *i.e.*, by Himself, into the Church, because He enters by His own authority, but others by authority derived from Him. But it is not possible in a parable to make all expressions fit in exactly. Moreover, Syrians and Hebrews delight in parables, heaping them up one on another, and running them into each other. As Christ in this place mixes up the similes of the door and the shepherd.

Ver. 3.—*To him the porter openeth*. (1.) That is Moses, as bearing testimony to Christ, says S. Chrysostom and others. (See chap. v. 46.) (2.) S. Cyril thinks that it means the angel who presides over the whole Church (S. Michael, as is supposed). (3.) The genuine meaning (according to S. Augustine, Chrysostom, and many others) is, that it means the Holy Ghost, “for the Scriptures opened by Him point out Christ as the Shepherd,” says Theophylact. Or rather the Holy Ghost opened a door for Christ into the Church, when He constituted Him the Pastor of the Church, confirmed His authority by His testimony, His grace, and miracles, as when He descended on Him in the form of a dove at His baptism, and afterwards through Him gave sight to the blind, healed the sick, and raised the dead. And He also places over the Church all other Pastors whatsoever, the lawful successors of Christ, and causes them to be acknowledged and accepted, and by them brings in all the other faithful into the Church. He also exposes the frauds of heretics, and causes them to be expelled from the Church.

*And the sheep hear his voice*. Just as sheep when they hear the call of the shepherd, so do Christian people acknowledge the true pastor (and those whom He substitutes as His deputies), listen to His voice, and follow Him in all things. S. Augustine, and Bede after him, understand by the sheep only the predestinated, for they are called sheep, and are distinguished from the goats (Matt. xxiii. 33). But this relates to

ancestors of Christ, were shepherds, learning thereby (says Philo) to be shepherds of men, &c. “If therefore thou wishest to know and to discharge the office of a true Pastor, see how a shepherd treats his sheep. Be so eminent in doctrine and sanctity among thy faithful ones, as to appear like a rational pastor among the irrational sheep, and as an angel among men.” (S. Chrysostom) He attends to his sheep one by one; let him lead them into richer pastures. He goes before them by his virtuous example, as S. Paul exhorts Titus (Tit. ii. 7). As a parish priest he drives away all heretics and hurtful persons. And let him feed his flock with sound doctrines and sacraments, and not fatten himself on the milk of his flock (Ezek. xxxiv. 2). Let him not be mercenary, seeking his own profit, paying court to the well-to-do and noble, and despising the rustics and mean of his flock. For Christ went about villages and towns, preaching the Gospel to the poor (Matt. xi.). Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, was a noble example of this; he refused to exchange his poor bishoprick for a wealthier one, saying that he could render a better account at the day of judgment for his few sheep and small gains than he could for greater ones. For he said, “If men did but know how exact an account would be required, they would not seek to obtain great and wealthy bishoprics.” (Sanders *in Schism. Angl.*) A good shepherd tenderly feeds and fosters the lambs and delicate ones of his flock (see Ezek. xxxiv. 4). And so does a parish priest and a bishop. (See the life of S. Abraham written by S. Ephrem.) He came from being an anchorite to be the pastor of a wild and barbarous people, and though cruelly entreated by them, brought them by his indomitable patience, gentleness, and charity, to submit to the laws of Christ.

Jacob, like a true shepherd, watched over his flock by day and night (Gen. xxxi. 40); and shepherds were watching over their flocks by night when Christ was born. So too should a parish priest or a bishop vigilantly watch over his flock, as his first duty. A shepherd risks his own life in guarding his sheep. So should a parish priest, when persecution or pestilence threatens; as did SS. Athanasius, Chrysostom, Basil, Ambrose. Lastly, S. Peter, the chief pastor of the Church, lays down notes for the pastors under him (1 Pet. v. 2). See also S. Gregory (*in Pastoralis*), S. Bernard (*de Consider. ad Eugenium*), and S. Augustine (*Tract de Pastoribus et Ovibus*).

All these duties are summed up in charity, for charity supremely loves God, and for His sake the faithful committed to its care by God. (See also chap. xxi. 15.)

*The good Shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep*. This does not relate so much to the parable itself, as to that which is signified by it. For the natural Shepherd ought to count his own life of greater value than the lives of his sheep. And yet he ought to protect his sheep even at the risk of his life. But the shepherd of souls is bound, by his duty, to expose his bodily life to danger, for the spiritual life of the faithful committed to his charge. And hence he is bound to stand by them in the time of the plague, or provide

their mind with devotions, outwardly they satiate themselves with good works.” And lastly, Theophylact says, “He will enter in who has a care for the inward man; he will go out who mortifies his members upon earth.”

Analogically, Rupertus says, “He enters the Church by faith, to find therein pastures; he will go out when at death he migrates therefrom into heaven.” “He enters,” says S. Augustine, “into the Church through the door of faith, and goes forth through the same door of living faith into eternal life, where he will find pasture.” And S. Gregory, “He will enter into faith, he will go forth to hope, and will find pasture in eternal satiety.”

Ver. 10.—*The thief cometh not*, &c. He shows what is the end and aim of him whom before He called a thief, and what on the contrary was His own. The thief and robber of the sheep,—as for instance a heretic or schismatic, a Scribe or Pharisee, or especially a false-Christ,—comes to carry off the sheep (*i.e.*, the faithful) from God and the Church, whose property they are, to hand them over to the synagogue of Satan, and there kill them by heresy and sin, and cast them into hell. But I who am the true Shepherd of the sheep (*i.e.*, of the faithful) came down from heaven, not for My own sake, but for that of the faithful, that being freed by Me, they may have the life of grace, even yet more abundantly. The word *περισσὸν* may be taken either as an adverb (*abundantly*), or as an adjective (*abundant*), that is, *surpassing, exceeding all measure*, that is, that they may abound in My doctrine and grace, and may live thereby, quick in spirit, enriched with spiritual gifts both in this world by grace, and in the world to come by glory. So S. Cyril and others. Rupertus adds, “that Christians may have more abundant grace than the Jews under the old law.” This abounding life of the spirit, inspired by Christ, you may see in S. Peter and the other Apostles, in Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, &c. Hence the glowing language of S. Paul, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ,” &c. (Rom. viii.)

Ver. 11.—*I am the good Shepherd*, &c. I, the one only Prince of Shepherds, who will lay down My life for My sheep, to redeem them by My death from death, and confer on them both present and eternal life. Neither prophets, nor apostles, nor any one else could do this. For though they were slain for the sake of the faithful, yet they did not redeem them, sanctify, or beatify them. So Rupertus, Chrysostom, &c. S. Augustine adds that the prophets and apostles are counted as one and the same shepherd with Christ, as being under Him, sent also and guided and protected by Him. Christ therefore is that special and singular Pastor foretold by Ezekiel xxxiv. 23. (See notes *in loc.*)

Christ passes from the parable of the *door* to the more striking parable of the *Shepherd*. He is the *door* by which the sheep enter, and also the *Shepherd* of the sheep: that is not any ordinary one, but the chief, special, and Divine Shepherd. And He enters through the door, that is, by Himself and His own authority.

Besides this Christ rejoices in the title of Shepherd, as being most appropriate and most sweet. He used to be thus represented in very ancient pictures, at Rome, as carrying a sheep on His shoulders. Many of the patriarchs, who were types and

the judgment when the elect and saved are separated from the reprobate. But the present passage relates to the Church militant, where the elect are mingled with the reprobate, and cannot be separated. Both then are called sheep. The sheep then are all the faithful. For they are all of them in the Church, and acknowledge, love, and worship Christ as their Shepherd.

*And calleth His own sheep by name, i.e.*, one by one. For the shepherd looks after them singly, and calls them, both in a body and separately, to follow Him to the pasture. And if any of them be sick He takes it out by itself, gives remedies, and if necessary carries it on His shoulders. Moreover, skilful shepherds commonly give names to their sheep and other animals, and call to them by their names. And in like manner Christ and every pastor give names to Christians at their baptism, and call them by them. He also takes care of them one by one, so as to feed them by His example and the Holy Sacraments, and thus leads them to salvation and heavenly glory.

Leontius observes that Christ here sets forth eight signs and duties of a true pastor; that he enters by the door, that the Porter opens to him, that he can address his sheep by their several names, that he leads forth his sheep, that he goes before them, that his sheep follow him, and that he lays down his life for the sheep. Such was S. Chrysostom, who, speaking on his banishment, thus addresses his people (*Hom. xi.*), “Ye are my father, ye are my mother, ye are my life, ye are my grace. If ye make progress, I am delighted. Ye are my crown, my riches, my treasure. I am prepared to be offered a thousand times for you; nor need you thank me for this. I am only discharging a debt. For a good pastor ought to lay down his life for his sheep. For to such an one death brings immortal life.”

*And leads them forth* to the pastures, which are not without, but within the fold, that is in the Church itself. For in the Church the pastor teaches the people, celebrates Mass, baptizes, administers the Sacraments, &c. Besides, the Church is the assembly of the faithful, and therefore where the faithful are there also is the Church, or a part thereof.

Ver. 4.—*And when he leadeth forth his sheep* (to the pastures) *he goeth before them*, to lead the way, to defend them from the wolf and the spoiler, and to lead those that follow him by a direct and convenient road to better pastures. And so in like manner Christ and every true pastor (1.) go before the faithful in their way to heaven by the example of a holy life. Let a pastor therefore consider that he ought to be the leader and guide of the faithful in sanctity, to surpass them all, to give to all a bright pattern of virtues, so that looking on him, they may follow him to greater heights, as S. Peter says (1 Epist. chap. v. 3). (2.) A pastor by his vigilance and energy protects the faithful from heretics, scandals, and other evils. (3.) He points out the straight way to heaven, and feeds and nurtures them with the best advice he can.

Analogically. St Augustine says, He who went before the sheep is He who being raised from the dead, dieth no more, and who said to the Father, "I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." (John xvii. 24)

*And the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.* They distinguish his voice from that of others, and therefore follow it.

Ver. 5.—*But a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers, i.e.,* of heretics, Jews, heathens, and all wicked and deceitful men, for the genuine sheep of Christ fly from them as from wolves.

Ver. 6.—*This parable spake Jesus unto them, but they knew not what things they were which he spake unto them.* In the Greek *παρομοίον*, a similitude, proverb. (See note on Prov. i. 5.) The Pharisees and Jews, against whom He launched it (and the apostles also), did not understand it, as being involved and obscure.

Ver. 7.—*Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.* Maldonatus thinks that Christ here speaks of two doors, the door of the house, *i.e.*, Holy Scriptures, and the door of the sheepfold, which is Christ. He believes that the word *door* is used in two senses, one by which the shepherds themselves, and the other by which the sheep enter. But this distinction is more subtil than solid. For Christ speaks in both cases of one and the same door, that is of the sheepfold. What He said obscurely and parabolically (ver. 1) He explained in the parable. "He opened," says S. Augustine, "that which was closed. He is the door. Let us enter that we may rejoice in having so done." This distinction evades indeed one difficulty, *i.e.*, how Christ enters as a shepherd through the door; that is, how He enters the door of the Church by Scripture witnessing to Him. But it does not escape the other difficulty—how the same person is both the shepherd and the door. We must say, therefore, that He united together two parables (as was said above, ver. 2). For Christ intended to teach two things. First, that no one could enter into the Church, and afterwards into heaven, that is be justified and sanctified, except through Him. This He shows by the parable of the *door*. For as there is no ingress into the fold except through the door, so there is no entrance into the Church, militant and triumphant, except through Christ; and secondly, that He is the true *Shepherd*, as laying down His life for the sheep; but that the others were hirelings, whom the sheep ought not to follow. This He sets forth by the parable of the shepherd. But because this latter subject is connected with the former, He mixes up the two parables together.

Ver. 8.—*All that ever came before me were thieves and robbers.* What then! were all the prophets thieves and robbers? S. Augustine (*contra Faustum*, xvi. 12, and S. Jerome, *lib. ii. contra Pelag.*) replies that the prophets came not of their own accord, but were sent by God. And again they were not sent in addition to Christ, but with Christ, as His precursors, and announcing His advent. They were therefore not contrary to Christ, but counted as one with Him, as having come for His sake, and by His order and guidance. "They came with the Word of God. He sent them as the heralds of Him who was to come, and He possessed the hearts of those whom He had sent." Euthymius adds, "They came indeed before Christ, but they entered through

the door." He speaks specially of those impostors who claimed to be the long-expected Messiah. They were thieves and robbers, such as Judas of Galilee, Theudas, and afterwards Simon Magus, Barchochebas, and many others, who claimed for themselves the name and title of the Christ. So S. Cyril, Chrysostom, Theophylact, Euthymius, and others.

*But the sheep did not hear them.* Because they discovered that they did not bring the token of the Messiah, as predicted by the prophets, but wished to steal away the faithful from Christ to claim them for themselves, and to cast them into hell.

Ver. 9.—*I am the door,* &c. Rupertus thinks that this relates to a different door and a different sheepfold from the other, according to what is said (ver. 16), "Other sheep I have," &c. But there is only one fold of Christ; one Church, that is. As He subjoins, "There shall be one fold and one shepherd." The meaning of the door already spoken of, Christ partly confirms, partly explains when He adds, "By Me if any man, enter in, he shall be saved." That is, if any man believe in Me, and therefore through faith in Me and by My grace enters the Church, "he shall be saved," *i.e.*, shall be justified and blessed, if he continues, that is, in My faith, grace and charity even unto death. So S. Gregory (*Epist. lib. vii. 49*). "He enters through the door into the sheepfold who enters through Christ. But he enters through Christ who believes and teaches the truth concerning Him—the Creator and Redeemer of mankind, and abides by what he preached."

*And will go in and out.* Will go out to the pastures, and after having fed will return to the resting-place, as sheep do. For the faithful will, when well fed, enter the fold of the Church, and again when hungry will go forth to the pastures of the soul, without any peril, for I will guide them to and fro. So Maldonatus.

But *to go in and out* signifies among the Hebrews to act with freedom, do one's own work, &c., and is connected with what follows. It means, the faithful man will move about everywhere without fear; will do his duty, and whatever he does, whether at home or abroad, will everywhere find food for his soul. The phrase denotes security, confidence, and freedom of converse; and of doing everything, everywhere, for and through Christ. So Cyril, Chrysostom.

Symbolically and tropologically, S. Gregory (*Hom. xiv.*) "The faithful withdraws within himself by contemplation, and comes forth in action to do good works." "He will enter in," says S. Augustine, "for inward meditation, he will go forth for outward action." The author of *De spiritu et anima*, says, "He will enter within to contemplate My Godhead, he will go forth to contemplate My Manhood, and in either case will find wondrous pastures." And in another place S. Gregory writes, "Within, they have the pastures of contemplation; without, the pastures of good works; inwardly they enrich