

The Voice of the Good Shepherd

Gospel according to Saint John 10:11-18

Jesus said:

"I am the good shepherd.

A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

A hired man, who is not a shepherd

and whose sheep are not his own,

sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away,

and the wolf catches and scatters them.

This is because he works for pay

and has no concern for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd,

and I know mine and mine know me,

just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;

and I will lay down my life for the sheep.

I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold.

These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice,

and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

This is why 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 on my own.

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

This command I have received from my Father."

Fourth Sunday of Easter: Homily by Father Juan Carlos Rivera Castro, S.J., based on the Gospel according to Saint John 10:11-18

My dear brothers and sisters, the Church asks us today, which voice are you hearing? Which voice are you following?

If we are true followers of Jesus Christ, if we observe His will we can recognize His voice. It is in following exclusively His voice that we have life, true blessed life, resurrected life. It is in following His voice that we change this resurrected life in the entire world.

Accordingly, today, inspired by the words of Our Saviour we can ask the Holy Ghost and to go inside ourselves so as to discover whose voice are we hearing and following.

As Christians we should only hear and follow One Voice. But we know that we have failed to do this on many occasions. We know that we have been seduced by our other voices in our life. Our Lord describes these voices as thieves and robbers because they do not enter through the gate but climb through other places.

These are the voices that promise salvation, freedom, happiness, love and human dignity. But they are thieves and robbers because their voice is not the Voice of the Good Shepherd. These voices hide behind the words of the Good Shepherd in order to seduce and deceive you.

These voices hide behind the mask of a politician, of a boss, of a friend, of a family member, and of many other secular saviours. We know these people, we see them all the time. They are around us because we hear their voices constantly coming out of our radios, computers, phones, televisions.

However, this does not mean that all voices we hear are bad or leading us to sin. Truly there are voices out there that desire our good. But are these voices the Voice of the Good Shepherd? As Christians we must pray that the Holy Ghost may open our hearts and ears so as to recognize the Voice of the Good Shepherd.

My dear brothers and sisters, nothing is more important than to recognize That Voice and to follow It. Only the Good Shepherd can lead us to green pastures, that is to our salvation, to our heavenly home, to the land where there is no more tears and suffering.

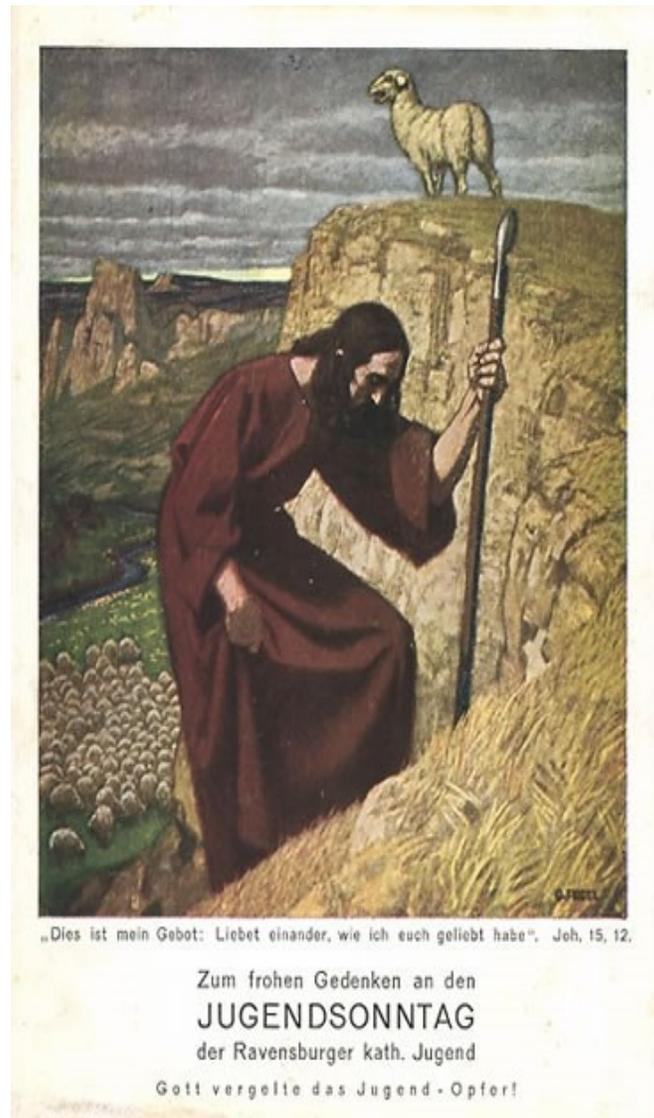
Only by being true members of God's flock we can experience, in our lives what Jesus Christ calls the abundant life.

Dear faithful, if we can free ourselves from attachments and strange voices and follow our Good Shepherd; how different would be our life. Let us remember during this Eastertide that Jesus Christ is alive; Christ is truly present among us; and His light is shining upon the world, even if we cannot see it at all times.

Therefore, let's not waste time during this Easter season and pray that we may always follow the Voice of the Good Shepherd; and may we always recognize that only in One Name are we saved. Let us use this Easter season to become true members of God's flock.

Let's act like disciples of the Good Shepherd. He is talking to us through His Words that we hear in Scripture today. He is talking to us through His Church. What could He be telling you today? To what great enterprise may He call you today?

Our Good Lord and Shepherd only desires to love you and transform you. He wants to make you His beloved follower, His sheep. He wants to make you a great saint. Amen



"This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you." *St. John 15: 12*

Christ as the Good Shepherd as depicted on a postcard to commemorate Youth Sunday; Ravensburg, Germany;

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