

# The Living Word

Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year A

30 April 2023

## First Reading Acts 2:14, 36-41

*God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ.*

On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd with a loud voice: 'The whole House of Israel can be certain that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.'

Hearing this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the apostles, 'What must we do, brothers?' 'You must repent,' Peter answered 'and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself.' He spoke to them for a long time using many arguments, and he urged them, 'Save yourselves from this perverse generation.' They were convinced by his arguments, and they accepted what he said and were baptised. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 22:1-6. R. v.1**

*(R.) The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.  
or*

*(R.) Alleluia.*

1. The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
where he gives me repose.  
Near restful waters he leads me,  
to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)
2. He guides me along the right path;  
he is true to his name.  
If I should walk in the valley of  
darkness  
no evil would I fear.  
You are there with your crook and your  
staff;  
with these you give me comfort. (R.)
3. You have prepared a banquet for me  
in the sight of my foes.  
My head you have anointed with oil;  
my cup is overflowing. (R.)
4. Surely goodness and kindness shall  
follow me  
all the days of my life.  
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell  
for ever and ever. (R.)

## Second Reading 1 Pt 2:20-25

*You had gone astray but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.*

The merit, in the sight of God, is in bearing punishment patiently when you are punished after doing your duty.

This, in fact, is what you were called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow the way he took. He had not done anything wrong, and there had been no perjury in his mouth. He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was tortured he made no threats but he put his trust in the righteous judge. He was bearing our faults in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our faults and live for holiness; through his wounds you have been healed. You had gone astray like sheep but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

## Gospel Acclamation Jn 10:14

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;  
I know my sheep, and mine know me.  
Alleluia!*

## Gospel Jn 10:1-10

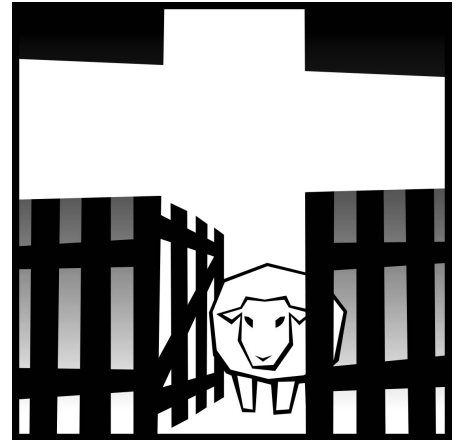
*I am the gate of the sheepfold.*

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them.

So Jesus spoke to them again:

'I tell you most solemnly,  
I am the gate of the sheepfold.  
All others who have come  
are thieves and brigands;  
but the sheep took no notice of them.  
I am the gate.  
Anyone who enters through me will be  
safe:  
he will go freely in and out  
and be sure of finding pasture.  
The thief comes  
only to steal and kill and destroy.  
I have come  
so that they may have life  
and have it to the full.'

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## Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

In Jesus' time, the shepherd lead from the front: the sheep followed the sound of his voice to reach good pasture. Jesus describes other voices who might try to mislead the sheep as 'thieves and brigands'.

In John's gospel, Judas, the *thief* from the common purse of the disciples, led a group of temple guards and Roman soldiers to take Jesus by force.

Barabbas was a *brigand*, a leader of an insurrection. Our Lord knew that armed rebellion against the Romans would lead to the destruction of Jerusalem.

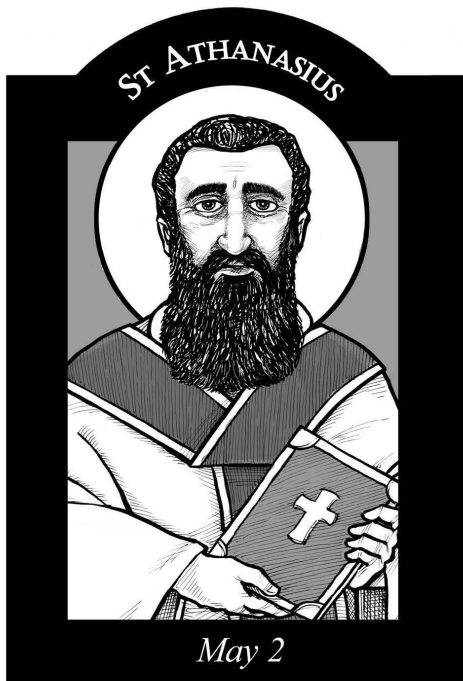
So, Jesus is warning his followers against the seductive voices of those who advocate the use of violence.

In particular, the successor of Peter should echo the voice of Jesus the Good Shepherd and no other. Popes of the modern era seem to be listening more attentively to the Good Shepherd, as successors of St Peter who was instructed: 'Feed my lambs, feed my sheep'.

We could pause for a moment to attune our ears to the sound of the Shepherd's voice and follow Him so that He may lead us to pastures where we can have life, abundantly.

Alleluia!

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# Wordsearch

Try to find these words:

fence	life	sheepfold	stranger
follow	name	shepherd	thief
gate	sheep	story	voice

A	Y	B	G	J	U	F	Y	T	W	B	E	M	A	N	U	N
Y	D	W	H	L	R	T	O	C	O	V	M	X	U	X	L	W
D	T	L	O	K	H	X	H	K	M	I	I	A	L	Y	R	V
R	K	P	W	L	H	Y	D	I	G	B	A	H	G	D	D	I
E	J	M	L	P	L	S	H	E	E	P	F	O	L	D	S	I
H	J	J	V	F	C	O	L	R	C	F	S	Y	H	Y	H	Q
P	G	M	A	V	R	M	F	W	K	N	K	N	T	T	E	V
E	O	S	F	P	B	N	S	H	I	X	E	D	G	U	E	Z
H	M	C	J	S	G	A	T	T	L	V	W	F	R	T	P	Z
S	I	K	T	A	X	S	X	U	R	B	F	Q	L	L	V	I
B	H	O	T	L	O	C	I	E	A	A	H	R	O	P	R	S
A	R	E	O	T	I	K	B	B	M	R	N	O	P	H	L	W
Y	E	E	H	N	Z	F	A	W	B	F	J	G	O	Y	E	U
X	S	O	H	Q	T	Q	E	X	E	F	A	J	E	N	W	S
U	M	F	E	W	M	B	I	O	U	G	P	O	V	R	E	M
X	O	R	U	S	E	C	I	O	V	T	D	U	W	F	Q	V
T	Q	D	K	S	K	T	G	G	V	A	J	Z	Y	N	B	X

**S**t. Athanasius was born in Alexandria to Christian parents in c.297. He was educated at a catechetical school and later went to the desert to spend time in retreat with St Anthony the hermit. He became the bishop of Alexandria in 328 and was a strong supporter of church orthodoxy. Athanasius was equally strong in his condemnation of Arianism which denied the Divinity of Christ. In his time as bishop many conflicts with Arians led to Athanasius going into exile on up to five occasions. During this time he continued his writings on theology, as well as a biography of his friend St Anthony. St Athanasius is portrayed as one of the Four Eastern Doctors of the Church.

Help the sheep find its way to the gate. Keep a look out for thieves!

