

1. Read (Seek) — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate (Find) — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray (Ask) — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate (Taste) — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence. **How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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[1] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 2, 68.1

[2] In Evangelia homiliae, 14

[3] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 2, 68.1

[4] Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) #753

[5] Divine Intimacy Vol. II pg. 176

Quick Connect

What is the Gospel saying? John 10:11-18 — Pg. 1

What is the Church saying Past and Present? Pages 1-3

What is God saying to you through this passage? Page 4

Gospel Reading – John 10:11-18 – Roman Missal

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."

Spiritual Reading

From St. Gregory the Great

O Lord, you say: "As the Father knows me, I know the Father, and I give my life for my sheep" (Jn. 10:15). It is as if you said: the fact that I give my life for my sheep makes it clear that I know the Father and that I am known by him...The charity that makes you die for your sheep, shows how much you love the Father... Again you say: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life" (ib. 27-28). Shortly before that you had said: "If any one enters by me he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture" (ib. 9). He will enter through faith, and then go out, passing from faith to vision, from ease in believing to contemplation, and will find pasture in the eternal feast. Your sheep will find pasture, because whoever follows you with a simple heart is nourished by eternally fruitful pasture. And what indeed is the pasture of these sheep if not the intimate joys of a forever verdant paradise? In truth, the pasture of your elect is the face of the ever-present God. While we contemplate him without ceasing, our minds are fully satisfied with the food of life... O Lord, make me seek these pastures to enjoy them with all the heavenly citizens... Fill me with ardent longing for the things of heaven, that I may love them and really set out on my way...no longer.

One Flock, One Shepherd - Lesson and Discussion

“...there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

Before his ascension into heaven, Jesus placed Peter as the shepherd of His flock. (cf. John 21:15-17) Jesus asked Peter three times to feed His sheep, signifying the number of times that Peter denied Jesus. “In this way the prophecy made to Peter before the Passion was fulfilled: but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren.” (Lk. 22:32)[1] St. Peter, as the good shepherd to the Church on earth, tells us in his first letter, “By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.” (1 Pt. 2:25)

What does Jesus mean by “A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep”?

Jesus is speaking of His death on the Cross. St. John Chrysostom writes: “...he is speaking of his passion, making it clear this would take place for the salvation of the world and that he would go to it freely and willingly”. Pope St. Gregory the Great comments on this passage saying, “He did what he said he would do; he gave his life for his sheep, and he gave his body and blood in the Sacrament to nourish with his flesh the sheep he had redeemed.”[2] St. Peter, along with every Pope after him, carries out this example in his willingness to die for the Church. The symbol of the shepherd that Jesus takes is passed on to St. Peter who is to feed and guard Jesus’ flock.

What is the mission of the shepherd? “Peter’s mission is one of guarding Our Lord’s whole flock without limitations. *Feed* is equivalent to ‘direct and govern’. Peter is made the shepherd and guide for the whole Church. As the Second Vatican Council points out, Jesus Christ ‘put Peter at the head of the other Apostles, and in him he set up a lasting and visible source and foundation of the unity of both faith and communion’.”[3] *Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia* is a phrase that means where Peter is, there is Christ’s Church.

In the first reading and responsorial psalm, we hear of Jesus as the “cornerstone”. “He is ‘the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone’” (Acts 4:11) While the images of a cornerstone and shepherd are different, they convey the same message, that Jesus is the only way to salvation. “For there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12)

Where do we, the Church, fit in this image of the Good Shepherd?

We are the sheep and the flock. “The Church is, accordingly, a sheepfold, the sole and necessary gateway to which is Christ. It is also the flock of which God himself foretold that he would be the shepherd, and whose sheep, even though governed by human shepherds, are unfailingly nourished and led by Christ himself, the Good Shepherd and Prince of Shepherds, who gave his life for his sheep.”[4]

What does Jesus mean when He says that there are other sheep?

Jesus is speaking of the Gentiles. He is also calling attention to the need for all of God’s people to be brought into one flock. “In very truth, there are still innumerable sheep who are far from the fold, but it was just these whom Jesus meant when he said: ‘They will heed my voice’ (Jn. 10:16). Yet how can they heed unless there is someone to preach the gospel to them?” This task starts with the head of the flock on earth, the Pope, but also, “Every believer is involved in this pressing duty: each must work with prayer and sacrifice to lead to Christ’s fold the sheep who are ignorant, far-off, scattered, and wandering, so that all may become ‘one flock’ and all may have ‘one shepherd’ (ib.)”.[5]

Who are the wolves? Satan is the wolf who tries to separate Christ’s sheep from Him.

What are other examples of “wolves” in the history of the Church?

One example is from the Protestant Reformation when unfaithful priests, religious, and laity scattered the “sheep” all across Europe. Other examples are Catholic politicians, who vote in favor of abortion and gay marriage; Catholic priests, religious, and/or laity who teach false doctrine or stand in opposition to the teaching of the Magisterium, or governments that openly persecute Catholics.

On the USCCB website the Bishops have an article entitled “Six Things Everyone Should Know About the HHS Mandate”. If you would like to read more, go to the following link: <http://uscbbmedia.blogspot.com/2012/02/six-things-everyone-should-know-about.html?pref=tw>

1. The mandate does not exempt Catholic charities, schools, universities or hospitals.
2. The mandate forces these institutions and others, against their conscience, to pay for things they consider immoral.
3. The mandate forces coverage of sterilization and abortion-inducing drugs and devices as well as contraception.
4. Catholics of all political persuasions are unified in their opposition to the mandate.
5. Many other religious and secular people and groups have spoken out strongly against the mandate.
6. The federal mandate is much stricter than existing state mandates.