

schedule. In this second section from the Good Shepherd passages, Jesus was using the antithesis of the Good Shepherd and the hired hand. On the one hand the true, real Shepherd (who owns the sheep) knows and cares for His sheep. The hired hand does his job. Jesus is the ideal of the owner of the sheep. He cares what becomes of them because of the investment in their future. The owner is willing to lay down His very life for the benefit of the sheep, which is in fact what Jesus has done for us. There is only One Shepherd and one flock. Salvation does not come through any other. There is none other to which we need to turn except our Good Shepherd: Jesus the Christ, the Messiah.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

¶ O Lord our God, how great is the goodness which You have set aside for those who know You. How good are the things that You have prepared for those who love You. Give us holy knowledge and love, that we, through Jesus, may obtain the glory You have prepared for us.

We thank You for the wonderful grace which caused You to send Christ, the Good Shepherd, into the world: to lay down His life for the sheep. We praise You that He came to ransom us by His blood from the power of evil, to redeem us by His suffering and death from the consequences we deserve for our sin, and to liberate us from the fear and bondage of death.

Accept our thanksgiving for His compassion on us, who were like sheep without a shepherd, going astray, but who are now, through Your great mercy, returned to the Shepherd of our souls. For Your forgiveness and the remission of all our sins, for the promise of Your peace and the promise of Salvation, for Your presence and power, for Your loving kindness and tender mercy, for every gift and grace in Christ Jesus, we thank You, merciful Father.

Give Your Church all the things needed, that we may be obedient to the example of our Savior and seek the lost sheep of the Israel of faith. Allow us to; raise the fallen, rescue the weary, comfort the faint, restore the erring, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, shelter the homeless, and thus show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Draw all the other sheep of Your pasture to their Shepherd, that we are one fold under our One Shepherd Jesus Christ.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

Even when our last hour comes upon us, and only because our eyes have seen Your salvation, let us depart in peace according to Your Word, and receive us into everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord.

© Amen.

EASTER FOUR

Chant Tone



Introit

I am the good — shepherd.*

I know My own and My own know
Me, and I lay down My life | for the
sheep.

The Lord is my — shepherd;*
I | shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green
— pastures.*

He leads me beside still — waters.
He re | stores my soul.*
He leads me in paths of
righteousness for His — name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death, I will fear no —
evil,*
for You are with me; Your rod and
Your staff, they | comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the
presence of my | enemies;*

You anoint my head with oil; my
cup | overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow me all the days | of my life,*
and I shall dwell in the house of the
Lord for — ever.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy — Spirit;
as it was in the be — ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

I am the good — shepherd.*

I know My own and My own know
Me, and I lay down My life | for the
sheep.

(Antiphon, John 10:14, 15b;
Psalm 23)

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him Who calls us each by name and follow where He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

Christ has risen | from the dead.*

[God the Father] has crowned Him with glory and — honor.
He has given Him dominion over the works | of His hands;*
He has put all things un | der His feet.

(adapted from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: Lord God, heavenly Father, Shepherd of our souls, we come before You as those who have been called into Your one flock. We give You humble and hearty thanks that in Your mercy You have fed us in the green pastures of Your Word. By giving us the knowledge of salvation through Jesus Christ Your Son, You have led us to the still waters that bring peace to our souls. For Your loving and gracious care, which You lavish on us without any merit or worthiness in us, we give You thanks. Give us the gift of Your Holy Spirit in abundant measure that we may have strength to walk in the paths of Your righteousness. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER HAS BECOME "GOOD SHEPHERD" SUNDAY. The church set aside this day to honor Jesus as our Good Shepherd. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He gathered us from all the corners of the world. He brought us in as the sheep of His pasture. He cares for us as individuals, calls us by name, brings us to the pleasant pastures, and helps us realize all things good. As our Shepherd, Jesus is standing between us and all danger. He uses His shepherd's staff to gently guide us and uses the same staff, and even His own life to keep evil out of and away from our lives. Our Good Shepherd has done all of this not because of anything we have done for Him, but only from His infinite Love for us.

THEME OF THE DAY:

The Good Shepherd

INTROIT—(Antiphon, John 10:14, 15b;) Psalm 23

We will cover John 10 in the Gospel Lesson. Psalm 23 was written by David. David used an illustration of God's care and concern, something that came from his understanding of having been a shepherd. With the inspiration of God, he gave us a full understanding of the great Love of Jesus for us. This Psalm is therefore a prophecy of Jesus and then was used by Jesus to explain His status as Messiah and God.

COLLECT

We proclaim our glory of the Resurrection of our Shepherd and confirm that it is only through the work of the Holy Spirit that we recognize the voice of our Good Shepherd.

FIRST LESSON—Acts 4:1-12

In the previous two chapters, we are shown so many good things that the apostles did, that we begin to wonder what has become of the scribes and Pharisees, and chief priests. They opposed Christ himself; surely they were opposed to the Apostles' proclamation of the Gospel. Either they had been off celebrating their "success" at killing Jesus, or they were so shocked by the events of the Pentecost and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit that they were rendered impotent. But, evil will rally until the very end of time. The Leadership stormed into the temple to confront the Apostles. Peter and John were arrested and committed to jail. They were examined by a committee of the Sanhedrin. "Filled with the Holy Spirit," they proclaimed salvation in Jesus Christ, "there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Peter, who had denied any knowledge of Jesus in the night, proclaimed Jesus as the only Savior to the very men who had murdered Jesus.

GRADUAL—(adapted from) Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7, Psalm 8:6

This is quite the compilation of Scripture. It is a statement of the Resurrection followed by the glory and honor given to Christ by our Father.

EPISTLE LESSON—1 John 3:16-24

Our conscience gives us little assurance that we are among the saved. Our conscience continues to condemn us. It reminds us of our past sins and calls our attention to the fact that we still do not measure up to God's standards in our daily living. God knows that in spite of what our conscience tells us, we have kept the greatest of His commandments, we have believed in Jesus Christ, His Son our Savior.

GOSPEL LESSON—John 10:11-18

John 10 is divided up into three pieces for the three years of the reading