

Readings for the week of April 21, 2024

Sunday:

Acts 4:8-12/Ps 118: 1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29 (22)/Jn 3:1-2/Jn 10:11-18

Monday:

Acts 11:1-18/Ps 42:2-3; 43:3, 4/Jn 10:1-10

Tuesday:

Acts 11:19-26/Ps 87:1b-3, 4-5, 6-7/
Jn 10:22-30

Wednesday:

Acts 12:24—13:5a/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6 and 8/
Jn 12:44-50

Thursday:

1 Pt 5:5b-14/Ps 89:2-3, 6-7, 16-17/
Mk 16:15-20

Friday:

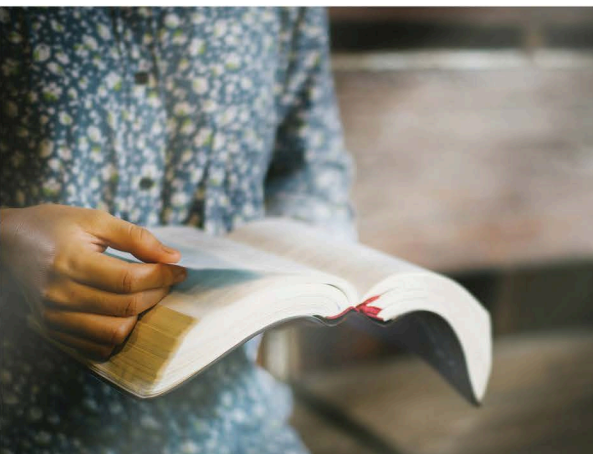
Acts 13:26-33/Ps 2:6-7, 8-9, 10-11ab/
Jn 14:1-6

Saturday:

Acts 13:44-52/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/
Jn 14:7-14

Next Sunday:

Acts 9:26-31/Ps 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32
(26a)/1 Jn 3:18-24/Jn 15:1-8



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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

Recently I was with my little dog Libby at a retreat center in the Arizona desert. I sat in a chair near a ravine filled with shrubs. Unbeknownst to me, Libby wandered down there and disappeared. Suddenly an animal's wild shriek erupted from the area. Without thinking, I bolted down into the ravine fully expecting to see coyotes, javelinas, or rattlesnakes. I didn't care. I desperately wanted to get Libby out of there, without any self-regard. Before I could face whatever danger lay hidden, my dog blissfully trotted out from an entirely different area, utterly unaware that I had (quite heroically) just placed my life on the line.

When the adrenaline wore off, I thought to myself: how far would I have been willing to go to save her? I don't know. But I do know, if I had literally died, my friends and family would have certainly thought me insane for dying for a dog. No offense, Libby.

How passionately Jesus wants us to know him and his willingness to die for us! This week he says, **"I know my own and my own know me,"** and **"I lay down my life for the sheep."** Here we encounter an insanely excessive love for us. Christianity is a relationship and not simply a religion or ethical code. In Jesus, God rescues and saves us. He laid down his life for you and me — and he has taken it up again. So often we are like Libby — blissfully ignorant of the reality of both our spiritual danger and his saving love. This Easter season, the risen Jesus calls us to be more conscious than ever before about his love. He never ceases to lay down his life for us.

— *Father John Muir*

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

The Good Shepherd and the Wolf

I remember very clearly the first movie I watched during my pregnancy with my eldest child. In this film, there is a scene where a young boy is kidnapped and shoved into the back of a van guarded by vicious dogs. His mother persists in trying to free him, even as the dogs snap at her. Their bared teeth and full-throated snarls don't slow her efforts in the slightest.

It wasn't a great movie or even a particularly great scene, but I'll never forget this scene. I'll never forget those dogs.

I had just learned that I was a mother a few days ago. The life growing deep within seemed to me as frail as a whispered secret, but I loved it powerfully. I worried constantly if the baby was safe and healthy. I agonized over signs — real or imagined — that could tell me if the poppyseed-sized child was thriving or failing.

I understood, for the first time in my life, why a woman would charge a pack of attack dogs without hesitation — not because she should, but because she has to.

She could choose not to fight, certainly. She could walk away. But why would she? A future without her son is so much more painful than any physical wound. She may fear for her life, but she fears a life without her child so much more.

The Good Shepherd discourse reveals to us the motivation behind God's actions throughout all of salvation history. From Adam to Noah to Abraham, all the way down to the time of the Messiah and beyond, He keeps trying to get us back. He keeps braving the attack dogs, time after time. He never stops. He never grows weary. And it baffles us: *what's in it for Him?* we wonder, because we are quicker to give up on ourselves than He is. *Why does He keep trying?*

He could choose not to fight, sure. But why would He? He doesn't want a future without us.

"I will lay down my life for the sheep." — John 10:11

- Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

What is unique or different about the way Catholics read and are exposed to the Bible?

Answer:

Catholics are exposed to Scripture primarily through the Sunday readings from a book known as the *Lectionary*. The *Lectionary* is a book of selected passages from the Bible set in the context of a liturgical season, such as Advent, Lent, or ordinary time. There are four readings assigned to any Sunday: the first reading (usually from the Old Testament), the responsorial psalm, the second reading (usually from a New Testament letter), and the Gospel reading.

These readings together give them a new context. The selected readings relate to one another in a unique manner that is not present in the Bible text itself. In close proximity to each other, these readings now have the opportunity to converse with each other in a way that would have not been possible before. A homilist pays attention to all four readings, preparing a reflection that speaks of this conversation among the readings, enabling us to zero in on what this unique combination of God's word has to say to us this particular Sunday.

Next time you attend Sunday liturgy, try reading the Scripture ahead of time and see how this new relationship among the readings addresses and challenges you to be a better Christian here and now.

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

"There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved."
(Acts 4:12)

Psalm:

The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone. (Ps 118)
Or: Alleluia.

Second Reading:

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. (1 Jn 3:2)

Gospel:

Jesus said:
"I am the good shepherd.
A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." (Jn 10:11)

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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Jesus the Good Shepherd knows that real love is an action, not an idea. His sacrifice is the proof of his love for his flock. Let us remember to love one another as the Good Shepherd loves us: not just in words but in actions, in choices, in deeds.

Observances for the week of April 21, 2024

- Sunday:** 4th Sunday of Easter; World Day of Prayer for Vocations
Monday: Earth Day
Tuesday: St. George, Martyr; St. Adalbert, Bishop and Martyr
Wednesday: St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, Priest and Martyr; Administrative Professionals' Day
Thursday: St. Mark, Evangelist
Friday: Arbor Day
Next Sunday: 5th Sunday of Easter



Saint of the week

St. Paschal Baylón was a devout Spanish monk. In his vocation as a lay brother, he worked as a chef, porter, gardener, and official beggar. He often gave so much to the poor that his brothers tried to limit his generosity. Because of his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, he is the Patron Saint of Eucharistic Congresses and Societies.

Prayer of the Good Shepherd

Dear Lord,
You are my Shepherd, a Good Shepherd, who leads in ways beyond my understanding. Guide me in the paths You would have me go.
Amen.

“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.”

- Jn 10:14-15

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

Peter bore witness to the Sanhedrin that it was the crucified and risen Jesus who healed the crippled man and through whom we are saved. Have you ever told someone else about your faith in Jesus?

Second Reading:

John tells us that as believers we are destined one day to be like the resurrected and glorified Jesus. How do you think we can best prepare for such a future?

Gospel Reading:

As the “Good Shepherd,” Jesus speaks of the power given to him by the Father to lay down his life for his sheep. What could you do this week for the benefit of another?



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The Eucharist is the sacrament of love: it signifies love, it produces love

- ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

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**THE REJECTED
STONE HAS
BECOME THE
cornerstone.**

PSALM 118

“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.” - Jn 10:16-17

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