

## WSC REFLECTION GUIDE

**Readings:** Acts 13:14, 43-52  
Psalm 100:1-3, 5  
Revelation 7:9, 14-17  
John 10:27-30

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter  
April 25, 2010

**Word:** **Believers in the Risen Christ seek heavenly things.**

**Theme:** **We seek heavenly things when we become instruments of salvation.**  
[Self-giving]

**Promise:** ***“For the Lamb... will shepherd them and lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”***  
(Rev 7:17)

### Reflection:

The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter is better known as the “Good Shepherd Sunday.” Let us reflect upon and seek to understand through the readings of today, the qualities of the “Good Shepherd” that we may follow and imitate the Good Shepherd, Jesus our Redeemer.

Paul, Barnabas, and the other disciples, knew that they were called by God in Jesus, because no matter what their circumstances, or situation in life, the words of Jesus always filled them with joy and peace. Consequently, the disciples chose not to follow other gods and to purge themselves of worldly attachments - pride, lust, envy, grudge, money and similar other false ‘gods’. They wanted to start anew and opted for the continuing conversion of life in Christ Jesus. They also knew that the time will come when they too will have to shepherd their own flock.

The disciples understood that it was time for them to “*cast their nets into the deep*” and share the Word of God not just with the righteous, but to all peoples - the Gentiles and pagans. They proclaimed the good news of repentance, forgiveness and love in Jesus, such that, every time they opened their mouths to preach the Word, many people came to believe and be converted, for the Holy Spirit was with them. It was no longer the disciples who lived, but Christ Jesus living in them.

The disciples were also prepared for rejection. On many occasions when they were with Jesus, they witnessed and experienced rejection because of the Jewish authorities who felt threatened by their mission and wished to silence them. “*The Jews preferred to be left in peace, to feel safe in the haven of their habits and the security of their traditions.*” Because of their patience and humility, they knew when to, and when not to “*shake the dust off their feet.*”

By this time, the disciples had become risk takers. Indeed, they acknowledged that while Jesus did not promise them earthly treasures, He promised eternal life with God through Himself. The disciples understood too, that despite persecutions, blessings upon blessings and grace upon grace will be poured upon them if they obeyed and put their trust in God. And so “*filled with joy and the Holy Spirit,*” they took the many risks confronting them.

In retrospect, we note that many of the great people God anointed to serve Him and whom we meet in the pages of Scripture, were real shepherds by profession, among them Jacob, Moses,

David and the many others who came after them. Why, you might ask. Perhaps it is because of their natural ability or propensity to care, love and guide the flock entrusted to them. As seasoned shepherds, they were strong; they could hold their ground and fight to protect their lambs. Symbolically, Jesus was sent by the Father, to be the Shepherd of humanity. God prefigured Jesus in the lives of these scriptural shepherds that we may understand the role, for which Jesus was sent, as our true Shepherd.

The disciples of Jesus who had moments of indecision, doubts and disbelief, found the strength and courage to carry on their tasks after having personally experienced the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. Only then did they understand their calling and truly hear the voice of God in their hearts. Only then did they find the boldness to risk ridicule, persecution and even death, as they stood witness, shared, and propagated the Word of God and like the Good Shepherd, cared for and guided His flock.

Finally, the disciples were always united with God in prayer – they were one with Christ, just as Jesus was one with His Father. This means they endeavored to make his thoughts their own, His plans their plans, and to act and behave like Him.

Prayer:

Lord God, thank You for showing me the qualities and character of a good shepherd. As I continue to live in community, I pray that You grant me the grace to do Your will, as You call me to both remain in Your fold, and care for your 'lambs'. I pray for wisdom that I may know what to do and the strength to do Your will for me. I want to be like You, my one True and Good Shepherd. Help me that I may glorify You in my life, and in my community. I pray in Your Name, Lord Jesus. Amen.

#### **Suggested Personal Reflection Guide:**

1. What qualities of the Good Shepherd do I possess, or need to cultivate?
2. What areas of my life need changing that I may be more Christ-like, more like the Good Shepherd?
3. How can I develop the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit that I may serve my community more meaningfully and with great joy?

#### **Next Week's Daily Mass Reading Guide:**

April 26, 2010 (Mon):	Acts 11:1-18; Ps 42:2-3, 43:3-4; Jn 10:1-10
April 27, 2010 (Tue):	Acts 11:19-26; Ps 87:1-7; Jn 10:22-30
April 28, 2010 (Wed):	Acts 12:24-13:5; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Jn 12:44-50
April 29, 2010 (Thur):	Acts 13:13-25; Ps 89:2-3, 21-22, 25, 27; Jn 13:16-20
April 30, 2010 (Fri):	Acts 13:26-33; Ps 2:6-11; Jn 14:1-6
May 01, 2010 (Sat):	Gn 1:26-2:3 or Col 3:14-15, 17, 23-24; Ps 90:2-4, 12-14, 16; Mt 13:54-58

***“Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!”***