

The Living Word

Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year C

11 May 2025

First Reading Acts 13:14, 43-52

We are now turning to the gentiles.

Paul and Barnabas carried on from Perga till they reached Antioch in Pisidia. Here they went to synagogue on the sabbath and took their seats.

When the meeting broke up, many Jews and devout converts joined Paul and Barnabas, and in their talks with them Paul and Barnabas urged them to remain faithful to the grace God had given them.

The next sabbath almost the whole town assembled to hear the word of God. When they saw the crowds, the Jews, prompted by jealousy, used blasphemies and contradicted everything Paul said. Then Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, 'We had to proclaim the word of God to you first, but since you have rejected it, since you do not think yourselves worthy of eternal life, we must turn to the pagans. For this is what the Lord commanded us to do when he said:

I have made you a light for the nations,
so that my salvation may reach the ends
of the earth.'

It made the pagans very happy to hear this and they thanked the Lord for his message; all who were destined for eternal life became believers. Thus the word of the Lord spread through the whole countryside.

But the Jews worked upon some of the devout women of the upper classes and the leading men of the city and persuaded them to turn against Paul and Barnabas and expel them from their territory. So they shook the dust from their feet in defiance and went off to Iconium; but the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 99:1-3. 5. R. v.3

*(R.) We are his people, the sheep of his flock.
or*

(R.) Alleluia.

1. Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before him, singing for joy. (R.)
2. Know that he, the Lord, is God.
He made us, we belong to him,
we are his people, the sheep of his flock. (R.)
3. Indeed, how good is the Lord,
eternal his merciful love.
He is faithful from age to age. (R.)

Second Reading Rv 7:9, 14-17

The Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water.

I, John, saw a huge number, impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. One of the elders said to me, 'These are the people who have been through the great persecution, and because they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb, they now stand in front of God's throne and serve him day and night in his sanctuary; and the One who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. They will never hunger or thirst again; neither the sun nor scorching wind will ever plague them, because the Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

Gospel Acclamation Jn 10:14

Alleluia, alleluia!

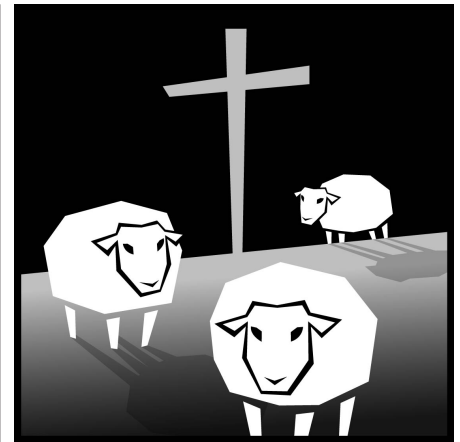
***I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my sheep, and mine know me.
Alleluia!***

Gospel Jn 10:27-30

I give my sheep eternal life.

Jesus said:

'The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice;
I know them and they follow me.
I give them eternal life;
they will never be lost
and no one will ever steal them from me.
The Father who gave them to me is
greater than anyone,
and no one can steal from the Father.
The Father and I are one.'



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

You and I are Gentiles – part of the non-Jewish world. We are the sort of Christians we are, because of St Paul. He became the strongest advocate of the grace that the early Christian community should be inclusive of all nations and tribes and ethnic groups on the face of the earth. We have not yet realised this potential.

What riches of intellectual traditions, cultural expressions, and organisational structure are we still to receive from the Chinese, the Korean, the Indonesians, the Africans, the Indian Catholics who are part of our 'Church without Borders'?

How do we maintain unity and identity amongst such diversity? By listening for the voice of the Good Shepherd, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

But it takes a good teacher to help us to hear The Voice in the clamour of life.

Some of those teachers may be found amongst the Bishops who carry a shepherd's staff. But at least in my experience the best assistant-shepherds have been my parents, and some others. They have helped me hear The Voice assuring me that I will never perish, that I will receive eternal life.

That is a Voice worth following! We could pause for a moment to get on the same wavelength as the Good Shepherd so as to echo His Voice in our lives.

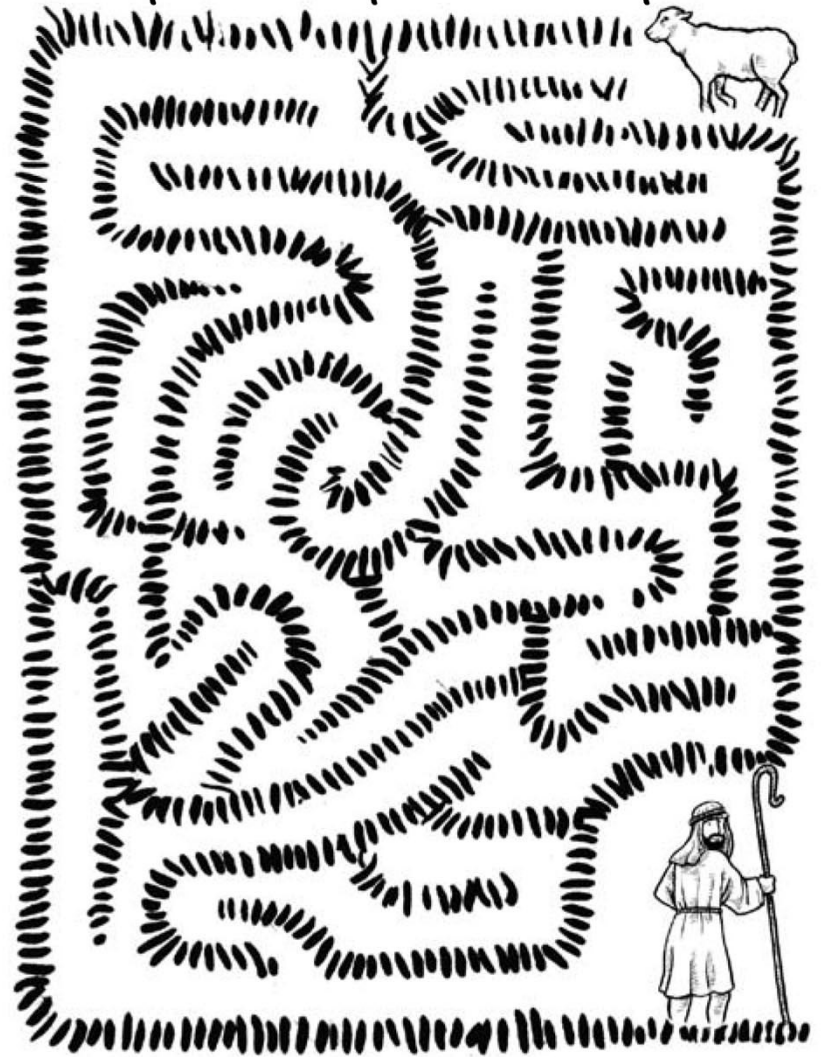
mtate@bigpond.com

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In the small Portugese village of Fatima, the Blessed Virgin Mary is said to have appeared to three shepherd children. On six occasions between May and October, 1917, Our Lady appeared to Lucia dos Santos and her two cousins, Francisco and Jacinta Marto. According to an account of the events given by Lucia, Mary entrusted the children with three secrets and encouraged them to do acts of penance and say the rosary every day. Thousands of people came to Fatima upon hearing of the visions, and on October 13, some 70,000 people reportedly witnessed a miraculous solar event. Fatima is now a major site of Marian pilgrimage.

Jesus' sheep will never be lost. Help the sheep follow the path to the shepherd.



Crossword



Across

- 1: take the path of a leader
- 4: the sound of someone speaking
- 5: bigger, more impressive
- 7: God is called our _____ in heaven
- 11: take without warning, grab
- 12: followers of Jesus

Down

- 2: the opposite of death
- 3: not ever, at no time
- 6: forever
- 8: the body part that has fingers and a thumb
- 9: an animal that produces wool
- 10: missing

