

## Fourth Sunday of Easter



He came without dogs, without noise or hired hands,  
without mercenaries or middlemen,  
without a staff...

He came alone with an attitude of mercy,  
with the trappings of love.

Saint Ambrose.

**Reading 1 Acts 2:14a, 36-41**

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed:

"Let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they asked Peter and the other apostles,

"What are we to do, my brothers?"

Peter said to them,

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is made to you and to your children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call."

He testified with many other arguments, and was exhorting them,

"Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand persons were added that day.

**Responsorial Psalm Psalm 23: 1-3a, 3b4, 5, 6**

**R. (1) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want..**

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

In verdant pastures he gives me repose;

beside restful waters he leads me;

he refreshes my soul. **R.**

He guides me in right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk in the dark valley

I fear no evil; for you are at my side.

With your rod and your staff that give me courage **R..**

You spread the table before me in the sight of my foes;

you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. **R.**

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Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life;

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for years to come. **R.**

## **Reading 2 1 Peter 2:20b-25**

Beloved:

If you are patient when you suffer for doing what is good,  
this is a grace before God.

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you,  
leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps.

*He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.*

When he was insulted, he returned no insult;

when he suffered, he did not threaten;

instead, he handed himself over to the one who judges justly.

He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross,

so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness.

By his wounds you have been healed.

For you had gone astray like sheep,

but you have now returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

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## Gospel John 10:1-10

Jesus said:  
"Amen, amen, I say to you,  
whoever does not enter a sheep-  
fold through the gate  
but climbs over elsewhere is a  
thief and a robber.  
But whoever enters through the  
gate is the shepherd of the sheep.  
The gatekeeper opens it for him,  
and the sheep hear his voice,  
as the shepherd calls his own  
sheep by name and leads them  
out.  
When he has driven out all his  
own, he walks ahead of them, and  
the sheep follow him, because  
they recognize his voice.  
But they will not follow a  
stranger; they will run away from  
him,  
because they do not recognize  
the voice of strangers."

Although Jesus used this figure of speech,  
the Pharisees did not realize what he was trying to tell them.

So Jesus said again, "Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep.  
All who came before me are thieves and robbers,  
but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate.  
Whoever enters through me will be saved,  
and will come in and go out and find pasture.  
A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy;  
I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly."



## **ALIGNING WITH THE GATE**

The Gospel of John presents Jesus with original and beautiful images. He wants his readers to discover that only Jesus can fully respond to the most fundamental needs of a human being. Jesus is «the bread of life»: whoever is nourished on him won't be hungry. He is «the light of the world»: whoever follows him won't walk in darkness. He is «the good shepherd»: whoever listens to his voice will find life.

Among these images there's one, humble and almost forgotten, which however contains a profound content: «I am the gate». That's Jesus. An open door. Whoever follows him crosses a doorway that leads to a new world: a new way of understanding and living life.

The Gospel writer explains it with three features: «Whoever enters through me will be saved». Life has many paths. Not all reach the exit or guarantee a full life. Whoever in some way aligns with Jesus and tries to follow him, enters through the right door. He won't end up losing his life. He'll save it.

The Gospel writer says even more. Whoever enters through Jesus «will be able to go out and come in». They have freedom of movement. They enter into a space where they can be free, since they only let themselves be guided by Jesus' Spirit. It's not a country of anarchy or debauchery. «Go in and come out», passing always by means of that «gate» which is Jesus, and move by following his footsteps.

The Gospel writer adds still another detail: whoever enters through that gate who is Jesus «will find pasture», won't be hungry or thirsty. They will find solid and abundant food in order to live.

Christ is the «gate» through which we Christians even today must enter if we want to revive our identity. A Christianity made up of baptized persons who relate to a Jesus who is badly known, vaguely remembered, affirmed once in a while abstractly, a mute Jesus who says nothing special to today's world, a

Only Christ can lead us to a new level of Christian life, better founded, motivated and nourished in the Gospel. Each one of us can contribute so that in the Church of these coming years Jesus will be felt and lived in a more living and passionate way. We can make the Church be more of Jesus.

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