



CELEBRATING AT HOME
FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

*Shepherd and sheep,
bonds of life and love (John 10:27-30)*



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church in
this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus,
you are the image of the unseen God.

Lord Jesus,
you are the bread of life and wine of compassion.

Lord Jesus,
**you are the Good Shepherd,
leading us into everlasting life.**

Risen Christ,
you always meet us with warmth and love.
**Give us the hope and peace we need
to remain strong in our care of each other.**
Amen.

Scripture Reading (John 10:27-30)

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 - *Shepherd and Sheep, bonds of love and life*

This fourth Sunday of Easter is traditionally known
as *Good Shepherd Sunday* because the Gospel for
this Sunday always portrays Jesus as the Good
Shepherd.

Being a shepherd in the time of Jesus was not
anything like the large-scale, commercial farming
enterprises of today. Then, a shepherd usually
had responsibility for about fifteen or twenty
sheep whom he accompanied day and night. Both
shepherd and sheep got to know each other. The
shepherd was responsible for keeping the flock
together and safe, for leading it to good pasture, for
binding up wounds. The sheep depended on the
shepherd for life.

No wonder the image of the Good shepherd
became so popular as a description of the
relationship between Jesus and his followers.

Today's Gospel is full of warmth and intimacy in
the way it speaks about Jesus' relationship with us.

The sheep who listen to Jesus belong to (are in
relationship with) him. There is a sense of intimacy
in the idea that Jesus knows each of the sheep who
follow him. He knows them and they follow him
because they are bound together by the bond of
love.

The sheep have life through their relationship with
Jesus, a relationship which brings eternal life, not
just after death; the sheep already live the eternal
life of God here and now.

This relationship with Jesus and the eternal life it
brings can never be lost or snatched away.

We are the gift that the Father gives to Jesus.
And because the Father and Jesus live in deep
communion with each other, we, too, are caught up
in this enduring communion of love.

This love God has for us makes us part of God's
family: God's beloved daughters and sons.

Any reflection about Jesus as the Good Shepherd
also keeps us mindful that shepherding each
other according to the heart of Jesus is part of our
vocation as disciples.

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Prayers of Intercession

May your whole Church, people and leaders,
be a good shepherd to the world.

Teach us to nurture each other with tenderness.
Strengthen our loving service.

May we tend the world with hope.
**Help us lend our courage to the fearful and the
broken-hearted.**

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.**

Thy kingdom come.

**Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Lord, God,
in the resurrection of Jesus
you share with us his risen life.
Transform our darkness, fear and isolation
with your comforting presence
so that we can be your calm, loving,
healing presence for one another.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May your blessing be upon us, O Lord,
and remain with us for ever.





Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when many cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.



The Carmelites
Australia & Timor-Leste
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