



## John 10:1-10

**1** Jesus said: 'I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. **2** The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; **3** the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. **4** When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they

know his voice. **5** They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

**6** Jesus told them this parable, but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them.

**7** So Jesus spoke to them again: 'I tell you most solemnly, I am the gate of the sheepfold. **8** All others who have come are thieves and brigands; but the sheep took no notice of them. **9** I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: he will go freely in and out and be sure of finding pasture. **10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.'

Other readings: Acts 2:14,36-41 Psalm 22 (23) 1 Peter 2:20-25

On most of the days of the Easter season, which goes from Easter Sunday until Pentecost, the gospel passage set down to be read at Mass is from the Gospel of John. This gospel, also known as the Fourth Gospel, contains rich teaching and new understandings of Jesus which supplement what is found in the other gospels. Our reading this Sunday is from the tenth chapter of John, in which we are presented with the image of Jesus as the good shepherd.

In the verses read this year there is an additional focus. While Jesus contrasts the shepherd of the sheep with the 'brigand' and the 'stranger', he goes on to refer to himself as 'the gate of the sheepfold'. Not only does Jesus lead his people, but he is also the way through which they enter to reach life. The Risen Lord is 'the way, the truth and the life' (John 14:6).

Jesus comes 'so that we may have life and have it to the full' (verse 10). The Easter season is a prolonged celebration of the gift of life which we receive from the moment of Baptism, and the anticipation of our full sharing in it in the life to come.

The second reading also celebrates the new life of baptism. The image of the shepherd is found here too, as Jesus is called the 'shepherd and guardian of our souls'.

*How effective is the image of Jesus as the 'good shepherd'?*

*Does the evangelist's use of images confuse or enlighten you?*

*Pray Psalm 22 (23) and ask for a deeper awareness that 'the Lord is my shepherd'.*

*We support by our prayer all those called to priesthood and the religious life.*