

MARK 6:30-34

The apostles rejoined Jesus and told him all they had done and taught. Then he said to them, 'You must come away to some lonely place all by yourselves and rest for a while'; for there were so many coming and going that the apostles had no time even to eat. So they went off in a boat to a lonely place where they could be by themselves. But people saw them going, and many could guess where; and from every town they all hurried to the place on foot and reached it before them. So as he stepped ashore he saw a large crowd; and he took pity on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he set himself to teach them at some length.

COMMENTARY: To be without a genuine shepherd leaves people floundering and open to attack.

In one very real sense all the baptised should think of themselves as shepherds: parents to their children; teachers; carers of others in any form.

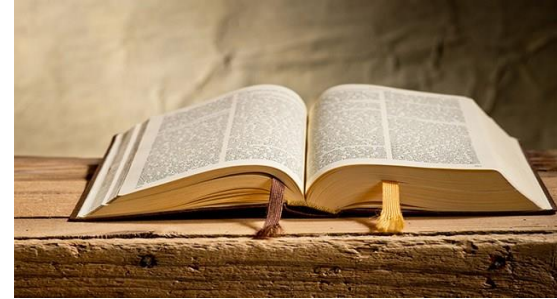
Psalm 23 on the cover makes for a wonderful prayer. It will almost always move us when prayed from the heart.

God/Jesus ultimately is our genuine shepherd. What image comes to mind when you find yourself praying psalm 23 or singing it in Church?

Liturgy of The Word

28.7.24

16th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.

All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord,
and your friends shall repeat their blessing.
They shall speak of the glory of your reign
and declare your might, O God.

The eyes of all creatures look to you
and you give them their food in due time.
You open wide your hand,
grant the desires of all who live.

The Lord is just in all his ways
and loving in all his deeds.
He is close to all who call him,
who call on him from their hearts.

2 KINGS 4:42-44

A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing Elisha, the man of God, bread from the first-fruits, twenty barley loaves and fresh grain in the ear.' 'Give it to the people to eat', Elisha said. But his servant replied, 'How can I serve this to a hundred men?' 'Give it to the people to eat' he insisted 'for the Lord says this, "They will eat and have some left over."' He served them; they ate and had some left over, as the Lord had said.

COMMENTARY: Jeremiah uses a common occupation as a metaphor for the leaders of God's people. Shepherds were among the poor and lowly in society, but the image is also used for Kings. It is the kings, especially in the kingdom of Judah (the southern region of Israel) referred to here. They were meant to protect the people and to ensure they were treated justly. Forgetting about justice is at the core of Jeremiah's condemnation.

One needs to read the entire book to understand, but what we can easily see is how powerful people use their position for self-gain.

The Church exists to teach the importance of Justice and to lead by example.

EPHESIANS 4:1-6

I, the prisoner in the Lord, implore you to lead a life worthy of your vocation. Bear with one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness and patience. Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together. There is one Body, one Spirit, just as you were all called into one and the same hope when you were called. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God who is Father of all, over all, through all and within all.

COMMENTARY: Understanding the first sentence leads us into the great mystery of unity. This verse refers to the fact that before the sacrifice of Jesus, Gentiles (non-Jews) were considered outsiders to the Jewish faith and were not able to participate fully in the religious life of the Jews. However, through the sacrifice of Jesus, Gentiles are now able to draw near to God and are no longer considered outsiders. In other words, the Christian faith is open to all. Jesus is emphasising the fact that all of humanity can consider themselves to be Children of God. We are brothers and sisters because of Christ.