

IV Sunday of Easter.



MY SHEEP RESPOND TO MY
VOICE, AND I KNOW WHO
THEY ARE. THEY FOLLOW ME,
AND I GIVE THEM ETERNAL
LIFE.
THEY WILL NEVER BE LOST...

Priest's Tidings

It is very reassuring to know that our guide or community leader knows us personally and calls us by our name. It makes us say or think: He knows me and I know him. This calls for deeper trust and loyalty and love. On the Sunday of the Good Shepherd Jesus himself reminds us how he knows us personally. At the same time the fact that we know him too, at least a bit, changes our whole life. For knowing him, we know God. We experience in him God's goodness and care and close presence in everyday life. Would that we could also be near to one another and Jesus' pastors and shepherds could be close to their people.

Who are the pastors, the shepherds, whom people trust and listen to? As if instinctively they entrust themselves to priests who do not preach themselves but the Lord Jesus and his Good News. They listen to and confide in priests who know them and who also take the time to listen to them and their problems and hopes. For in them they recognise something of Jesus, the Good Shepherd and model of all shepherds. Let us join our Good Shepherd in his thanks to the Father.



Fr Hugo

H o l y C o m m u n i o n

Entrance Hymn:

678 – In Christ alone my hope is found.

Collect:

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: raise us, who trust in him, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that we may seek those things which are above, where he reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.. **Amen**

First Reading

Reading from the Acts of the Apostles:

In those days: Paul and Barnabas went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. Many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God. The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, 'It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth." ' And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit..

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm:

R./ We are his people, the sheep of his flock.

Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing for joy.' **R/.**

Know that he, the Lord, is God. He made us; we belong to him. We are his people, the sheep of his flock. **R/.**

Indeed, how good is the Lord, eternal his merciful love. He is faithful from age to age. **R/**

Second Reading:

Reading from the Book of Revelation

I, John, looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands.

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Gradual Hymn:

652 – Guide me, O thou great Redeemer.

Gospel Reading

Hear the The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John:

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Jesus said, 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ



Prayers of Intercession

Lord, we thank you for the diversities of children around the world and all you have provided for them and their families. We thank you for children's abilities to grow and learn in a safe environment. God, you have opened to us, the way of eternal life and supported this community with your mercy and loving guidance. We give thanks for the church and its ministers and their positive influence on children around the world. We thank God for the services rendered for the protection of children in this country.

Lord of power and might,
Hear our prayer

Father almighty we pray for children who are in poverty and the abandoned so that they can be fed and they can find safe shelter. We ask you to watch over children living in war and refugees who are in constant danger and fear for their health and safety. Lord, we pray that you grant the wellbeing of all the young kids who are suffering and in need of protection, the terminally ill, orphans and stray kids. Lastly, we pray for children maltreated in the world we're living in today, that they may be rescued and find comfort in the love of god.

Lord of power and might,
Hear our prayer

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Offertory Hymn:

732—My Jesus, my Saviour.

Communion Hymn

Bless the lord O my soul.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, I worship His holy
Name.
Sing like never before, O my
soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.

Verse 1

The sun comes up; it's a new
day dawning;
It's time to sing Your song
again.

Whatever may pass and
whatever lies before me,
Let me be singing when the
evening comes.

Chorus

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, I worship His holy
Name.
Sing like never before, O my
soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.

Verse 2

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger,
Your Name is great, and Your heart is kind;
For all Your goodness I will keep on singing,
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find.

Chorus

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, I worship His holy Name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.

Verse 3

And on that day when my strength is failing,
The end draws near and my time has come;

Still my soul sings Your praise unending,
Ten thousand years and then forevermore.

Chorus

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, I worship His holy Name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, I worship His holy Name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.
Yes, I will worship your holy name
Lord, I worship your holy name

Post Communion Prayer

Merciful Father, you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the good shepherd, and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again: keep us always under his protection, and give us grace to follow in his steps; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Texts for prayer and meditation

These few verses form part of a longer passage in which John reports a lively debate between Jesus and the people about his relationship to God the Father. It ended with the people wanting to stone Jesus! When Jesus challenged their murderous intentions they answered, 'We do not want to stone you because of any good deeds, but because of your blasphemy! You are only a man, but you are trying to make yourself God!' (John 10:33).

Jesus sees deeper into their hearts than they realised. He knew they would not accept him 'for they are not my sheep' (verse 26). And they were not his sheep because the Father had not given them to him as his believers. Jesus hints at the mysterious gift and wonderful grace of faith. No one can believe in Jesus unless he is given the grace by the Father. In John 6 Jesus conveys this idea in another way. Jesus told his puzzled listeners that he was the

bread of God and they needed to feed on him if they wanted to live (John 6:25-59). Once again the gracious gift of God is needed for faith to believe. And the Father is the sole giver of grace.

If God the Father gifts an individual with grace, that person belongs to Jesus and becomes one of Jesus' 'sheep'. They are given the ability to grow in understanding of all that Jesus teaches and to receive eternal life. But for growth to occur we need to be in constant touch with Jesus.

The people who wanted to stone Jesus had not yet received the Father's gift of faith. If their hearts and minds were open, they would have seen that this was an opportunity to seek the Father's help and grace to believe. But the 'goats' declined (Matthew 25:32) and refused to accept Jesus as God's Son.

In this age of uncertainties we can have no stronger promise than the one Jesus gives to those who follow him: no one and nothing can separate us from God. This is explained further in Romans 8:38-39. It is the truth – nothing can separate us from the love of God that is ours in Christ Jesus. This promise is not only for this life but extends beyond our death into eternity.

Mediato...

- In these few verses Jesus mentions several benefits of being one of his sheep. Think

about what each one means to you.

- As Christians we believe that God knows everything, but sometimes we act and pray as though he doesn't. In verse 27 Jesus reminds us that he knows each of his sheep individually. Do you find this reassuring or uncomfortable? Consider your response to this.
- 'My sheep listen to my voice... and they follow me.' How good are you at listening to Jesus' voice and doing what he says? Ask Jesus what would be best for you to do to help you be more obedient.
- If faith in Jesus is a gift from the Father, how should this influence our attitude to people who don't believe in Jesus?

Oratio:

Bring what God reveals to you from this passage and your time of meditation to him in prayer. Don't rush this – take your time. Read Psalm 100 and use this to give thanks to God for giving you the gift of faith in Jesus.

Contemplatio:

Have you considered that as a believer you are the gift of the Father to his Son, Jesus? Think about your relationship with Jesus your shepherd.

Recessional Hymn

588 – And can it be that I should gain.

What's New!

Sunday — Mass at 9:30 am

Support St Matthew's Church:

First Communion Liturgy

The minister addresses the congregation

Brothers and sisters, today we are welcoming Temi to Holy Communion. As parents and godparents, and as the community of St Matthew's, we share the responsibility of encouraging them in their worship, and of supporting them by our friendship, our example and our prayers. Will you help him to grow in faith and love?

All We will.

The minister addresses Temi
Temi, you love God, you follow Jesus, and you live the Christian life. Do you wish to receive Holy Communion?

Temi **Yes.**

As Temi receives today the sacrament of the body and blood of

Christ, let us pray that we may all know and reflect the love of Christ.

God of life, you invite us to eat at your table; may we know your love, follow you in the world, and shine with your light all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

SAVE THE DATE Cathedral Confirmations

Saturday 7th June

Regular Giving

Many thanks for your generous giving to the ministry of St Matthews' each week. If you have taken home a red envelope please fill out the form and return it so we can plan our future developments of St Matthew's

Youth Club

Our Youth Club currently runs every week on Fridays from 5-7pm at Christ Church, 90 Brixton Road. Please spread the word!n Road. Please spread the word!

Ways to make your donation:

- We receive no regular state funding to look after St Matthew's building. Anything you are able to give is greatly appreciated



CONTACT US

Parish Administrator : Monica Hernandez Ingles:

admin.eng@stmatt.co.uk - Español: admin.esp@stmatt.co.uk Office

Hours: 9:00 am to 4:00 - Address: Meadow Row . London SE1 6RG

07845084879