



Worship@Home

21st April 2024

Open our hearts and minds that as we read your Holy Scripture we may draw closer to you through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen.

Gospel Reading: John 10:11-18

"I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, so when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away.

Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep"

Reflection

"I am the Good Shepherd" may not speak to us in quite the same way as to the rural, agricultural world of Jesus where the value of sheep in a herd was often higher than that of the shepherd hired to look after them.

I think that in this simple illustration of Jesus, he shows that our understanding, perspective, value as not changed all that much. The business and economic world measures success in monetary terms or in climbing to the top of the corporate pile: it looks on success by the way we dress, how much is in our wallets or purses, or the glamour we attract.

And in all of this we can lose our way, get caught up in wanting the next 'big thing' and lose sight of the true love of families, friends, relationships and of God himself.

We need to remember that God mourns when we are lost to him, but like the Father of the Prodigal Son he goes out everyday looking and expecting to see our return.

However like a bleating sheep crying out for help to return to the pen, we too need to cry out to God and in so doing show our trust in Him.

As I write this I'm mindful that last week we sat in our living room and heard a pitiful cry over and over again. When we looked into the garden there was Chester who had tried to wriggle through our hedge and then turned back was well and truly stuck and crying for help. Thankfully we heard his cry and was able to cut the hedge sufficiently to release him and bring him home.

Are prepared to cry out to the Good Shepherd and look to him to bring us home into His arms and embrace where we find the love and warmth that only he can provide.

Opening Prayer

Great and loving God,
we greet you this day with praise and wonder.
We greet you as the creator of the ends of the earth,
Lord of space and time,
our finite minds struggle to comprehend all that you are, and yet you do not require us to understand, but to simply accept you as our Mother and Father in Heaven and to walk in your love with you.

Amen

Hymn: 566 – Take my life, and let it be

Sing/ Read /pray the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Of4I5bTdZ8M>

- ¹ Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.
- ² Take my hands, and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet, and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.
- ³ Take my voice, and let me sing
always, only, for my King;
take my lips, and let them be
filled with messages from thee.
- ⁴ Take my silver and my gold,
not a mite would I withhold;
take my intellect, and use
every power as thou shalt choose.
- ⁵ Take my will, and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine;
take my heart – it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.
- ⁶ Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure-store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836 – 1879)

Prayer

Prayer

God of love,
we pray for those many people in our world
who have been lost sight of the invitation to your
family,
who feel lost and abandoned,
or for whom love has been painful.
may they know the love and warmth of Christ.

We pray for those those who have become estranged
from family and friends; those whose children have
moved away to begin lives of their own,
We pray for those whose parents have become frail,
confused and infirm;
those who are bereaved
May the knowledge of your unending love
be a constant source of comfort and inspiration.
Touch their hearts with the love and warmth of Christ.

We pray for those those who have been subjected to
abuse,
those afraid of showing their true feelings,
those oppressed by mental illness.
May their hearts be filled with the love and warmth
of Christ.

Loving God,
we bring to you the complex world in which we live.
A world capable of bringing such joy but such sorrow,
so much pleasure yet also so much pain.
We thank you for your gift of love
and all the love that surrounds us,

May the leaders of this world be
Touched in their hearts by the love and warmth of
Christ.

Grant to us all the knowledge
that your love will never fail,
and that your love never lets us go.
Thanks be to God, in Jesus' name.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven.....

Hymn: 409 – Let us build a house where love can dwell

Sing/ Read /pray the words or listen to it here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTdxFRfEoMs>

¹ Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
*All are welcome,
all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

² Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:

³ Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground
where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,
is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:

⁴ Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:

⁵ Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:

Blessing

O God our dance,
in whom we live and move and have our being:
so direct our strength
and inspire our weakness
that we may enter with power
into the movement of your whole creation,
through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.