

# **CELEBRATE EASTER**

## **Fourth Sunday of Easter**

**Dear Lord, bless us with forbearance that we may patiently endure our sufferings, burdens and shortcomings.**

### **Acts 4:8-12**

Peter and John were arrested and put in jail for proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus. They were brought before the elders and the scribes and the high priests and questioned about the source of their authority and power for teaching and healing. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, boldly proclaimed that the preaching and healing were done in the name of Jesus and that salvation has come through Jesus.

**Reflect on giving honor and glory to God for all the wonderful things he does in and through you.**

### **Psalm 118**

This is an all-embracing, universal, missionary Psalm inviting all people to thank God and proclaim His steadfast love. The Psalmist calls Israel (the people of God), the house of Aaron (the priestly class) and those who fear the Lord (the Gentile converts) – all people, including the Gentiles (heathens) to praise and proclaim God's enduring love. The Church has been singing this Psalm at Easter as it is an all-inclusive Psalm, inviting all people, including the Gentile proselytes to praise God.

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,  
For his mercy endures forever.**

**It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man.**

**It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes.**

### **1 John 3:1-2**

The author of this letter tells us that we are God's very dear and beloved children. It also tells how excited and amazed we should be about our status as God's beloved children who are not recognized by the world. The world, that does not recognize Jesus, does not recognize God's children either.

**Rejoice! Be happy! You are God's very dear and beloved children! And be grateful and be faithful to this calling!**

## **John 10:11-18**

This Gospel passage proclaims Jesus as the good and caring shepherd who knows us, loves us, leads us, and lays down his life for us. The image of the shepherd appealed to the listeners of Jesus and to the early Christians. Sheep and Shepherd shared intimate and lifelong relationship. This was a good and readily understood image which described the bond between Jesus and his followers.

The image of the shepherd is very challenging and demanding to the contemporary ministers since it reflects a very caring, provident, protective, selfless, self-sacrificing, and enduring relationship. The good shepherd knows and is known by the sheep...the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.....because the good shepherd loves, cherishes and values the sheep.

Our good shepherd, Jesus, in laying down his life for us, secured our safety and our salvation. This is a very challenging and demanding call for all ministers of today. Be grateful! You have a good shepherd in Jesus!

**Look to this good shepherd for direction and follow his direction!**

I am the good shepherd.....(who) lays down his life for the sheep, says Jesus.

**What an amazing relationship between human beings and their maker!!!**

**How awesome it is that we have become cherished and prized objects of divine diligence and sacrifice!!!**

God, in Christ, is deeply concerned about me, as an individual person and not just one in a crowd – this should give me a sense of dignity and worth, pride and devotion, gratitude and praise, meaning and purpose.....

The Psalmist proclaimed, “The Lord is my shepherd”. Now we can proclaim it even more boldly because the Lord has said, “I am the good shepherd” who is ready to lay down his life for us.

The good shepherd spares no pains for the welfare of the sheep. We can look to our good shepherd with absolute confidence and devotion.

**Be a caring person! Today, make an extra effort to show someone that you really care about her/him!**

## **Saint of the Day, April 21 - St. Anselm of Canterbury and 11 other saints are remembered this day.**

Anselm was born in or around Aosta in Upper Burgundy, now part of Italy, sometime around 1033. At the age of fifteen, Anselm wanted to enter a monastery, but was refused acceptance because of his father's opposition. Twelve years later, after careless disinterest in religion and years of worldly living, he finally fulfilled his desire to be a monk. He entered the monastery of Bec in Normandy, was elected prior three years later, and 15 years later, was unanimously chosen abbot.

Considered an original and independent thinker, Anselm was admired for his patience, gentleness, and teaching skill. Under his leadership, the Abbey of Bec became a monastic school, influential in philosophical and theological studies. During these years, at the community's request, Anselm began publishing his theological works, comparable to those of Saint Augustine. His best-known work is the book *Cur Deus Homo* ("Why God Became Man").

Against his will, Anselm was appointed archbishop of Canterbury in 1093, at the age of 60. His appointment was opposed at first by England's King William Rufus and later accepted. Rufus persistently refused to cooperate with efforts to reform the Church. Anselm finally went into voluntary exile until Rufus died in 1100. He was then recalled to England by Rufus' brother and successor, Henry I. Disagreeing fearlessly with Henry over the king's insistence on investing England's bishops, Anselm spent another three years in exile in Rome. His care and concern extended to the very poorest people. Opposing the slave trade, Anselm obtained from the national council at Westminster the passage of a resolution prohibiting the sale of human beings.

Indifferent toward religion as a young man, Anselm became one of the Church's greatest theologians and leaders. He received the title "Father of Scholasticism" for his attempt to analyze and illumine the truths of faith through the aid of reason.

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