

The 4th Sunday of Easter

April 21, 2024



The Good Shepherd Fresco, from the Roman Catacombs (150)



210.532.7341
stpaulsa.org

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own- by which I mean, I love them - and my own know me." In plain words: those who love me are willing to follow me, for anyone who does not love the truth has not yet come to know it.

My dear brethren, you have heard the test we pastors have to undergo. Turn now to consider how these words of our Lord imply a test for yourselves also. Ask yourselves whether you belong to his flock, whether you know him, whether the light of his truth shines in your minds. I assure you that it is not by faith that you will come to know him, but by love; not by mere conviction, but by action. John the evangelist is my authority for this statement. He tells us that anyone who claims to know God without keeping his commands is a liar.

Consequently, the Lord immediately adds: *As the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep.* Clearly he means that laying down his life for his sheep gives evidence of his knowledge of the Father and the Father's knowledge of him. In other words, by the love with which he dies for his sheep he shows how greatly he loves his Father. Again he says: *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them; they follow me, and I give them eternal life.* Shortly before this he had declared: If anyone enters the sheepfold through me he shall be saved; he shall go freely in and out and shall find good pasture. He will enter into a life of faith; from faith he will go out to vision, from belief to contemplation, and will graze in the good pastures of everlasting life.

So our Lord's sheep will finally reach, their grazing ground where all who follow him in simplicity of heart will feed on the green pastures of eternity. These pastures are the spiritual joys of heaven. There the elect look upon the face of God with unclouded vision and feast at the banquet of life for ever more. Beloved brothers, let us set out for these pastures where we shall keep joyful festival with so many of our fellow citizens. May the thought of their happiness urge us on! Let us stir up our hearts, rekindle our faith, and long eagerly for what heaven has in store for us. To love thus is to be already on our way.

No matter what obstacles we encounter, we must not allow them to turn us aside from the joy of that heavenly feast. Anyone who is determined to reach his destination is not deterred by the roughness of the road that leads to it. Nor must we allow the charm of success to seduce us, or we shall be like a foolish traveler who is so distracted by the pleasant meadows through which he is passing that he forgets where he is going."

St. Gregory the Great, Good Shepherd Homily (578)

The Greeting and Welcome

The congregation stands and faces the back of the sanctuary. We begin with a procession as the cross leads the way, representing our life in Christ – our journey from death to life. Some bow as the cross passes, honoring the mystery of salvation.

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty (790)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise Him, for He is your health and salvation!

Let all who hear Now to His temple draw near, Joining in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord, who has fearfully, wondrously, made you,

Health has bestowed and, when heedlessly falling, has stayed you.

What need or grief Ever has failed of relief? Wings of His mercy did shade you.

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;

Surely His goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.

Ponder anew What the Almighty can do As with His love He befriends you.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in us adore him!

All that has life and breath, come now with praises before Him!

Let the Amen Sound from His people again; Gladly forever adore him!

Invocation

En el nombre del Padre, y del ✠ Hijo, y del Espíritu Santo.

All Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us

All But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Señor, ten piedad de nosotros.

All Señor, ten piedad de nosotros.

Cristo, ten piedad de nosotros.

All Cristo, ten piedad de nosotros.

Señor, ten piedad de nosotros.

All Señor, ten piedad de nosotros.

Silence is Kept

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father:

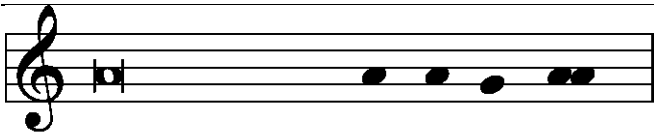
All Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not

loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

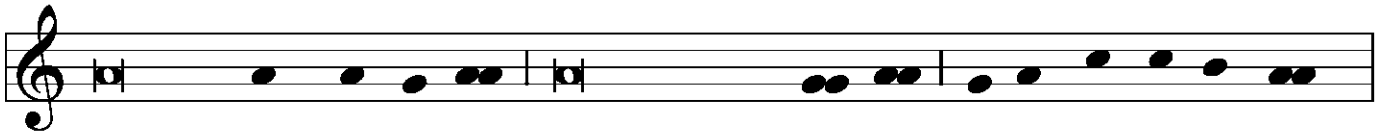
The Kyrie



A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



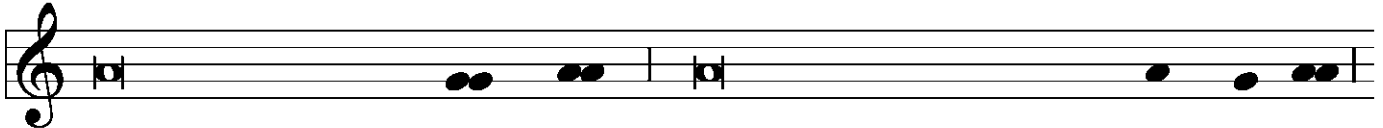
C Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from a-bove and for our sal-va-tion let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



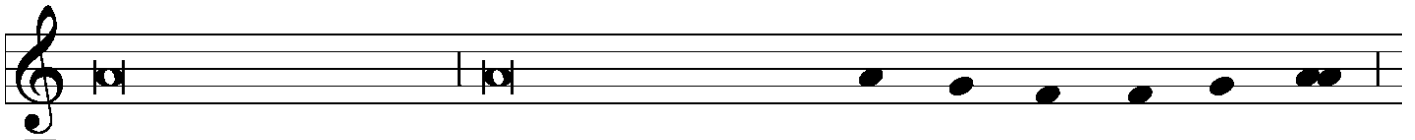
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



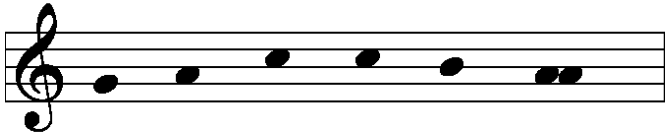
and for the uni-ty of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



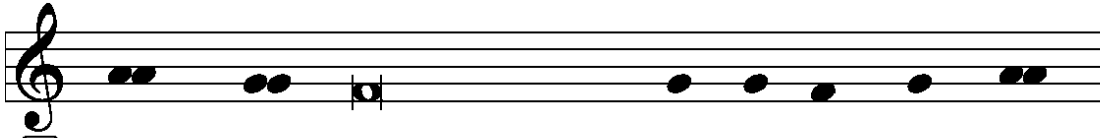
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



C A - men.

The Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

Let us pray.

All Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Scripture Readings

Acts 4:1-12

And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand. On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

1 John 3:16-24

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. If anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and truth. By this we know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; for when our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. This is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus and love one another, as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. By this we know he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Procession

The gospel is read in the midst of the people as a sign of God coming to us in Jesus Christ. As the gospel is announced some worshippers make a small cross on their forehead, lips, and chest – a prayer that the Word may dwell in our minds, on our lips, and in our hearts.

Hail Thee, Festival Day (489)

**Hail thee, festival day! Blest day to be hallowed forever;
Day when our Lord was raised, Breaking the kingdom of death.**

**Hail thee, festival day! Blest day to be hallowed forever;
Day when our Lord was raised, Breaking the kingdom of death.**

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

All Glory to You, O Lord.

John 10:11-18

Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father."

The Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Hail Thee, Festival Day (489)

**Hail thee, festival day! Blest day to be hallowed forever;
Day when our Lord was raised, Breaking the kingdom of death.**

**Hail thee, festival day! Blest day to be hallowed forever;
Day when our Lord was raised, Breaking the kingdom of death.**

The Apostle's Creed

All I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection ☩ of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The King of Love Shepherd Is (709)

The King of Love my Shepherd is, Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His And He is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow, My ransomed soul He leadeth
And, where the verdant pastures grow, With food celestial feedeth.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill With Thee, dear Lord, beside me,
Thy rod and staff my comfort still, Thy cross before to guide me.

Sermon

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow (805)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Silent Prayer Before Reception of Holy Eucharist

*O Lord, I believe and profess that you are truly Christ,
The Son of the living God, who came into the world
To save sinners of whom I am the first.*

*Accept me as a partaker of your mystical supper, O Lord,
For I will not reveal your mystery to your enemies,
Nor will I give you a kiss as did Judas, But like the thief I profess to you:*

*Remember me, O Lord, when you come in your kingdom.
Remember me, O Master, when you come in your kingdom.
Remember me, O Holy One, when you come in your kingdom.*

*May the partaking of your Holy mysteries, O Lord,
Be not for my judgment or condemnation,
But for the healing of my soul and body.*

*O Lord, I believe and profess, that this,
Which I am about to receive,
Is truly your most precious Body, and your life-giving Blood,
Given for me for remission of all my sins and for life everlasting. Amen*

Service of the Sacrament

The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God. And most especially are we bound to praise You on this day for the glorious resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, the very Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us and bore the sins of the world. By His dying He has destroyed death, and by His rising again He has restored to us everlasting life. Therefore, with Mary Magdalene, Peter and John, and with all the witnesses of the resurrection, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of Sabaoth adored;
Heaven and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.
Sing hosana in the highest, sing hosana to the Lord;
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy, we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross. Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us to faithfully eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us to in His own testament. Gather us together from the ends of the earth to celebrate, with all the faithful, the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone be all glory, honor, and worship, now and forever.

All Amen.

The Consecration

The Ringing of Altar Bells

The church has always used bells to capture our attention and imagination. From a bell tower's opening call to worship, to ringing bells at a wedding or funeral – bells punctuate special moments in the church. Altar bells are rung after the bread and wine are consecrated today to remind us of this miraculous moment: the body and blood of Christ are now present.

The Acclamation and Invitation

As often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

All Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Behold the Lamb of God, behold Jesus, who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.

La paz del Señor sea con ustedes.

All Y Tambien contigo

Sharing of the Peace

Greet each other in the name of Christ by saying 'the Peace of the Lord be with you' as a sign of forgiveness & reconciliation in preparation for reception of the Blessed Sacrament.

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Distribution

Eucharistic Dismissal

Thank The Lord

**Thank the Lord and sing His praise; Tell everyone what He has done.
Let everyone who seeks the Lord, Rejoice, and proudly bear His name.
He recalls His promises, and leads His people forth in joy
With shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Post-Communion Prayer

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You, that of Your mercy, You would strengthen us in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Announcements

Blessing

Rejoice, O Pilgrim Throng (813)

**Rejoice, O pilgrim throng! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing;
Your festal banner wave on high, The cross of Christ, your king.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!**

**With voice as full and strong As ocean's surging praise,
Send forth the sturdy hymns of old, The psalms of ancient days.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!**

**Still lift your standard high, Still march in firm array,
As pilgrims through the darkness wend Till dawns the golden day.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!**

**At last the march shall end; The wearied ones shall rest;
The pilgrims find their home at last, Jerusalem the blest.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!**

**Praise Him who reigns on high, The Lord whom we adore;
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, One God forevermore.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!**