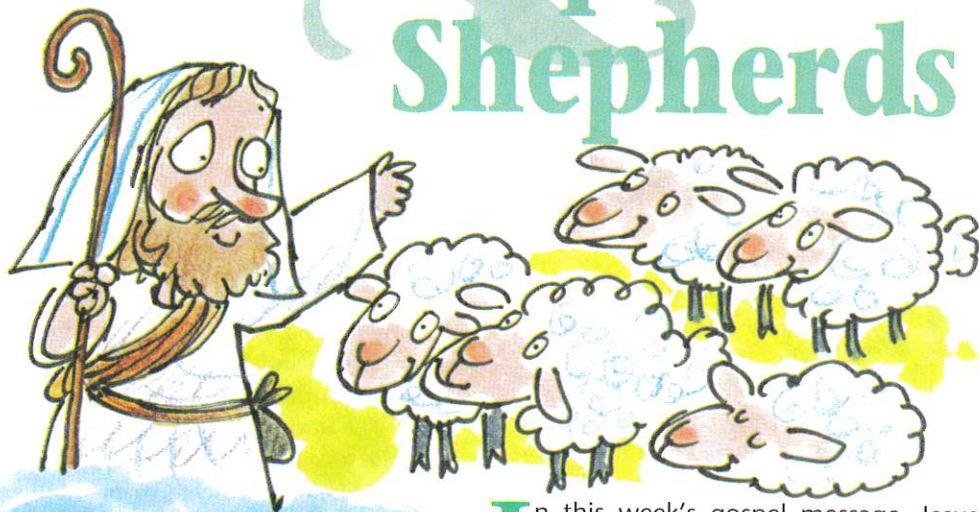


Of Sheep and Shepherds



In this week's gospel message, Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd...And I lay down my life for the sheep." Can you picture Jesus as a shepherd? Can you picture yourself as a sheep? Have you ever even *seen* a sheep herder with a flock of sheep? How can we more fully understand how this story affects our lives today?

Jesus faced the soldiers in the garden. He was laughed at and beaten and people like you and me hollered, "Crucify him!" We (the people) acted like sheep, blindly and stupidly following after one another instead of thinking for ourselves and acting responsibly to stop the senseless ridicule and torture our Shepherd was subjected to.

"I know my own, and my own know me," Jesus said. Sheep follow the voice of their shepherd. But during his passion (trial and torture), Jesus' voice was silent, and his own (the disciples) scattered and hid. After his Resurrection, Jesus returned to his own. He opened their minds with his Word (the Scriptures), and they followed him with Spirit-filled devotion.

Today, Jesus leads us still. Our Good Shepherd watches over us and cares for us every minute of every day. He doesn't want us to get lost or hurt or frightened. He wants us to know that we belong to him — and he is always near. *Listen!*

SCRIPTURE ACROSTIC

To solve this puzzle and hear the promise Jesus makes to his people, fill in the answers to the clues, then transfer the letters to their numbered places below.

Clues:

- | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1. The St. Louis Cardinals, for example | 4 | 13 | 19 | 43 | | |
| 2. A long dress | 7 | 41 | 32 | 20 | | |
| 3. Farm machinery for tilling ground | 14 | 26 | 9 | 23 | | |
| 4. Small flying insect | | 38 | 27 | 35 | | |
| 5. TV or radio knob | 30 | 22 | 2 | 36 | | |
| 6. A way of speaking to God | 49 | 17 | 28 | 44 | 16 | 42 |
| 7. Things that you eat | 40 | 8 | 31 | 10 | | |
| 8. Jet aircraft | 14 | 25 | 19 | 33 | 47 | |
| 9. Gusty or blustery | 23 | 1 | 33 | 18 | 29 | |
| 10. Sound of a snake | 5 | 24 | 45 | 11 | | |
| 11. Ten-cent coin | 21 | 37 | 34 | 39 | | |
| 12. Sound a donkey makes (2 words) | 46 | 48 | 6 | 15 | 2 | 23 |
| 13. Church song | 12 | 35 | 3 | 20 | | |

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22
 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33
 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44
 45 46 47 48 49



GOSPEL THEME
 A good shepherd is willing to die for the sake of the flock.