

Prayer Gathering for Fourth Week of Easter

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

OPENING PRAYER

**Good Shepherd,
with the love of a mother, you nurture us and tend our every need.
Shepherd us beyond our distractions and worries,
our resentments and hurts,
so that we may travel in safety and joy along the path that leads to your kingdom.
We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, our Lord. AMEN.**

READING

MOMENT FOR SILENCE

GOSPEL PASSAGE

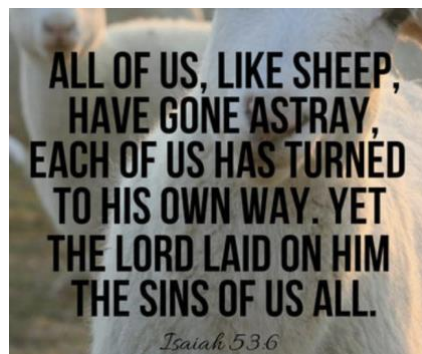
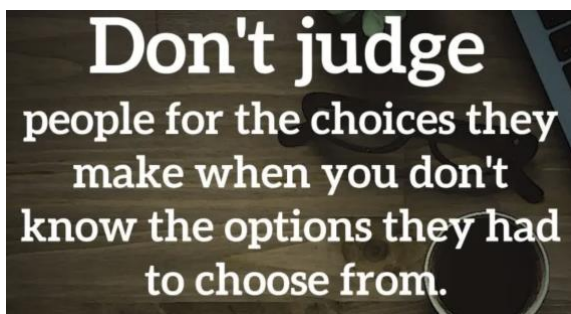
SHARING QUESTIONS

"On the sabbath [Paul and Barnabas] entered the synagogue and took their seats. Many Jews and worshipers who were converts to Judaism followed them..."

"Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, 'It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first, but since you reject it and condemn yourselves as unworthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.'"

How would you handle it if two preachers (who claimed to be enlightened) came to church one Sunday, interrupted Mass with their teaching, and said that those who chose our Tradition over their teaching were 'unworthy of eternal life'? How does putting yourself in those shoes affect your hearing of this story?

POSTED RECENTLY



DISCUSSION

"My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

When the sheep follow, the job of the shepherd is easy. When in life have you been a sheep who follows Jesus? And when have you been a sheep who strays?

"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand."

How does hearing Jesus say this make you feel?

Was this image of Jesus the one you grew up with? If so, who taught you the most about him? If not, what image was in its place?

LITANY

Sometimes anger takes me over, and cruel words pour from my mouth...

My job is just to follow; please, Lord, lead me on your path...

My hurting heart lays out some options that are not the ones you give...

My job is just to follow; please, Lord, lead me on your path...

When I worry that my legacy amounts to nothing much at all...

My job is just to follow; please, Lord, lead me on your path...

It seems that others have the easy path and mine goes through the thorns...

My job is just to follow; please, Lord, lead me on your path...

When there's not enough to go around will I be left without?

My job is just to follow; please, Lord, lead me on your path...

When I think I must have all the plans and, God, you seem so far away...

My job is just to follow; please, Lord, lead me on your path...

When my boredom takes me over and my choices aren't the best...

My job is just to follow; please, Lord, lead me on your path...

When my loneliness assails me and I am dying to escape...

My job is just to follow; please, Lord, lead me on your path...

When apathy takes over and it seems too hard to try...

My job is just to follow; please, Lord, lead me on your path...

OUR FATHER

[OPTIONAL] PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION (St. Alphonsus Ligouri)

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament.

I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already here, and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You. AMEN.

CLOSING PRAYER

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

READING 1

A reading from the book of the Acts of the Apostles:

Paul and Barnabas continued on [their journey].

On the sabbath they entered the synagogue and took their seats.

Many Jews and worshipers who were converts to Judaism

followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them

and urged them to remain faithful to the grace of God.

On the following sabbath

almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.

When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy

and with violent abuse contradicted what Paul said.

Both Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said,

*“It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first,
but since you reject it and condemn yourselves as unworthy of eternal life,
we now turn to the Gentiles.*

For so the Lord has commanded us:

*‘I have made you a light to the Gentiles,
that you may be an instrument of salvation
to the ends of the earth.’”*

The Gentiles were delighted when they heard this

and glorified the word of the Lord.

All who were destined for eternal life came to believe,

and the word of the Lord continued to spread through the whole region.

The Jews, however, incited the women of prominence who were worshipers

and the leading men of the city,

stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas,

and expelled them from their territory.

So they shook the dust from their feet in protest against them, and went to Iconium.

The disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

READING 2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John

Jesus said:

*“My sheep hear my voice;
I know them, and they follow me.
I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.*

No one can take them out of my hand.

*My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all,
and no one can take them out of the Father’s hand.*

The Father and I are one.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You, Lord, Jesus Christ

John, chapter 10