# LSW

children

Have you ever been tempted before? What is being tempted? Have you ever seen in cartoons, etc that when a person is tempted, there are two little persons, one on each shoulder telling the tempted person what to do? *Discuss what the little angel and the little devil are trying to do.*

As a Christian, do you know which one is carrying a message from Jesus? Would you know what Jesus would like you to do? *Explain that if we are the sheep of Jesus, we would know which one of these promptings is the voice of Jesus and we should know what to do. Do we?*

Year A

###### Fourth Sunday of Easter

## Images

## Sheep following a shepherd

Shepherd risking his life

## Points to note

This Sunday is known as Good Shepherd Sunday.

This is one of the most endearing images of Christ: Jesus as the Good Shepherd. In many ways, there are two images of the Good Shepherd. One, as a leader after whom his disciples will follow. And his disciples include us. His disciples will follow him because we know him.

The other image is that of a shepherd risking his life for his sheep, fighting off wolves and the like. Jesus, however, not just risked his life for us, he laid down his life for us. For younger children, you may not wish to emphasise this image.

**Liturgy**

## Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the Good Shepherd, says the Lord;

I know my own sheep and my own know me.

Alleluia!

##### Reading

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And also with you.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St John

*All:*  Glory to you O Lord

 (Jn 10:1-10)

Jesus said: “I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hears his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.”

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them. So Jesus spoke to them again:

 “I tell you most solemnly,

 I am the gate of the sheepfold.

 All others who have come are thieves and brigands;

 but the sheep took no notice of them.

 I am the gate.

 Anyone who enters through me will be safe:

 he will go freely in and out and be sure of finding pasture.

 The thief comes only to steal and destroy.

 I have come so that they may have life

 and have it to the full.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord

#### Discussion

This is a good opportunity for everybody in the group to share his or her name. Make sure that each gives his name out loud to the group and not just to the facilitator.

Anyone has a dog? Does your dog come when you call? *Explain that sheep flocks in the Middle East tend to be small* *and the many flocks need to search for scarce grazing land. Grazing grounds generally overlap and flocks tend to mix freely. Interestingly, though, when the shepherds leave at dusk, each has no problem in identifying his sheep and leading them home. The sheep all knew their master and each will respond only when its master calls and not another, very much like how dogs recognise their masters.*

Jesus called himself the Good Shepherd and that his sheep, i.e., we, know him and will follow him when he calls. How do you think he will call us? *By our names. Discuss those who God called by their names: Abraham, Samuel, etc. Discuss how Mary Magdalene did not recognise Jesus at the tomb until he called her by her name. A good example of the sheep who knew the shepherd.*

Have you seen how cows are branded? *With a red hot metal rod, which then imprints the owner’s name or sign on the side of the cow. Cows are branded so that everyone knows to whom those cows belong.*

If we are Jesus’ sheep, do we also need to be branded like the cows? *Yes!! Like the cows, we are branded with Jesus’ name on us (not with a branding iron of course). We are all called Christians.*

Is there any way other people can know that we belong to Jesus? *Discuss that following is not just to physically to follow a person somewhere like the sheep following the shepherd. A follower also follows what his or her master does. When other people see that we are doing the same thing as our master, they know that we are followers of our master. Discuss the things we should be doing so that people will know.*

Have you noticed the bishop’s staff? It is called a *crozier* and has a crook at the end of it. This is to symbolise a shepherd’s staff. The crook is there to hook any straying lambs by their necks. In giving him the *crozier*, we are acknowledging the bishop as the shepherd that Jesus asked to take care of us.