

I AM the Good Shepherd

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly, to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

.....Pause and Pray

Prayer of Approach:

Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd. I have all I need in you. Guide me today to still places of rest. Lead me along a righteous path. Fill me with love and joy that truly satisfies and sustains me. Holy Spirit, tune my ear for the Father's voice. Amen.

Rejoice and Reflect

As I begin to consider Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and the sacrifice he made, I ask God to consider me. I join with the ancient prayer of God's people in Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT).

Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
Point out anything in me that offends you,
and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

This is Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter Sunday. During this week, we remember the events that took place as Jesus was in Jerusalem, meeting with his disciples and followers, imparting his last teaching to them before he was arrested, tried, and crucified. Jesus had foreshadowed his coming suffering, but his followers did not fully understand the scope of what was to come.

Today you will read a passage from John 10:11-21. Even though you know what is to come at the end of Holy Week, (the Resurrection) try to identify with Jesus's followers as they heard him speak. How might they have heard Jesus's words?

11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep. **12** A hired hand will run when he sees a wolf coming. He will abandon the sheep because they don't belong to him and he isn't their shepherd. And so the wolf attacks them and scatters the flock. **13** The hired hand runs away because he's working only for the money and doesn't really care about the sheep.

14 "I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, **15** just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep. **16** I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd.

17 "The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. **18** No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded."

19 When he said these things, the people were again divided in their opinions about him. **20** Some said, "He's demon possessed and out of his mind. Why listen to a man like that?" **21** Others said, "This doesn't sound like a man possessed by a demon! Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

Ask

Jesus, I want to know your voice. Open my ears to hear you. Open my heart to be receptive to your word in me.....Pause and Pray

Jesus, bring to mind a person who is not yet in your sheepfold. I pray they hear your voice today and recognize it. Help me to love them with your love.....Pause and Pray

Yield

As I return to today's passage, John 10:11-21, I listen for a particular word or phrase the Holy Spirit may be highlighting for me today.
.....Pause

What is the different between a hired hand and a shepherd? Why does this matter?

How do you think Jesus's followers would have reacted to what Jesus said to them in this passage?

How do you react to what Jesus says in this passage?

Consider the sacrifice Jesus made for you.

Yielding Prayer: Psalm 51:10-12

Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. Do not banish me from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.

Yielding Promise

As I prepare to take this time of prayer into the remainder of this day, I remember the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Before I celebrate the Resurrection, I reflect on his death in Luke 23:44-46 (NLT)

By this time it was about noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. The light from the sun was gone. And suddenly, the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn down the middle. Then Jesus shouted, "Father, I entrust my spirit into your hands!" And with those words he breathed his last.

Closing Prayer

*Father, help me to live this day to the full,
Being true to you in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
Being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
Proclaiming Christ in all I do and say. Amen.*

This guide is based on the Morning Prayer template of Lectio 365, and uses the closing prayer from that app. If you find this guide meaningful, download the Lectio 365 app on your phone. The app provides three prayer guides each day, Morning, Midday, and Night.