

Prayers of the Church, 4th Sunday of Easter, Cycle A (May 3, 2020)

Let us pray to our risen Savior on behalf of the Church, the world, and all people according to their need.

A brief silence

Thank you, Jesus, for being our Good Shepherd – even though we balk at being compared to sheep! Thank you for giving us abundant life, even as we walk through death-shadowed valleys. Thank you for knowing us by name, even though we sometimes forget yours. Claim us and guide us every day, in spite of ourselves, until we are safely in your house forever.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

You are the Good Shepherd. Defend the Church from peril, provide for its needs, and lead it in paths of righteousness. Through its ministry, lead many to hear your voice and follow you.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

You are the Faithful Shepherd for your people who are set upon by wolves and persecutors. Protect, guide, and bless them. Give them such grace under pressure that their enemies' hearts may repent of evil deeds.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

You call your sheep by name. Bless the work of theologians and seminary professors. Help them to identify and train faithful "holy sheepdogs," called by you to help tend your beloved flock.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

You are the Good Shepherd of this congregation. Lead us with your Word. Prepare our table with your Body and Blood. Teach us to do your will with glad and faithful hearts. And use us to lead many into your safe keeping.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

Lead our children, especially teenagers, in paths of righteousness and holiness. Defend them from every enemy that tempts them to stray from your side. Channel their energy, idealism and curiosity into ventures that glorify you and lift up others.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

You are the Gate of your sheep. Protect the people of every nation from false shepherds; from rulers who care nothing for their welfare; and from all the threatening dangers of this world.

Bring peace in places of violence; rich pasture in places of poverty; and true righteousness in places of injustice.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

You are the Rod and Staff of all who stand in harm's way on behalf of others. Guide, protect, and strengthen them. Prosper all their works that make for peace, safety and justice; shelter and strengthen their loved ones; and bring them home safely and soon.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

You are Shepherd who leads us through dark valleys shadowed by suffering. Be the strong Guide and sure comfort of all who call upon you, especially: {List}. Fill them with your abundant life; keep them steadfast in faith; and strengthen and bless all who care for them.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, you prepare a table for us in the presence of our last enemy, death itself. Thank you for leading home all who listened to your voice in their earthly life. Be our Good Shepherd, too. Teach us to hear your voice, nourish us at your Table, and defend us from our great Enemy. Fix our eyes upon your Cross and lead us through the valley of death's dread shadows. Bring us into your Father's house, where with all whom you claim as your dear flock, we shall receive the abundant life which you share with your Father and the Holy Spirit.

Lord, in your mercy, please hear our prayer.

We praise and magnify you, dear Jesus. Accept our prayers and lay them at the feet of your Father, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns gloriously as our Lord and our God, now and forever. Amen.