

Homily
Monday of the Fourth Week of Easter
April 22, 2024

Yesterday, we celebrated Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Today, we hear Jesus calling himself the gate for the sheep. In each instance, we are the sheep; we hear the Good Shepherd, we follow His voice and we enter through the Gate.

This is a common theme throughout scripture. In the Old Testament, Psalm 114, the Israelites passed dry-shod through the Red Sea, opened by Moses through the power of God. The chosen people cross the Jordan, again dry-shod, the flow of the water stopped by the priests carrying the ark of the covenant, again, by the power of God. In Jeremiah, we hear God saying, “Cursed is the man who trusts in human beings, who makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD.” We stop following God when we turn away from Him to follow earthly creatures.

Jesus said to Thomas, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

Jesus is the Way, the path to the Gate through which we pass; Jesus is the Truth, He cannot lie and no one else has the truth outside of Him; Jesus is the Life, eternal life can only be obtained through Him.

In everything we do, in everything we say, we must follow Jesus, the Good Shepherd; we must listen to His voice; we must pass through Jesus, the gate to the promised land; we must trust Jesus, the only truth. When we don't, we fall off the path, we miss the gate, we are lost to the truth. We can only be led astray if we choose to be led astray. This can happen when we take our focus off Jesus and focus on earthly things. We must listen to His voice and follow Him in every moment. There is no past – we can't change what has happened; there is no future – we cannot make decisions now for tomorrow; we live in this moment and we make our choices in this moment.

We get up in the morning and choose what to do and what to say. And when we keep our focus on the voice of the Good Shepherd, our choices are simple and we go where the Good Shepherd leads us. It isn't easy because the road is narrow and the distractions are many. But Jesus has already walked the path, suffered and died for us, destroyed death and restored life that we may have life and have it abundantly in the glory of heaven.