

Fourth Sunday of Easter - Yr. C

[Reading I: Acts 13:14, 43-52](#)

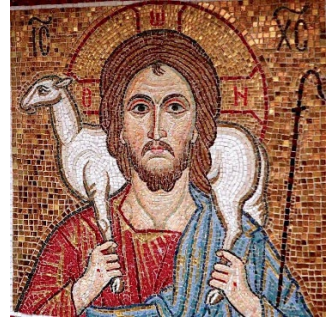
[Responsorial Psalm: 100:1-2, 3, 5](#)

[Reading II: Revelation 7:9, 14b-17](#)

[Gospel: John 10:27-30](#)

Readings may be found on the US Bishop's website:

[Fourth Sunday of Easter | USCCB](#)



Jesus on the shore

The Gospel passage follows the Good Shepherd discourse in the first part of chapter 10. That discourse focused on the shepherd. This selection focuses on the sheep. Those who are the sheep, hear the shepherd's voice and respond to him. The shepherd in turn, gives them eternal life. There is a relationship between the shepherd and the sheep. They come to know one another. This "knowing the shepherd" is one of the unique aspects of Christianity. While others worship the one God, Christianity alone presents the personal connection and relationship between Jesus and each disciple.

Listening takes practice and attention. In our culture, there are many voices and sounds coming toward us. It may be a child's demands, someone who talks continually, or just the noise of media. Sometimes, we spend more time tuning things out than in listening deeply. Listening requires attention. One must focus and hear not only the words but also be attentive to who is speaking, their care for us, and full meaning of the speaker. When applied to prayer, one must listen to the big message of the scriptures and recall what God has done for us. Listening takes time and cannot be rushed. In regular listening, one comes to know the voice of God and can distinguish that voice from all the other messages that come one's way.

This listening leads to life – eternal life. Through this listening, one becomes united with Jesus, and nothing can destroy that connection. Since Jesus is one with the Father, when one becomes united with Jesus, one is united with the Father. It is not a matter of becoming good enough for God to speak to you, it is about listening enough that God will bring you to wholeness and full relationship. It is God who does the work and brings us to life.

This passage also highlights the full unity of the Father and Jesus. The scripture points to the unity in light of Jesus listening to the Father and doing the will of the Father. The scriptures are not speaking in philosophical terms but in relational terms. Jesus manifests his oneness with Father through his teaching, his healings, and his compassion for those who are suffering.

The first reading comes from chapter 13 in the Acts of the Apostles. Paul follows the pattern that Jesus established. Preaching begins in the synagogue and when one is rejected, one reaches out to those who are on the fringes. For Paul, these are the converts to Judaism, the non-believers who had a desire for God and were seeking along with Gentiles, non-Jews, who longed for something more in life. Paul saw that God was at work in anyone who listened to the Good News and responded to it. This was God's work and not that of humans.

This also presents a challenge to us. How do share our faith? If we share only when we think that we will have a great reception, we limit the way God can plant seeds that will bear fruit in the future.

The admission of Gentiles was a major issue in the early church. Some insisted that gentiles needed to become Jews first before they could become followers of Jesus. Paul recognized that God was at work in the life of anyone and that God's love is available to all who respond to God. This issue will be the focus on the reading on Sixth Sunday of Easter.

The reading for the Book of Revelation is also read on the feast of All Saints on November 1. The image here reinforces the message of Paul. This great crowd that is worshipping God is from every race, people, and tongue. They have been made new through the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God. Jesus will shepherd them, provide for their needs, and protect them from harm. This pictures the fulfillment of God's saving work in the human family.

Reflection Questions:

How do you understand the oneness of the Father and Son? How do you understand your oneness with Jesus?

What are some of the ways that you prepare yourself to listen to God?

How do you sort through the many messages that cross your mind to identify the voice of God?

When and how do you share your faith?

Themes

Divinity of Jesus

Listening in prayer

Pastoral Ministry

Martyrdom

Salvation for all people

Prayer Suggestions:

For the Church: that we may recognize the voice of the Lord in our lives, distinguish it from the many other sounds which demand our time and attention, and follow the invitations of Jesus to a fuller life

For the grace to share our gifts: that we may place our gifts at the service of others for God's glory even if they are not accepted

For freedom from fear: that we may rely upon the Spirit's strength as we face challenges and negative messages in our work and society

For all who serve in pastoral ministry: that God will guide them in the service of the community, help them to follow Jesus more closely, and continually renew their strength and energy