

Gospel Reflection

Easter 4, May 3, 2020

Picture a small community where there is a common pen for sheep from multiple herds. All of sheep from the various herds would be collected in this common pen for their protection from wild animals. There would be only one gate. The gatekeeper is probably a hired hand, but the gatekeeper recognizes which shepherds should have access to the pen. Anyone else would be rejected by the gatekeeper so their only access would be by climbing a wall, away from the gate. A shepherd could go in through the gate and call to his sheep and only the sheep who knew that shepherd would follow him. Notice that the sheep follow the shepherd, he doesn't have to drive them.

Jesus uses this analogy to describe to the disciples His role with Israelites. People following anyone's voice but his are being led astray. But those of his flock, know his voice, and more importantly Jesus knows each of them by name. The sheep following Jesus are being led out to find good pasture and to have an abundant life.

How comforting it should be to us. If we can just simply listen to Jesus' voice, believe, and follow him, we can have an abundant life now. Further, Jesus knows us personally, by name. False prophets are thieves and bandits who only intend to steal, kill, and destroy. Listen to Jesus voice, follow him, and take comfort in his loving arms. Jesus is the gate.