

APRIL 22, 2018



FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



ACTS 4:8-12

PSALM 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29

1 JOHN 3:1-2

JOHN 10:11-18

REFLECTION

One of the oldest images of Jesus Christ is found in Rome's Catacomb of Priscilla created in the third century (see the sidebar image on this handout). The image is Jesus as the Good Shepherd. This image was created at a time when Christians were being persecuted by the Romans. Notice the lamb is being carried on the shoulders of Christ. Perhaps the artist was reflecting on the need of the Christian community to be carried by Christ as it was suffering from the torture inflicted by the Romans. The Good Shepherd was leading the community from death into life.

On this Fourth Sunday of Easter we continue to celebrate the joy of Easter Time. At the center of this joy is being thankful for the Good Shepherd's willingness to "lay down" (John 10:15, 17) his life. This is so important that it is mentioned five times in this short reading! Good Shepherd Sunday celebrates that this "laying down" one's life leads us to new life in the resurrection.



Third century image of the Good Shepherd.

ACTION

Read today's Gospel a few times and let the words sink in. Then take out some crayons or markers and draw a picture that contains both the Good Shepherd and yourself. After completing the drawing, journal on the questions below.

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- How does your drawing of Jesus as the Good Shepherd compare to the third-century drawing from the catacombs? What is the relationship of the Good Shepherd to the drawing of yourself? What do you see? What does your drawing reveal about your relationship with Jesus?