

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

“**A**men, amen I say to you: He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he hath let out his own sheep, he goeth before them: and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. But a stranger they follow not, but fly from him, because they know not the voice of strangers. Jesus said to them again: Amen, amen I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All others, as many as have come, are thieves and robbers: and the sheep heard them not. I am the door. By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved: and he shall go in and go out and shall find pastures. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling, and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and flieth: and the wolf catcheth, and scattereth the sheep: And the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling; and he hath no care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know Mine, and Mine know Me. As the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father: and I lay down My life for My sheep. And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.”

(John 10:1-16)

“May the Lord the God of the spirits of all flesh provide a man, that may be over this multitude: And may go out and in before them, and may lead them out, or bring them in: lest the people of the Lord be as sheep without a shepherd.” (Numbers 27:16-17). **Will YOU be that man or woman who will shepherd them?**

Who is a shepherd? A shepherd can be the **POPE** over the flock of the whole Church. The shepherd can be a **BISHOP** over the flock of a diocese, or a **PRIEST** over a parish, or also teaching **MONK (BROTHER)** or **NUN (SISTER)** over their students, or even **PARENTS** over the children in the family. **The shepherds of today have changed pastures from Tradition to Modernism!** They have led—and still are leading the sheep astray!

“I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, like sheep that have no shepherd” (3 Kings 22:17). “But they forsook the God of their fathers, and went astray after the gods of the people of the land” (1 Paralipomenon [1 Chronicles] 5:25). “For they went astray for a long time in the ways of error, holding those things for gods which are the most worthless among beasts, living after the manner of children without understanding” (Wisdom 12:24).

Any shepherd will tell you that sheep are incredibly stupid. We all know the Psalm: **The Lord is my shepherd.** That makes us what? Sheep! How many of you have been to a circus before? Did you see any trained animals? Bears? Elephants? Tigers? You know what you didn't see? **Sheep!** You know why? Because **sheep are stupid!**

Did you know that sheep are the only domesticated animal that cannot go wild? Cats, dogs, birds, horses, pigs, even cows if you set them loose in the world they'll get thin, they'll get smart, and they'll get by. Sheep? Sheep get eaten!

That is what the world does to Catholics if they find them without a shepherd! Many have been 'eaten-up' by the devil and the world over the years. **The Church needs true shepherds!** Boys and men, girls and women, who will help Jesus shepherd His flock.

Jesus could have taught, converted and led the whole world by Himself. He could still be living on Earth right now if He wished! But **He chose to work through human-beings** like you and I. He Himself chose Twelve Apostles to help Him with His work—one betrayed Him, the others would bicker and argue amongst themselves, and all abandoned Him in the Garden of Gethsemane and His first Pope, Peter, denied Him three times! Yet Jesus still persevered with them and continued to use them despite their faults and failings. **They got better, and eventually became saints.**

You, too, may have faults and failings! You, also, may have betrayed Him! You may have even abandoned Him at some point in your life! Yet despite all that, He may still be calling you to be a shepherd—priest, monk, nun, brother or sister!

St. Matthew was a publican—a Jewish tax collector for the Romans, taking money from his own people to give to the Romans! Yet Jesus called him, and he followed! **St. Paul was a persecutor of Christians!** Yet Jesus called him too, and he followed! **Mary Magdalen was a public sinner, possessed by seven devils!** Yet when Jesus came, she followed Him too!

But there was **a young man, whom Jesus loved**, who asked Jesus the way to Heaven. Jesus said: “If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow Me. And when the young man had heard this word, he went away sad: for he had great possessions” [Matthew 19:21-22]. **What a terrible thing to prefer things of this world to Jesus**, the Creator of all things and the Creator of the world!

St. John Bosco, a beautiful example of a shepherd of souls, would say that, in his opinion, **God calls one out of four children to a vocation** — priest, monk, nun, brother or sister. **ONE OUT OF FOUR!** Yet most are like that young man in the Gospel of St. Matthew. When called, **they go away sad, for they have great possessions or at least they hope to have great possessions one day!** “For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14). Or should we say, **they choose not to come**, like those invited to the wedding, but were full of excuses why they should not go (Matthew 22:1-14).

