

April 30, 2023



Center for Spiritual Development

# Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH EASTER

Photo by Tomas Williams from Pexels

## TO BE KNOWN BY NAME

By Sister Jeanne Fallon, CSJ

### Today's Gospel

*Jesus said: "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and **the sheep hear his voice**, as the shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers." Although Jesus used this figure of speech, the Pharisees did not realize what he was trying to tell them.*

*So Jesus said again, "Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. **I am the gate**. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more*

abundantly.”

JOHN 10:1-10

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## Reflection

As we continue on this Easter journey, we move into shepherd imagery, noting two metaphors: the first describes the relationship of the shepherd and the sheep; the second illustrates how Jesus, the gate, is the only one who has access to God’s sheepfold.

The first metaphor: today’s gospel describes a shepherd coming into the area where the sheep have been sheltered, calling each one by name and leading them out into fresh and green pastures. The sheep recognize the shepherd’s voice, and they follow. This reminds me of an experience with my own dog. I had been away for three years during my novitiate and when I arrived home in full religious habit, my parents and my dog came out of the house to welcome me...but my dog just stared at me, afraid of the long black dress until I called her name, “Cookie!” She knew the sound of my voice; her fear and confusion dissolved, and she jumped into my arms. When sheep hear the voice of their own shepherd, they trust the familiar sound. If we have come to know Jesus Christ as our shepherd, what sentiment arises within us when we pray Psalm 23, *“The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want.”*? What is the relationship like between Jesus and me? Between God and me? Is there a bond of trust and familiarity between us? In my everyday life, how do I listen for the intimate sound of God’s voice? How do I discern God’s voice amidst the cacophony of ordinary noise?

The second metaphor: Jesus calls himself the gate for the sheep. In the Hebrew Scriptures, there are several passages about God, the shepherd of the house of Israel. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel denounced the shepherds (kings) of Israel for their ill-treatment and cruelty to the people and they proclaimed that God would give them new shepherds who would pasture the people of Israel. God said, *“I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep”* (Ezek. 34:15). When Jesus says in today’s gospel, *“I am the gate,”* he is saying that he is the gate into God’s sheepfold; he will care for the flock—he is the good shepherd who gives abundant life to his people.





Photo by Sr. Karin Nürnberg, CSJ

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### For Pondering & Prayer

Jesus speaks to each one of us, “I am the good shepherd, I know my sheep, and mine know me.” Just as we are known as deep as the marrow of our being, Jesus wants us to know him in the intimacy of our hearts. May it be so. Let us take some time now to just sit and be with Jesus.

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