

April 21, 2024

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

NAMING AND CLAIMING

By Julie Mussché

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

Jesus said:

"I am the good shepherd.

A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ...

I am the good shepherd,

and I know mine and mine know me,

just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;

and I will lay down my life for the sheep."

JOHN 10:11, 14-15

Reflection

Traveling to various spots around the globe has afforded me the opportunity to observe numerous animal husbandry practices. One of my traveling companions years back had an academic interest in the geography of

agriculture; we spent considerable time visiting farms and agricultural centers. From dairy cows in Switzerland, the Netherlands, and the California Central Valley, to shepherding or goat herding in Idaho, Morocco or the Mojave, herding is hard work, requiring special care and commitment. In some cases, it is a matter of survival for a family or community. By way of distinctive bells or names, herders worth their weight knows the animals they are tending and can take account in all circumstances.

Today's Gospel reading tells of the Good Shepherd, certainly a fitting description for Jesus. Do you remember the picture of the Good Shepherd when you were a child? It might have been an inset in a Bible, or maybe you saw the image in Sunday School, or there was a picture over your bed next to that of a Guardian Angel, or perhaps you had a Holy Card with the picture and prayer. The depiction usually shows Jesus tenderly shouldering or holding a lamb.



For Pondering and For Prayer

Imago Divina Prayer

An invitation: do a search on “Good Shepherd Jesus” to view various artistic renderings of the Good Shepherd, usually to be found in images. Is there one representation that captures your attention?

- Spend some time with the image you selected and allow your eyes to gather the detail and nuances of the portrayal.
- What is it that moves you and conveys God’s word or truth to you?
- In your meditation, what would you like to share with God? What is God sharing with you?
- Then, in the spirit of this Easter Sabbath, rest awhile in God and allow the Spirit to carry you.
- Consider ending your prayer time with the following Psalm portion:

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
From the house of the Lord we bless you.
The Lord is God,
and he has made his light shine on us.
With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession
up to the horns of the altar.
You are my God, and I will praise you;
you are my God, and I will exalt you.
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.*

PSALM 118: 26-29

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