

February 22, 2024

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Lent



Center for Spiritual Development

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Today's Responsorial Psalm and Excerpt from Today's Gospel

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. In verdant pastures he gives me repose;

Beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul.

Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side

With your rod and your staff that give me courage.

You spread the table before me

in the sight of my foes;

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life;

And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for years to come.

“And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

MATTHEW 16:18-19

Reflection

Jesus has chosen Peter to be the “Rock of his Church” and has given him the “Kingdom of heaven.” Since we’ve been listening to how Peter seems to miss key aspects of Jesus’ message, what I find endearing is Peter’s ability to keep at it. When he falters, he keeps going. Perhaps this is part of the message Jesus wants us all to hear: we are not perfect; if we are steadfast in our desire to follow Jesus, then we too help build the Church through our imperfect lives.

Psalms 23 never ceases to touch my heart because it exudes tenderness and companionship; God is with us, always! Through the hardships we bear, God is beside us. Through our need for reassurance, God reveals to us his presence in unexpected places and through people when we least expect it. No matter what is happening in our lives, we walk in the tender accompaniment of God.

One final thought is a song that keeps running through my mind as I reflect on this psalm, “Because the Lord is my Shepherd” by Christopher Walker. It is another way to pray and sing this psalm; by doing so, one can’t help but experience a closeness with God, our Shepherd.

The Lord is My Shepherd!

O Lord, I do want, and it is when I turn back to you that I remember “I shall not want.”

In so many ways, you refresh my soul and for this I am forever grateful.

O Lord, at times fear creeps in. It is recalling your promise to be with us, always.

In you we find serenity, peace, and courage to continue our pilgrim’s journey.

O Lord, you speak of goodness and kindness following us all the days of our lives.

When we find our home in you, this promise comes to fruition.

O Lord, to dwell in you is to live as Jesus lived. It is our response to you that

reveals our deep faith, hope, and love for you, O God.





Bartrès, France
Photo by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

How do the words from Psalm 23 settle within you? Is there one word or phrase that speaks to you more profoundly? If so, hold it gently and give it space to settle within you.

For Prayer

*O God,
in our humanness, be patient as we return to you, our Shepherd.
May we receive the grace we need to remain steadfast
in our faith, hope, and love for you and all of your creation.
Amen.*

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