

! DO NOT ENTER!

The answer to your question  
might be here:

Upstairs

In the wash

I don't know  
what's for dinner

No

When you're attending Church online...  
...but you normally sit in the balcony.



April 30, 2020

Christ is risen! Alleluia!  
(He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!)

.....Because sometimes, you just have  
to laugh!

off the mark.com

by Mark Parisi



I give God thanks for the gift of humor. If you have any humorous pictures or comments you'd like to share, please pass them on.

LUNCH TO POTOMAC TOWERS Haven volunteered to provide lunch at Potomac Towers whenever there is a fifth Thursday in a month, which includes today. Usually we take down a warm entree and sides for about forty plus residence. With the current restrictions, the meal was still needed but we could not come to serve it. I thank Prue Yelinek, Valerie Wills and Kelly Bracken (and family) for coordinating bagged lunches to be delivered. I am grateful I got to do some cookie baking and then send it to others so I would not be tempted at my home.

The next time we will serve at Potomac Towers is July. We will send out word of the menu, needed donations and call for volunteers in early July.

DID YOU SIGN-UP FOR BISHOP GOHL'S WEEKLY UPDATES If you have not already, I would strong recommend that you sign up to receive the Bishop's weekly updates. They include good and timely information as well as words of encouragement. To sign up go to <https://demdsynod.org/covid-19/> Scroll down to "Messages from the Bishop" After the list of previous messages, you will see a place to click so you can have them delivered to your e-mail address. You could also read them at the link above. The message is usually posted by Thursday afternoon. We are members of an extended, diverse and active church. It is good and hopeful to realize that wider connection with our Delaware and Maryland brothers and sisters in Christ.

NEW MESSAGE FOR OUR DIGITAL SIGN My sister passed this on. **"The Church is not closed. The Church is DEPLOYRD"** So true! The church is still "out there" at work because WE are out there being God's people wherever we are. Amen!

WHAT IS ON YOUR PLATE TODAY? Many days I start out with a plan but then..... But today, I'm on other people's schedules. I have a follow up visit with my surgeon (Maybe I will be off my wound V.A.C. soon?!?!)... A 10:00 am Zoom meeting with the DE-MD Synod Deans and the Bishop... Prepare a children's message and a sermon in time for taping Sunday's worship on Friday afternoon... oh and somewhere in there I need to put a pork loin roast (that was on sale) in the Crockpot. At least at the end of this day, I will be able to say with certainty what it is that I did. I can't say that about every day. In any event, I still go to sleep counting blessings and giving God thanks.

Stay safe and dry. I hope you can enjoy one of your favorite rainy day activities. And if this gray days are making you blue, call some folks to see how they are doing.... put on some music that soothes or gets you up and dancing... prepare something that makes the house smell delicious.. and remember --- The Lord IS with you. The Lord WILL lead us out to new and renewed pastures. The Lord loves you beyond the moon and back.

God's peace IS with you!  
Pastor Linda M. Alessandri

#### A PAUSE IN GOD'S WORD

Read: John 10: 1-10 (*This year's gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Easter*)

[Jesus said:] <sup>1</sup>“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. <sup>2</sup>The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup>Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup>So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

Reflections *Today's reflection and prayer were prepared by Pastor David Kaplan*

Good Shepherd Sunday – The fourth Sunday of the Easter season has traditionally carried that title

with good reason. The appointed psalm for all three liturgical years is the Shepherd Psalm, Psalm 23 (see Monday's Pause for two translations and Pastor's comments). The Gospel readings are successive excerpts from John 10, in which Jesus declares himself to be the Good Shepherd, who "lays down his life for the sheep." Even the Prayer of the Day in all three years contains shepherd imagery. It's amazing, isn't it, that in a culture where for the most part shepherds tending sheep are the relic of a bygone age, we still find comfort and support in that image even (maybe especially) in the midst of the present darkness.

At least I do in this coming Sunday's Gospel reading from John 10 (printed above), the passage for Year A. Unlike thieves and bandits who try to sneak in the sheepfold by scaling the wall or burrowing under it in order to snatch an unsuspecting, but perhaps curious lamb, the shepherd enters by the gate. He calls his sheep by name ("C'mon Short Ears, move it Gray Wool") with perhaps a gentle tap on the sheep's butt in order to bring the flock out. Once all the sheep are outside the fold, the shepherd goes on ahead to lead them to good pasture.

Remember the recognition problem in last week's Gospel? Those two straying sheep going the wrong way from Jerusalem to Emmaus (trying "to cut their losses" is how Pastor described it in Sunday's sermon) didn't know the Shepherd even when he prodded them with Scripture about himself! But having experienced the shepherd's presence in their midst through word and meal, the sheep now know: they "follow him because they know his voice." No recognition problem here!

So my sister and brother sheep (yes, you too Wandering Feet - don't be taken in by that strange voice over the wall - it's the enemy) from Haven fold...Haven fold? Don't we wish! Truth is we haven't seen Haven fold in weeks turning to months. It's a strange fold in which we find ourselves this Easter season, separated from one another, feeling all alone, fearful at times that perhaps even the Shepherd has deserted us. But just when we're on the edge of despair, the psalm comes with its strong familiar reminder, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me"; and this Gospel text speaks assurance in the depths of our loneliness, "He calls his own sheep by name - the name indissolubly linked to his name in the waters of Baptism - and leads them out." Somehow, somehow he will bring us through this mess and bring us out of this murky fold. That may take some pushing and prodding, because as depressing as this situation often becomes, we're getting used to it, and now we're fearful of what lies on the other side of the fold. So "C'mon Deb; move it Dave, get out of that fold you were never meant to be in." But we don't need to be afraid, for the Shepherd goes before us to lead us into good pasture, even if at first it seems new and a bit strange. And meanwhile, even in the fold, he leads our souls out to experience the beauty of spring, the compassion of caring loved ones, and above all the good news of his Easter victory over sin and death.

And one more little twist to this portion of the Good Shepherd story. At its conclusion we expect Jesus to say, "I am the Good Shepherd." And he does - in the verse (11) which directly follows this reading, the opening verse of next year's Good Shepherd Sunday Gospel. But in this Sunday's reading he concludes with a less familiar "I am" saying: "I am the gate for the sheep." Besides being our great good Shepherd, Jesus is the gate through which the sheep come in and go out of the fold. Both gate and Shepherd - how can that be? Perhaps this way: as crucified Savior, Jesus is the gate that opens for us the way from despair to hope, from darkness to light, from death to life. As risen Lord, the Good Shepherd leads us on that way to bring us life in all its fullness and abundance and joy, as God always intends for us, even here, even now.

Prayer: Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life. Amen.  
(ELW 780).

Music:

"Loving Shepherd of Thy Sheep" (Rutter) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqRt7Z\\_P-IY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqRt7Z_P-IY)

"The Lord is My Shepherd" (Mormon Tabernacle Choir)

"Shepherd" David Crowder (contemporary) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YckXtIs-DO0>