

A Good Shepherd

A PRAYER MEDITATION FROM *AMBASSADORS OF JESUS CHRIST*

“Consider Jesus Christ as the good shepherd of the Gospel, who seeking the lost sheep, placing it upon his shoulders, and bringing it back to the fold. Since you are taking his place, look upon yourself as obliged to do the same thing.” (Meditation No. 196.1)

FIRST MOVEMENT

1. **Take a few minutes to quiet yourself and to call to mind that God is present in the poverty and need of those with whom you work.**

“Recognize Jesus beneath the raggedness and poverty of those you have to teach. Adore him in their person.” (Meditation No. 96.3)

2. **Ask that God might help you to understand better what God’s will is for you.**

“I have come not to do my own will, but the will of the one who sent me, which is that I should lose nothing of all that has been given me.” (Jn 6:38-39)

SECOND MOVEMENT

3. **Contemplate the Mystery of God’s Love at Work in the World**

Read the following Scripture passages a few times slowly. What words or phrases especially catch your attention? Listen to what is being said. Watch what happens. Try to become part of the mystery. Lovingly contemplate Jesus Christ, the good shepherd of the Gospel, and your relationship with him.

“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The one who is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd; I know my own and mine know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.” (Jn 10:10-15)

“What do you think? If a man has 100 sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the 99 on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more

than over the 99 that never went astray. So it is not the will of my heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish." (Mt 18:12-14)

"Jesus unfolded the scroll and read: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.'" (Lk 4:17-19)

4. Reflect on the Mystery of God's Love at Work in Your Own Life

For whom are you a shepherd? Who are those that God has entrusted to you? Where is God inviting you to challenge the darkness of ignorance? Where is God sending you to set free those imprisoned by self-doubt ... to be a compassionate presence leading back those who are alienated and spiritually abandoned ... the lost ... those cut off from the Truth in a world where, more and more, religion is perceived as something foreign or superfluous?

God so loved the world that Jesus was sent to bring us home. Are you open to the possibility that the same God so loves the poor? ... the abandoned? ... those without good news in their lives that you are being invited to seek them out and help bring them home?

THIRD MOVEMENT

5. Resolve to Be More Open to the Spirit Who Works in and Through You Today

If you chose to allow this Scripture to come alive in you now, what would you have to change in your life? What are the obstacles to this change?

Where is the Spirit drawing you to sacrifice yourself today that others may have life?

This prayer meditation is an excerpt from *Ambassadors of Jesus Christ: Prayer Meditations for Christian Educators* (1995) by Brother William Mann, FSC, Brother Henry Dissanayke, FSC, and Brother Isaias Tzegay, FSC. This book contains 35 meditations that invite one to enter into the three movements of Saint John Baptist de La Salle's *Method of Interior Prayer*.