

# The Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 30, 2023

## The Collect of the Day

O God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd of your people: Grant that, when we hear his voice, we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## A Reading from Acts 6:1-9, 7:2a, 51-60

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen. And Stephen said: "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it." Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and

saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

**Reader:** The Word of the Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

## Psalm 23



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**The Psalm will be chanted.**

- 1 The LORD is my **shepherd**; \*  
therefore I can lack **nothing**.
- 2 He shall feed me in green **pastures** \*  
and lead me forth beside the waters of **comfort**.
- 3 He shall refresh my **soul** \*  
and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his Name's **sake**.
- 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no **evil**, \*  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff **comfort me**.
- 5 You shall prepare a table before me, in the presence of those who **trouble me**; \*  
you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be **full**.
- 6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my **life**, \*  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for **ever**.

Glory to the Father, and to the **Son**, and to the Holy **Spirit**:  
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever **shall be**, world without end.

**A-men.**

## A Reading from 1 Peter 2:13-25

Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

**Reader:** The Word of the Lord.

**People:** *Thanks be to God*

**“Alleluia”**

**Psalm 23:6**



## The Holy Gospel according to St. John 10:1-10

*All standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Holy Gospel, first saying*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to \_\_\_\_\_.

**People:** *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

*People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

## **Proper Preface**

### *Easter*

*For the Celebrant to read after the Sursum Corda.*

But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who was offered for us, and has taken away the sin of the world; who by his death has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again has won for us everlasting life .