



**THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**April 21, 2024**

*St. James Catholic Church*  
*3909 Harrison \* Kansas City, Missouri 64110*

*Reflection from Ben Babaran*

*"I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me."*

Good Shepherd Sunday is an opportunity to share again how Jo and I and the children call each other in a crowd even with cell phones in hand. It's a high-pitched whistle created by inhaling rather than blowing. It is such a unique call that the children decided to learn the whistle. To this day, when we call each other in a crowd or in a movie theater or across the Troost39 Thrift Store or just to get each other's attention or even just to say a long distance "hi!", we whistle. I myself find it endearing and many times amusing when one of our family members tries to get my attention using the whistle. It even gives me peace of mind whenever I get their respective whistle response.

In like manner, shepherds and farmers have their own distinct and unique ways of calling their sheep or farm animals. Their animals listen to them. They know their master's voice and call. In cases when the sheep do not respond to the shepherd's call, the shepherd goes in search of the stray lamb. When the sheep do not respond because they are sick, the shepherd heals them. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, knows us, his flock. He feeds us when we are hungry and thirsty through the Holy Eucharist, goes after us when we are lost, heals us when we are sick, and above all, protects us, even dying for us, his sheep.

In today's gospel, Jesus says "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice." Jesus' flock has NO boundaries! This statement leads me to Pope Francis' greetings to the participants meeting for the Fourth World Gathering of the Global Christian Forum from 15 to 20 April in Accra, Ghana, saying Christians are called "to embody the unity and love of the Triune God in their personal and ecclesial lives so that they bear witness to a world scarred by division and rivalry." This is our call today!

We are called to be good shepherds as everyone is entrusted with the care of others. We are parents, teachers, pastors, nurses, doctors, and government officials. We are shepherds! May we love, respect, guard, encourage, and be present with those entrusted to us.

May we give thanks to the Good Shepherd, hear his voice, follow him and rejoice in his faithful love.

**HAPPY GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY TO ALL!**