



## Lectio Divina. IVth Sunday of Easter. Cycle A

*Rome (Italy), Miss Yolanda Valero, May 3, 2020.- “I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (Jn 10:10).*

### GOSPEL

#### John 10: 1-10

Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers.” Although Jesus used this figure of speech, they did not realize what he was trying to tell them.

So, Jesus said again, “Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came [before me] are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.

### STUDY OF THE TEXT

#### *“The sheep hear his voice”*

The text uses images like shepherds, sheep, sheepfold, gate. This language was familiar to his hearers and they understood it well, because, for centuries, the shepherds were having a

common occupation in Israel. Jesus has often used it in his talks (Mt 10:5-6) and parables (Mt 25:31-33).

The image of the “Gate” and the “Shepherd” come up directly from the preceding incident. (cf. John 9). The Pharisees of the synagogues of Jerusalem turned out to be bad shepherds because they thought only about maintaining their subjective authority, without neither feeling compassion for the man born blind, nor feeling any joy in the restoration of his sight. On the contrary, the Lord was sincerely concerned for the life of that poor blind man, who finally followed him outside the sheepfold of Judaism, after which the Jews expelled him (John 9: 34). “I am the gate” is the third of the seven “I am” declarations of Jesus mentioned only in the Gospel of John. These “I am” declarations point out His identity and unique divine end. Soon after declaring that He is “the Gate” in John 10: 7, Jesus declared: “I am the Good Shepherd” (John 10: 11). He describes Himself not only as “the Shepherd”, but also as “the Good Shepherd.”

Of all the figures that are applied to God in the Old Testament, that of the Shepherd is one of the most important. Others can illustrate better his majesty and glory, but none like this one expresses the divine tenderness and concern for his people. In this text Jesus identifies Himself as the one to whom the sheep belongs, “the Good Shepherd” whom they listen to and obey, the one who guides them to good pastures and protects them from enemies, giving up his very life for them. Without doubt, it is a very expressive term which speaks to us of property, care, protection, intimate knowledge and unlimited sacrificial love.

## MEDITATION

### *“I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved”*

The sheep knows the shepherd and follows him. Thus, Jesus using this image shows himself as the shepherd with authority to gather and guide his sheep to a new sheepfold. All those who listen to his voice, his message of liberation, because he is the shepherd of Israel, will find in Him light and life in abundance. His voice is not directed to anonymous persons, but to those whom He knows one by one; for Jesus each one has a face, name and dignity.

- What does it mean for you to be voice and guide in your Christian life?
- Like Jesus, do you recognize in the other: his face, his name and his dignity?

Jesus reveals to us that he is the new Door, not only in relation to the old sheepfold of Israel, but also with respect to those who will follow him. His words are a clear invitation to change our way of thinking and relating to others. To enter through Jesus supposes to place the good of the other person as a priority task and to spend all energy to achieve it. The person who does not enter into this new way of reasoning is an oppressor. Certainly, these are hard and strong words that Jesus speaks to his contemporaries and to us today, who often continue to use power and violence to oppress the people. Jesus is the new door in relation to others, but what does it mean for us today to enter through the gate which is Jesus? This means to “go

closer to him,” “ trust him,” follow him and let oneself be guided by his message; it entails, in short, participating in the gift of Jesus, His death and resurrection, so that human beings will attain real happiness: to have life and to have it abundantly.

Jesus is the shepherd who comes to your life as the gate through which to go out and enter:

- Do you let him lead you, when you relate to others?
- Are you also in your community and family a gate, which does not close you in but which remains open for fraternal communication and let love and trust pass through it?

## PRAYER

***“I came so that they might have life”***

*Lord Jesus, You are the one who guides our life, the one who seeks our good and for this, you invite us to enter by the door of faith, so that believing in You, we will find you not only in our prayer and sacramental life, but also in others, whom you have entrusted to us so that we may be light and guide in their concrete realities and thus, all will be able to open, enter and follow the path that you show us, because you are the path that leads us to life in abundance, Amen.*

## CONTEMPLATION

During this week I will remember:

\* Jesus tells us:

***“I am the gate; the one who enters through me, will be saved”.  
“I have come so that you may have life in abundance.”***