



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year C, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



### Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for the session, read all the readings.

Acts 13:14, 43-52

Psalm 100:1-2, 3, 5

Revelation 7:9, 14b-17

John 10:27-30

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Was there a particular reading which appealed to you? Was there a word or image that engaged you?

Read the Word in Liturgy and Catholic Doctrine sections. These give you background on what you will be doing this session. Read over the session outline and make it your own. Check to see what materials you will need for the session.

## The Word in Liturgy

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is known as Good Shepherd Sunday. The readings in all three years of the lectionary cycle employ the images of sheep and shepherd to explore the relationship between Jesus and those who belong to him. The gospel passage for year C highlights the gift of eternal life given to the sheep, and establishes the connection between Jesus the good shepherd, and God the Father.

The first reading concerns one episode in Paul's first missionary journey. The passage recounts how the good news was welcomed by some in the Jewish community at Antioch, but greeted with jealousy and rejection by others. Although the conflict between the apostles and those who reject their message culminates in the announcement that the good news will be preached to the Gentiles, Paul's explanation shows that the mission to the Gentiles is part of God's foreordained plan, and not caused by Jewish rejection. Upon leaving that area, Paul and Barnabas "shook the dust from their feet"—a cleansing gesture common to Jews in leaving foreign territory, which Jesus told his first disciples to practice when they are rejected (Luke 9:5; 10:11)—yet the passage ends on a positive note. Those in Antioch who persist in their newfound faith are full of joy and the Holy Spirit.

Today's brief passage from the tenth chapter of John's gospel is remarkable first of all for its promise of eternal life. Not only safe pasture, guidance, and protection are given to the sheep, they are promised unending life. The providential care of Jesus is expressed by the

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image of the sheep being held safely in the hand of the shepherd. Yet because this image is accompanied by a promise of eternal life, it points beyond human commitment and caring to a divine gift. Jesus goes on to say that the sheep have been given to him from the Father's hand, from which no one can snatch them. The final statement of the passage, "The Father and I are one," makes explicit that the ground of Jesus' promise to give life to the sheep and protect them forever from destruction lies in his oneness with God.

# **Catholic Doctrine**

## **The Divinity of Christ**

At liturgy, the Church prays what we believe about the Trinity using terms developed by our forebears in faith. We proclaim of Christ that he is "begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father." God has been revealed to us by Jesus as the Father not only because God is our Creator but because of the unique relationship between the Son and the Father.

