



a Kendall Hunt Company

Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year A, Junior High

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Sun, 07/28/2013 - 20:00

Junior High Session

Acts 2:14, 36-41

John 10:1-10

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Jesus our Shepherd, lead us on the path of goodness.

Help us to hear and know your voice.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is Jesus, the Good Shepherd. To begin the session, mark three columns on a large sheet of poster paper or chalkboard. Title the first column, *Media*, the second column, *Contemporary Music*, and the third, *Jesus*. Invite the youngsters to brainstorm some messages that they receive from the first two columns. Write down their responses. In the column titled, *Jesus*, brainstorm with them what they think Jesus is calling them to. Write down their responses. Discuss:

- How can messages we get from music and the media keep us from hearing Jesus' voice?
- What helps us listen to Jesus' voice?
- How is Jesus calling you in your daily life?

Allow time for discussion. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his flock. Jesus offers us a relationship of trust and love.

Listen to the Word of God

In the first reading from Acts of the Apostles, Peter tells the people about following Jesus. Listen to his powerful message.

Read Acts 2:14, 36-41.

Allow for silence.



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Scripture Discussion Starters

- What does Peter tell the people about Jesus?
- Who is listening to Peter?
- What is the question the people ask Peter?
- How does Peter answer them?

In the Gospel today listen to how Jesus is like a good shepherd.

Read John 10:1-10.

Allow for silence.

- How does Jesus describe himself?
- What does Jesus say about hearing his voice?
- What does Jesus offer those who follow him?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

Today's first reading from Acts is taken from Peter's sermon on the day that the Holy Spirit is poured out on the disciples. Peter spreads the word that Jesus is Lord and Messiah. Some of the crowd are struck by Peter's Spirit-filled testimony and they ask, "What are we to do?" Peter commands that they believe and be baptized. Many accepted Peter's message and the community of Christians grew rapidly. In today's passage from Acts we see that when the good news is proclaimed it demands a response from listeners.

The gospel reading today makes clear that believers are to trust in Jesus Christ alone, the true shepherd. The imagery of shepherd and sheep found in today's gospel relies on the understanding of the shepherding practices of the time. In first century Palestine the shepherd knew each one of his sheep and he protected them. The sheep would recognize the shepherd's voice and, when called, would respond to no other. In those days, the shepherd would walk in front of the sheep and lead them.

In today's Gospel passage, the description of Jesus as shepherd shows how he protects and cares for his followers by laying down his life for them. Jesus the good shepherd offers his followers a close relationship that brings life.



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Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How is Jesus like a good shepherd?
- How can we listen for Jesus' voice and follow?
- What kind of relationship does Jesus offer you?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

Jesus reveals who God is for us. Jesus, the Good Shepherd helps us to know about God's unending love. In the Scriptures, the Good Shepherd is the leader who lays down his life for his flock. He is a caring companion who protects his sheep. The sheep recognize the good shepherd's voice and they follow him. Jesus had all these qualities and even gave his life for us.

We are members of God's flock, the Church. We put our faith and trust in God because God loves us and will always care for us.

- How does the image of shepherd describe God's relationship with us?
- How can you deepen your relationship with Jesus, the Good Shepherd?
- How do you live as a follower of Jesus?

The Gospel in Life

How can you choose to be a "good shepherd" and care for others this week?

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