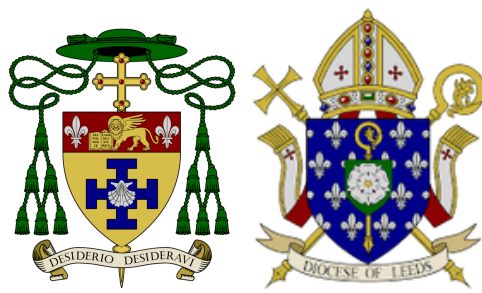




Tomb to Mission

A journey from Easter to Pentecost



FOURTH SUNDAY

I am the Good Shepherd, I know my own and my own know me. John 10:14

The 'time' referred to at the beginning of the reading is Jesus teaching in the Temple in Jerusalem. He had come for the 'Feast of Booths' (Sukkot), a seven day celebration of the Exodus from Egypt, when God freed his People from slavery.

It is on this visit, in the Temple itself, that Jesus gives some of his greatest teaching:

- *'I am the Light of the World'*
- *'Before Abraham Was, I Am'*
- *'I am the Good Shepherd'*
- *'I and the Father are One'*

Jesus is the One promised by God in the words of the prophet Isaiah:

'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.'

What does Jesus mean when He says, 'I am the Good Shepherd'? The shepherd was a familiar figure to the Jewish people, yet the relationship between shepherd and sheep is far more intimate than we might imagine from our own culture:

*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.*

We are sheep, not because we follow blindly or stupidly, but because we recognise the Shepherd's voice.

We hold together, like a flock, because we trust Him and he is familiar to us:

*A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him,
for they do not know the voice of strangers.*

Our language for this is the Christian community:
we all belong and are called to follow Christ.

#GospelReflection