

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

April 2015

The following series is **free, downloadable small-group materials** based on each week's Mass readings and taking into account the seasons of the liturgical year. Each study provides an introductory reflection on some aspect of the readings or on personal spirituality. Each of the readings is provided along with a few questions designed to engage the heart and stimulate the group's discussion. These small-group materials will be provided on a continuing basis in monthly segments.

We would suggest the following 60-to-90 minute format for the small group:

1. Open with a moment of quiet reflection and prayer.
2. Discuss the introductory reflection with a question or comment like, "What do you feel is important for us to grasp in this introduction?" or "What stood out to you from these opening paragraphs?" As the facilitator of the discussion be ready to share one or two things which were important to you from the introduction.
3. Have someone read the First Reading and ask several people to share their answers to the reflection questions. **Effective group-dynamic techniques should be used to further stimulate the discussion and affirm the participation.**
4. The Responsorial Psalm provides a reflective transition from the First Reading to the Gospel Reading, so have the Psalm read aloud. You may do this without additional comment, or you may want to draw their attention to something you feel is pertinent.
5. You can either read this week's Second Reading next and ask several people to share their answers to the reflection questions, or cover the Second Reading after you cover the Gospel Reading. The Second Reading does not always have a clear connection to the other Sunday Mass readings, **so do not feel like you need to force a connection.** However, you can provide an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to draw a connection by asking, "How do you see this passage tying into the theme of the readings?"
6. Move on to the Gospel Reading, repeating the process by asking several people to share their answers to the reflection questions.
7. Approximately equal time for discussion should be given to each of the sections: Introduction, First Reading, Gospel Reading, and the Second Reading. Obviously, if one section is especially stimulating, you should give some additional time to discussing it.
8. Close the discussion with group prayer, using various prayer formats.

We trust that God will use these materials to make His Word more meaningful to you, both within the small group environment and during Mass as you hear the Scripture is read and taught. **We would appreciate knowing if you are using the *Reflecting on Sunday's Readings*, and would welcome your feedback, either through the Emmaus Journey web page form, or by direct e-mail.**

Sincerely in Christ,

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Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

EASTER SUNDAY, THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD—April 5, 2015

Introduction: Easter, when delight was turned to disappointment, and disappointment was turned to delight. Surely Satan and the forces of evil must have thought they had won. And if the forces of evil could have danced, surely they must have been dancing in the streets. They thought they had killed the Son of God. Darkness seemed to have been reigning supreme from the time when Judas and an armed crowd, came to arrest Jesus under the cloak of darkness. Darkness provided the cover for their evil intentions and also for the shameful abandonment of Jesus by his disciples. Even Peter had to slink away into the darkness to hide his shame.

How they must have rejoiced as “from noon onward there was darkness over the whole land,” until at last Jesus “gave up his spirit.” How they must have believed that this darkness was just a foretaste of the spiritual darkness which would rule the earth unabated by the Light of the World. But God had another plan and turned their delight to disappointment.

For the followers of Jesus, for several days, disappointment had reigned supreme. Their leader, their Lord and teacher, the one they loved and left all to follow, had been arrested, brutalized, humiliated, and killed. Their lives were devastated and they were left with only memories and questions. While this darkness still seemed to reign, Mary Magdalene and her companions, and later Peter and John, came “while it was still dark” only to find an empty tomb. Disappointment upon disappointment, or so it seemed at first. But when they realized that the face cloth was separate from the other burial wrappings, a ray of hope and light, pierced the darkness, never to be extinguished. Rather, it was a ray of hope and light which was to grow in brilliance as Christ’s resurrection became known and its meaning understood. Praise God, disappointment was turned to delight!

“The New Testament writers speak as if Christ’s achievement in rising from the dead was the first event of its kind in the whole history of the universe. He is the ‘first fruits’, the ‘pioneer of life’. He has forced open a door that has been locked since the death of the first man. He has met, fought, and beaten the King of Death. Everything is different because He has done so. This is the beginning of the New Creation: a new chapter in cosmic history has opened.”*

Wherever, or whenever you are experiencing darkness of the soul, Jesus is there, just as John said in the beginning of his Gospel, a Light shining in darkness. We should no longer shrink into our fears believing the lie that evil will triumph, but follow the disciples’ example and seek out the resurrected Christ. He is risen, he is triumphant, we are in him, full recipients of his victory. In Christ, you are a new creation, and can experience living as a new creation in the peace and power of Jesus. Like the disciple in today’s Gospel reading, we must see and believe.

*C.S. Lewis, from *Miracles*.

First Reading — Acts 10:34, 37-43

34 Then Peter proceeded to speak and said, "In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. ...37 what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached, 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. 39 We are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and (in) Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. 40 This man God raised (on) the third day and granted that he be visible, 41 not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42 He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. 43 To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name."

1. How do you see darkness manifest in the ordinary existence of the people in your environment?
2. How do you feel about being a witness? What makes it difficult? What makes it easy?

Responsorial Reading — Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

1 Give thanks to the LORD, who is good, whose love endures forever. 2 Let the house of Israel say: God's love endures forever.

16 the LORD'S right hand is raised; the LORD'S right hand strikes with power." 17 I shall not die but live and declare the deeds of the LORD.

22 The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. 23 By the LORD has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes.

Second Reading — Colossians 3:1-4

1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory.

3. What does "your life is hid with Christ in God" mean to you?

4. What have you found helpful to enable you to "set your minds on things that are above"?

Gospel Reading — John 20:1-9

1 On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." 3 So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. 4 They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; 5 he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. 6 When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, 7 and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. 8 Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. 9 For they did not yet understand the scripture that he had to rise from the dead.

5. How do the responses at the tomb provide an analogy of the conversion process?

6. What is the significance of such detail in reporting the resurrection?

7. Through this incident, what value do you see of living your faith in companionship with other believers?

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER OR, DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY—April 12, 2015

Introduction: Holy Week and the Easter celebration has enabled us to emotionally and spiritually walk with Jesus and the disciples through their spiritual warfare and victory. On Holy Thursday our hearts were alternately warmed and chilled as we entered into Jesus' inauguration of the Eucharist, and heard the warning of his coming betrayal. Our hearts became burdened with heaviness when on Good Friday we recalled Jesus' arrest, abusive trial and crucifixion, even though we knew "the rest of the story". Then in the Easter vigil and during the Easter celebration we were able to exalt in Jesus' resurrection and victory over Satan, the forces of evil, and death. We rejoiced knowing that death is destroyed once and for all and that we have new life through faith in the merits of Jesus.

Sadly, for many, the Easter story ends on Easter morning. Actually, Easter should be just the beginning of a new reality which we should ever experience for the future. What are we celebrating if we are not celebrating entering into a new way of living? How tragic it would have been for the disciples to have participated in this fateful week in Jesus' life and to have walked away unchanged. How tragic it would have been if they simply returned to their homes and picked up their lives where they left off before they met Jesus. The whole message of the Gospel of John is captured in the opening paragraph; "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." And in the closing chapters of John's Gospel, Jesus' Passion fulfilled this truth uttered at the beginning of his ministry. Would it be possible to really comprehend this truth, celebrate it, and walk away unchanged by it? I think not!

There are three expected changes that are fully recognizable in today's Gospel reading. The first is when Jesus twice said, "Peace be with you." No more should our lives be characterized by fear; fear of death, fear of God's retribution, or fear of powerlessness in our lives to overcome the darkness. As we contemplate the finished work of Christ and entrust ourselves to him, we will see a diminishing of fear and an up-surfing of peace filling our being.

A second change should come about as we grasp Jesus' statement, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." This commission provides purpose and direction for a lifetime. No more must we wander meaninglessly about trying to discover why we exist, or what our purpose is. The resurrection and this commission provides the ultimate promotion; to be ambassadors of Christ to a world that lives in darkness and from which we have been delivered. We have become carriers of forgiveness to a world experiencing the affects of condemnation.

The third change is captured in John's statement, "that believing you may have life in his name." If we walk away unchanged, only to experience life as do the nonbelievers around us, we are missing out, really missing out. Jesus truly offers us new life, a life with new attitudes, with a new spirit, with new power over sin, with new relationships, both with God and with God's people, a new family. We need not walk away unchanged. We can continue to walk with the disciples emotionally and spiritually for the remainder of our lives. The process for us is the same as it was for them. We need to go to Jesus and ask him to breathe into us new life, then join with his disciples to follow him. "If our life in God is to become vital in our experience, we must be involved in ongoing and repeated transformation. It does not have to be forced, but it does have to be real. God's grace will do most of it, but our cooperation is required."*

*Marilyn Gustin in *Living the Liturgy*.

First Reading — Acts 4:32-35

32 The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. 33 With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. 34 There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, 35 and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.

1. What are the evidences that major transformation has taken place within the disciples?
2. How would you respond if you met a group of people like these early believers?

Responsorial Reading — Psalms 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

2 Let the house of Israel say: God's love endures forever. 3 Let the house of Aaron say, God's love endures forever. 4 Let those who fear the LORD say, God's love endures forever. ...

13 I was hard pressed and falling, but the LORD came to my help. 14 The LORD, my strength and might, came to me as savior. 15 The joyful shout of deliverance is heard in the tents of the victors: "The LORD'S right hand strikes with power; ...

22 The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. 23 By the LORD has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes. 24 This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice in it and be glad.

Second Reading — 1 John 5:1-6

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten by God, and everyone who loves the father loves (also) the one begotten by him. 2 In this way we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey his commandments. 3 For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, 4 for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith. 5 Who (indeed) is the victor over the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 6 This is the one who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ, not by water alone, but by water and blood. The Spirit is the one that testifies, and the Spirit is truth.

3. Why do you agree, or disagree, with the statement, "his commandments are not burdensome"?

Gospel Reading — John 20:19-31

19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 (Jesus) said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. 23 Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

24 Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

26 Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe."

28 Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of (his) disciples that are not written in this book. 31 But these are written that you may (come to) believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

4. What is the relationship between the disciples' having been sent, and their forgiving sins?

5. Was Thomas' response commendable or not? How much should we rely on our own validation of truth?

6. Why do you think these other signs were not recorded?

7. What do you think John means by, "you may have life in His name"?

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER—April 19, 2015

Introduction: The wellspring of reconciliation, Christ's sacrifice on the cross and bodily resurrection, is the message of hope that we believers must communicate to the world around us. For through his death on their behalf the world can find release from a life of sin and the guilt and condemnation that comes with it, even for the most righteous non-believer, Jesus' bodily resurrection communicates to them the hope of transformation.

In this week's Gospel passage these dejected and defeated disciples exemplify how this message of hope can set people free and turn their world around and put them on a new road of life. Jesus did not choose some miraculous or exalted means to communicate with them, but rather chose two simple means of communications, means which we can also utilize to communicate this hope. Jesus made himself present to them through friendly and significant conversation around a simple meal. We who know Christ are reminded of the privilege we have of dining with Christ through the Eucharist. In this simple celebration we are able to commune with him, and experience his grace filled fellowship.

But what about the poor non-believer who hasn't yet entered into the fellowship of his Body by putting their faith in Christ? How is the non-believer to share in a simple meal of fellowship with Christ? Only through us. As we make ourselves available to them, Christ who dwells in us, also becomes present to them. It is through our words and actions that Jesus can engage the non-believer in meaningful conversation, communicating the message of salvation and his love and care for them.

It is interesting to note that Jesus was not satisfied that they simply became aware that he was alive and present. In addition Jesus made himself known to them by opening the sacred Scripture to them so that they could understand the significance of his death, and resurrection. Once he had accomplished this, those disciples were prepared in both head and heart to be "witnesses of these things." When believers have allowed both their heart and head to be converted they become enthusiastic about "witnessing to these things."

As we relate to non-believers it is important that we also open the Scripture to them, so that they too can understand the significance of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. We can do this by simply telling them about a passage of Scripture that has been meaningful to us, or a thought based on a passage of Scripture. We can also invite them to read and discuss the Bible with us. It is amazing what the Holy Spirit will do in their life when they allow their mind and heart to be engaged by God's Word.

"The wellspring of reconciliation, John Paul writes, is the cross of Christ. Its vertical beam symbolizes the human need for reconciliation with God, and its horizontal crossbeam represents the need for reconciliation within the human family. Because the Church is the Body of Christ, its 'central task' is 'reconciling people: with God, with themselves, with neighbor, with the whole of creation.' One of the ways the Church lives out that ministry of reconciliation is to remind the world of the reality of sin, for reconciliation is impossible without naming the evil that had caused division and rupture in the first place."*

* *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II*, by George Weigel, page 473.

First Reading — Acts 3:13-15, 17-19

13 The God of Abraham, (the God) of Isaac, and (the God) of Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has glorified his servant Jesus whom you handed over and denied in Pilate's presence, when he had decided to release him. 14 You denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. 15 The author of life you put to death, but God raised him from the dead; of this we are witnesses.

17 Now I know, brothers, that you acted out of ignorance, ⁷ just as your leaders did; 18 but God has thus brought to fulfillment what he had announced beforehand through the mouth of all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. 19 Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away,

1. What do John's message in the second reading, and this message of Peter's have in common? How are they different?

2. Why would these messages be perceived as being “hopeful”?

Responsorial Reading — Psalms 4:2, 4, 7-9

2 Answer when I call, my saving God. In my troubles, you cleared a way; show me favor; hear my prayer.

4 Know that the LORD works wonders for the faithful; the LORD hears when I call out.

7 Many say, "May we see better times! LORD, show us the light of your face!" Selah 8 But you have given my heart more joy than they have when grain and wine abound. 9 In peace I shall both lie down and sleep, for you alone, LORD, make me secure.

Second Reading — 1 John 2:1-5

1 My children, I am writing this to you so that you may not commit sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one. 2 He is expiation for our sins, and not for our sins only but for those of the whole world. 3 The way we may be sure that we know him is to keep his commandments.

4 Whoever says, "I know him," but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps his word, the love of God is truly perfected in him. This is the way we may know that we are in union with him: ...

3. Illustrate the role of an “advocate.”

4. Define “expiation.”

Gospel Reading — Luke 24:35-48

35 Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

36 While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

37 But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. 38 Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? 39 Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." 40 And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. 41 While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 They gave him a piece of baked fish; 43 he took it and ate it in front of them.

44 He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. 46 And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day 47 and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things.

5. Why was (is) it important to know that Jesus' body was real?

6. How can this passage affect your view of the Old Testament?

7. Give an example of a mind not opened to these things.

8. What makes being a “witness to these things” most difficult for you?

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER—April 26, 2015

Introduction: Many of us in the baby-boomer generation can recall learning, and reciting from memory, the Twenty-third Psalm: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want . . . and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” Though thousands memorized this wonderful psalm it is doubtful how many actually gave any consideration as to what it meant to have Jesus as our shepherd. This week’s Gospel reading, and the verses from John 10:1-21, begin to open up for us the significance of Jesus as shepherd.

For the most part shepherds were not particularly esteemed in the time of Jesus’ life and ministry. As this passage indicates there were many that were hirelings, irresponsible and unreliable, especially in the face of danger. But by communicating this simple allegory Jesus elevates the role of shepherd to something significant which we are to emulate.

Jesus describes himself as the Good Shepherd which is in contrast to the evil shepherd. The evil shepherd takes his responsibility for the sheep lightly, and puts his own interests ahead of the sheep’s well being. Whereas Jesus takes this responsibility as shepherd very seriously, even to the point of dying to save the sheep. He is devoted to their care and protection.

By contrast the hireling does not own the sheep, he does not know the sheep individually, and does not love the sheep, therefore he has no qualms about abandoning the sheep in the face of peril. Jesus on the other hand owns the sheep, having bought us with his own blood. We are his prized possession. He also knows us individually and calls us each by name. In this intimacy of knowing and being known personally by Jesus there is great assurance and peace. In addition he loves us with an everlasting love, even as the Father loves us. Consequently, he brings all of his resources to bear to sustain our life and relationship with him. That is why in the parable of the lost sheep the shepherd is so intent on finding the one that is lost, because he knows the lost sheep personally and loves it deeply.

It is also important to note that the sheep respond differently to the Good Shepherd than they do to the hireling. The hireling they do not know, whereas Jesus they know. Some of us have been born into a Catholic Christian home and have grown up with a vicarious relationship with Jesus based on the faith of our parents. When a vicarious relationship is the sum and substance of our faith we often cannot say that we “know” Jesus the Good Shepherd. For those of us who fall in this category it is imperative that we personally embrace Jesus as our Savior. “This is crucial: we must be converted—and we must continue to be converted! We must let the Holy Spirit change our lives! We must respond to Jesus Christ.”* This conversion will enable us to be ever more confident in our relationship with him.

When Jesus speaks the sheep listen to him. This passage implies that the Good Shepherd is desirous of communicating with us, but also that we need to listen to him. Very simply this means that when we hear the Scripture read, read them ourselves, pray, or listen to the Scripture proclaimed we should not simply listen with our ears, but endeavor to have our heart attuned, asking, “What is Jesus saying to us?”

Having heard his voice the sheep follow him wherever he goes, obeying his voice. As his followers this is where our faith becomes alive. It remains no longer simply an intellectual tenet of faith, but becomes a belief that we act upon. Faith and obedience are really one in the same. If you look at Hebrews 11 where is listed an honor roll of faith filled believers, you will find that these heroes’ faith is always expressed by obedient behavior. Our faith becomes alive and vibrant only as we follow the Good Shepherd and respond to his leading in loving obedience. Only then do the truths of Psalms 23 become a reality for us.

* *Go and Make Disciples*, published by the National Council of Catholic Bishops.

First Reading — Acts 4:8-12

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the holy Spirit, answered them, “Leaders of the people and elders: ⁹ If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved, ¹⁰ then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; in his name this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ He is ‘the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.’ ¹² There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved.”

1. How do you respond to Peter's statement that "there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved"?
2. Explain why this must be true. (A helpful reference is *Mission of the Redeemer*, paragraph 5)

Responsorial Reading — Psalms 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 29

¹ Give thanks to the LORD, who is good, whose love endures forever. ... ⁸ Better to take refuge in the LORD than to put one's trust in mortals. ⁹ Better to take refuge in the LORD than to put one's trust in princes. ...

²¹ I thank you for you answered me; you have been my savior.

²² The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. ²³ By the LORD has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes. ...

²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. We bless you from the LORD'S house. ... ²⁹ Give thanks to the LORD, who is good, whose love endures forever.

Second Reading — 1 John 3:1-2

¹ See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

3. Children usually manifest some characteristics of their parents. As a child of God which characteristics of the Father would you like to see become prominent in your life?
4. What is the most outstanding benefit of being God's child?

Gospel Reading — John 10:11-18

¹¹ I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. ¹³ This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷ This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father."

5. Who are the "other sheep" to whom Jesus was referring? What "fold" was he referring to?
6. What helps you to listen to his voice?
7. What new thing have you learned about Jesus from this passage?