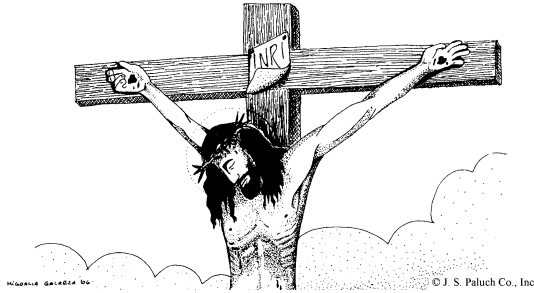


Fourth Sunday of Easter

May 3, 2020

He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness.

— 1 Peter 2:24a



IN NEED OF A SHEPHERD

For a while it was very fashionable to own pigs as pets. The publicity surrounding these creatures informed us that they were—contrary to their popular image—very clean animals, and also quite smart. Sad to say, sheep will most likely never enjoy this sort of domestic vogue. They are neither clean nor smart and are largely defenseless when left on their own, even in large numbers. The biblical image of us as the flock of sheep is not a particularly flattering one. Sheep without a shepherd are truly sad, because they most likely will perish either from their inability to fend for themselves or from their lack of defenses against predators. Placing ourselves in the heart of this unflattering image can reinforce our faith. Until we come to a profound realization of how much we need a shepherd, we cannot appreciate how deeply blessed we are to have been given a Shepherd, one who laid down his life for us and was raised to life eternal in the Spirit, so he might guide us and we might follow him in faith forever. Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — All peoples called by God will receive the gift of the Spirit if they repent and are baptized

(Acts 2:14a, 36-41).

Psalm — The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want (Psalm

23).

Second Reading — Once we were like straying sheep; but now we have been returned to the shepherd, our guardian (1 Peter 2:20b-25).