

Theme of the Week - I know my sheep

Within a school like ours, the pastoral care given by your form tutor, head of year or any member of staff for that matter is the most important aspect of our school life. It's important to know that your teacher cares deeply for you. They want you to be happy and safe in school. They want you to confide in them where needed and know that they will support you not just in your studies but as you move into adult life. So in this week's Gospel, where we see Jesus as the shepherd who knows His sheep, it's important to know that the Latin root word for shepherd is pastor, and it is from this root that springs the church's terminologies and concepts of pastoral care and roles within faith communities. These roles imply a duty of love and care.

In Jesus' day, flocks of sheep were very small and the shepherd knew each sheep by its name. They were a bit like pets. So if you are fortunate to have a pet or have had a pet, you as an owner have cared for them; Take them for walks, fed them when they were hungry, loved them like family. So Jesus as our shepherd is telling us that he will always be there for us when we need him, and that he watches over us and protects us always. The shepherd knows his sheep, and the sheep their shepherd. Complete trust is implicit. The Gospel today makes some sweeping claims - eternal life promised for his sheep, and total protection from anyone who would seek to snatch them away. It finishes up with the declaration that Jesus and God are one.

In what ways are you called to act as a 'shepherd', and to whom? Who are the people who act as shepherds to you? How do they carry out this role? As we place ourselves in the midst of this intimate relationship with Jesus, we might think about the ways in which we 'hear his voice'? Do you have a sense of being called by name? How have you been **Attentive** and **Discerning** in listening to the Lord's voice when He has spoken to you through prayer? What are the other conflicting voices that try to drown him out, and where are they leading us? During the week be **Attentive** and **Discerning** to the needs of people who are in your care.

I know my sheep

Weekly Reflections
4th May 2025
4th Sunday of Easter



From the Gospel of John (10: 27-30)

At that time: Jesus said, 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.'

Prayer for the Week

Loving Father,

We thank you for the many ways we hear your voice – through the scriptures, the world around us, and the people we meet; through prayer and reflection, through the experiences of life and through our daily walk with you.

Through Christ our Lord
Amen

Day 1

Who at St Joseph's would you turn too when in need?
What qualities does that person have for you to turn to them?

Day 2

If you have owned a pet in the past, how have you illustrated the teachings of Jesus? How have you been their shepherd?
Why does Jesus promise eternal life for His sheep?

Day 3

How can you be more **Attentive** and **Discerning** in listening to Jesus through prayer?
How can we be more **Attentive** and **Discerning** when listening to the needs of others?

Catholic Social Teaching – Peace

Today the world has a profound thirst for peace. In many countries, people are suffering due to wars which, though often forgotten, are always the cause of suffering and poverty." **Pope Francis, 20 September 2016**
Peace is not just the absence of war. It is part of God's nature, and a value we should all seek to live out in our daily lives.

"Inner peace is closely related to care for ecology and for the common good because, lived out authentically, it is reflected in a balanced lifestyle together with a capacity for wonder which takes us to a deeper understanding of life." **Pope Francis, Laudato Si', 225**

How this half term can you promote Peace in all that you do in St Joseph's and society?