

In this reading we learn that disciples are called to bear undeserved suffering with patience, even as Christ has set an example for us, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. This word is addressed primarily to those who are servants, but can well be applied to all Christians who endure pain despite having done no wrong. Their Lord has transformed the meaning of suffering and through his wounds brought healing. This letter was evidently written at a time when the Christians in Asia Minor were experiencing various forms of persecution.

Please listen as I read this passage from First Peter

For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

John 10:1-10

Our gospel presents two related images in which Jesus is first the shepherd in charge of the sheep and then the gate through which the sheep enter. These teachings are set in the context of controversy. Jesus' words are directed against religious officials who do not know or truly care for their people. But Jesus knows his own sheep by name. They hear his voice and find the fullness of life.

Hear now these words from the gospel of John.

“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice.” Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Liturgist: This is the gospel message of our Lord and Savior

All: May the reading and the hearing of Your word inform our minds, comfort our souls, and guide our feet.