

# Reflection and Prayers for Fourth Sunday of Easter:

## Vocation Sunday

*Jesus describes himself alternately as the 'gate of the sheepfold' and as the 'shepherd of the flock'. As we entertain these distinct but complementary images, that of "gate" might remind us of Jesus' claim to be the one and only Way to the Father (Jn 14:6). The early Christian movement was also called the Way (eg Acts 9:2). There's food for thought here: is our way of life the Way of Life that Jesus offers?*

As Jesus said to Nicodemus long ago he came to offer the world boundless life. Let us pray for the whole of creation to share fully in this divine gift.

For Pope Francis, chief shepherd of the flock, and all who are pastors in Jesus' name, may they care for those entrusted to them with life-giving love.

We pray for all bishops, priests, deacons and religious, that they may know true joy and fulfilment in their vocations and inspire others to follow in their steps.

We pray for the seminarians of Broken Bay and those preparing for the Permanent Diaconate, that they may follow you, the Good Shepherd, wholeheartedly as men of prayer and commitment.

We pray for those who may be discerning their vocation, that they experience the guidance of your Holy Spirit in their discernment and get the courage and support they need to answer their call.

For world leaders, that their cooperative response to COVID-19 will bear fruit in effective common action to protect the planet from climate change.

We pray for citizens everywhere, that they will emerge from the coronavirus pandemic with a new awareness of and commitment to our shared humanity.

We pray for family members unable to grieve together for loved ones who have died, may they will find ways of comforting and supporting one another through this time of loss.

We pray for the recently deceased, especially those who have died from the coronavirus, . . . and for those whose anniversary of death occurs around this time, that the risen Lord will shepherd them to eternal life.

All-loving God, you sent your Son to lead us to pastures of peace. Keep us close to him until we rejoice for ever at the banquet of eternal life. We ask this through Christ our Lord.