

4th SUNDAY OF EASTER 2022.

THE MAASAI OF KENYA/TANZANIA-GOOD SHEPHERD:

Whenever the question of the Good Shepherd appears, my mind races back to a particular special tribe in Kenya, **the Maasai**. They are a pastoralist tribe occupying the Maasai Mara game park and the southern part of Kenya near Mt. Kilimanjaro, which borders both Kenya and Tanzania.

The Maasai believe all the cows belong to them and were given by God to them for their benefits and needs, hence they should take good care of them, and indeed, they always do.

They mind the flock, or herd, all the year through. They criss-cross Kenya and Tanzania in search of good pasture for the cows as though there were no regional boundaries.

They are very sensitive to the change in climate, during the rainy season, and during the dry season, always looking for the best conditions for their flock (herd).

They stay alert at all times for cattle rustlers and any predators that might attack their herd (flock). They take great care of the expectant cows, sheep, and goats. It is no wonder when you meet them you might see them carrying a little calf on their shoulders. They are very nurturing with the sick cows and have traditional medicinal herbs to counteract any disease or illness.

The Maasai will always take good care of their flock and know each of them personally right down to their needs on a daily

basis. They are very committed shepherds. We can learn so much really from this trib on how to be caring. They are very practical in life, not idealistic, as in so many places of our world.

It is against this background that we read from our Gospel today of the Good Shepherd. We live in a world of **imperfection, emotional crisis, great benevolence...crime, conflict, hatred,...as well as grace, love, and even sin.** It is not a perfect world that we live in indeed. There are so many **attractive but misleading voices which will derail us in our Christian way of life.** We all need a good shepherd to **lead and pull us away from those tempting attractive voices trying to lead us off of God's path.**

We need a **caring one, who knows the sheep by name, who is attentive to their needs, ready to direct and call them back when they stray** due to the confusion caused by different voices. We need a Shepherd who **listens to the cry of the flock, who knows their inner personal life, and gathers the flock together, while going after those who are missing and caring for the sick... A Shepherd that is available to the flock always...** We can find such a Shepherd in the **person of Jesus Christ.**

The sheep too **must listen to the voice of the shepherd and follow that voice in-spite of conflicting voices** from the world... avoiding all the fragmented voices, remaining free of political and religious affiliations, cultural conflicts, languages and traditions...it is sometimes easier said than done.

Christ will give his flock **eternal life and He will take care of them that no one snatches them from Him. (Jn.10:29)**

If we listen to His voice He will gather us as one flock into one field where we can all **feel safe, protected, peaceful, and call it home.**

He will always call us back to Him. He is inviting us today to listen to his voice: ****if today you would listen to his voice, harden not your hearts. Are you going to listen to him?!***

He is sending **Grace** to each one of us to go after the **lost, the strays, the limping, the confused, the sick, and the stranded, to bring each one home. This is our mission of the Resurrection.**

Can you be an instrument and a Maasai Shepherd to someone today?

LET US SHEPHERD EACH OTHER AND MAKE THE WORLD GOOD

