

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's readings picture Jesus as the promised shepherd of God's flock who would bring back the lost and wandering sheep. He responds as a compassionate shepherd to two different needs.

When the apostles were subjected to too much pressure he invited them to a retreat 'near restful waters he leads me to revive my drooping spirit'; And to the people who were lost for leadership he is the shepherd who 'guides me along the right path.'

Jeremiah 23:1-6

The Lord himself will look after his people as he brings them back from exile.

Ephesians 2:13-18

Christ Jesus is the peace between all peoples, making us one in his Spirit.

Mark 6:30-34

Jesus takes pity on the people for they are like sheep without a shepherd.

Reflection



“HE TOOK PITY ON THEM BECAUSE THEY WERE LIKE SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD”.

When Jesus' disciples returned from their mission, they reported everything they had said and done in his name. Like Jesus, the disciples were servants of the people. As the disciples ministered to the people, so many came to them that they did not have time even to eat. As a wise shepherd of his flock, Jesus knew that his followers must tend to their bodily as well as their spiritual needs. He invited them to come with him to a secluded place in order to rest.

The crowds saw Jesus going away, and so they hurried round the lake on foot. When Jesus and his disciples arrived by boat to what they thought was a

“deserted place,” the people were already there to meet them. Instead of being annoyed by this inconvenience, Jesus took pity on them for they were “like sheep without a shepherd.” Ignoring his own need for rest, Jesus began to “teach them at some length”.

LIKE SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD

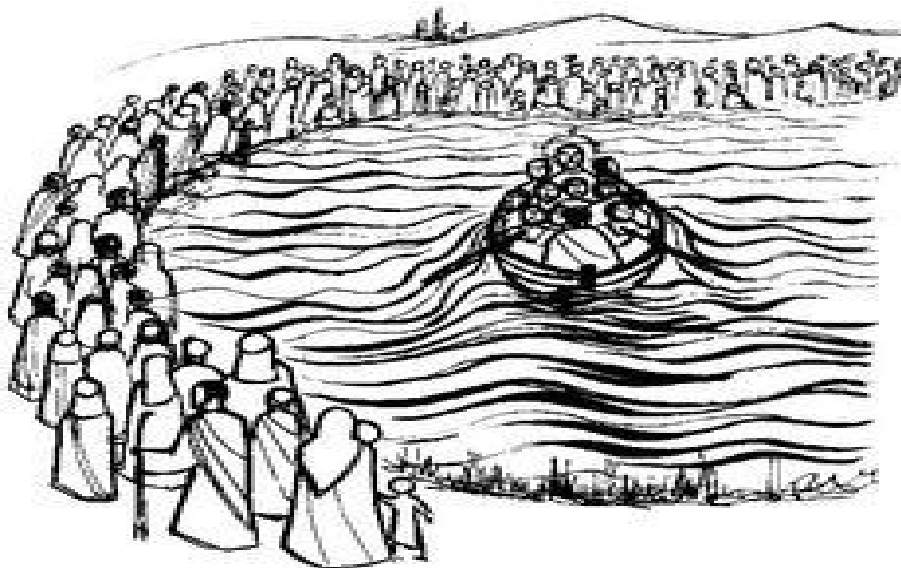


This is the simple theme of today's readings. It's interesting that Jesus' reaction to the crowd is one of pity – as he sees their great thirst for his teachings. This is, in a sense, a clear fulfilment of the prophecy in the first reading today, where God promises a true shepherd who will care for the people of Israel.

Shepherding is a particularly suitable image of God's love and care. The dependency of the sheep on their shepherd, their wandering and straying without someone to guide them, is also a suitable image of the people God loves.

Our own age also shows us as being like sheep without shepherds - a great wandering crowd, seeking something, but not knowing what we are seeking. It is to this flock that the present day followers of Jesus are sent as shepherds.

HE TAUGHT THEM AT SOME LENGTH



GOSPEL WORDSEARCH

R	E	T	S	T	S	E	R	A	W
A	N	Y	A	W	A	H	A	D	Y
S	W	D	W	O	R	C	E	R	T
A	E	O	E	N	B	I	Y	E	I
H	A	L	T	P	R	E	R	H	P
M	C	O	T	R	P	O	R	P	E
A	W	A	U	S	H	E	L	E	H
N	A	H	E	S	O	A	T	H	S
Y	W	A	A	T	C	P	W	S	S
A	Y	W	A	E	G	R	A	L	E

APOSTLES	PLACE	BOAT
MANY	TOWN	ASHORE
LARGE	REST	CROWD
SHEEP	SHEPHERD	TEACH

