



The Good Shepherd

One day as Gandhi stepped aboard a train, one of his shoes slipped off and landed on the track. He was unable to retrieve it as the train was moving. To the amazement of his companions, without hesitation Gandhi calmly took off his other shoe and threw back along the track to land close to the first. Asked by a fellow passenger why he did so, Gandhi smiled, "The one who finds the shoes lying on the track, will now have a pair that he can use." Gandhi conscious of the needs of others, knew and lived Jesus' words closely. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." There are three qualities that speak about a good shepherd that is 'understanding, caring and self-sacrificing'. For Jesus, the true disciple was the good shepherd who was deeply committed to his sheep. He knew where the good pastures were and led the sheep to them, even over rough ground. The good shepherd would lead and walk ahead of his flock.

Today's gospel on the Good Shepherd Sunday reminds us that Jesus considers each one of us as his own. His love and concern for us is always personal. "I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father." while it is true that all of us belong to one human race, his love for each one of us is always uniquely special. He knows all of us by name. it is precisely because his love for each one is unique that the care he bestows is always suited to one's needs, one's temperament and psychological makeup. It is a love that respects and gives consideration for our individual uniqueness as persons.

We are all called to be good shepherds in our own right. Some of us may hold seemingly ordinary positions, but none of these are insignificant. For instance, parents to their children, teachers to their students, employers to their employees, priests to their parishioners etc. Let us pray that we are all aware of our roles and commitments towards others especially to those whom we are called to be good shepherds to.

