

REFLECTION

Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year A, April 26, 2026

Christ our Shepherd

Scripture: 1 Pet 2:20-25

This passage delivers a message that is both demanding and deeply transformative: it calls us to patiently persevere through suffering, particularly when that pain is undeserved or serves as an expression of God's grace.

But, this is not an easy lesson to learn. Our natural tendency is to reject pain, defend ourselves, and demand justice. However, Jesus Christ provides us with another option—one of redeeming love rather than passive resignation. St. Peter specifically refers to Christ: "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his footsteps." He does not suggest Christ suffered for us in a way that eliminates all suffering from our lives. Rather, Christ suffers for and with us, demonstrating how to bear suffering in a way that transforms it. Consider times in our own lives when we are misunderstood, mistreated, or injured by others. The temptation is to retaliate, keep grudges, or let resentment take root. However, Peter asks us to go a step further: to respond as Christ did—with patience, humility, and forgiveness. Thus, anger and vengeance should not control our hearts.

We are encouraged to unite our suffering with Jesus, the good shepherd, and turn it into a love witness, a participation in his redemptive mission. This includes choosing forgiveness when it is difficult, patience when it is painful, and faith when it is uncertain. May we follow in the footsteps of Christ, our good shepherd, and live lives characterized by his healing love rather than bitterness.

