

Fourth Sunday of Easter – Homily – 05/03/2020

“Jesus said, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber.’”

“So Jesus said again, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep...whoever enters through me will be saved.’”

Since it’s pretty safe to assume that most everyone listening wants to be saved then it is of vital importance to know what Jesus meant when he said I am the gate.

Saint Peter made it very clear what he meant in the second reading when he wrote, “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps.”

We must follow in the footsteps of Jesus if we hope to be saved and by the simple fact that we were born into this world we are given everything we need to do so.

Furthermore, being baptized into the faith of Jesus Christ makes walking in his footsteps even more imperative.

Life is generally quite wonderful. Even in the midst of our current world-wide situation there is still a lot of joy. But life is never without its ups and downs.

In other words, bad things happen to everyone – no matter what they believe.

Ultimately, we will all have to endure some of life’s tragedies like sickness and the loss of loved ones – many already have – and eventually we must all face our own death. This is life.

So we either do it in union with Jesus Christ or not.

Saint Peter also wrote in the second reading that, "He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness."

Without Jesus suffering really has no meaning at all. But with him we can live the new life of righteousness.

This means that we can unite everything we do and everything we experience, particularly our sufferings, to Jesus and participate in his salvific act.

And the more deeply we unite our lives to Jesus the more perfectly he is able to work through us.

By the power of almighty God, we become Christ for others. We bring grace into the hearts of other people. We bring about conversion. We participate in Jesus Christ's work of saving and sanctifying the whole world.

During this time we have had many opportunities to unite our sorrows and sufferings to Jesus. Let's not let it go to waste.

"Jesus said, 'Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber.'"

As baptized Catholics we are neither thieves nor robbers. We have been born at this time for this time.

Jesus is the gate and Calvary is the way.

Whoever enters through Jesus will be saved.