

**Reflection for 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter – 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020 – Year A – Acts 2:42  
– end and John 10:1 – 10**

I have to make a confession. During the first weeks of this Covid-19 pandemic, I felt like a sheep who couldn't find its way to the gate and the Shepherd. I just couldn't hear the familiar voice calling to follow. Have you felt like that during these past weeks?

As we continue through this Easter season, we notice that our readings are not any more about the Risen Jesus appearing to his disciples. Like today when we hear how Jesus is using 'figure of speech' to explain something rather important.

In today's reading from John's Gospel, Jesus uses the image of both of a shepherd and the gate for the sheep. And then at the very end of our reading, Jesus says this,

*"I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture... I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."*

As I was reflecting these words, what struck me was how Jesus says, *"I am the gate"* and *"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."*

What does Jesus mean by saying these things?

In our rational thinking the gate's job is to create an opening in the fence. It's job is to allow travel through the fence or the wall.

Jesus is the gate who through His death on a cross has given us access to eternal life. But that leads me to the second bit Jesus says. What does he mean by 'abundant life?'

I'm sure Jesus isn't talking about what we have in our minds straight away when we hear words 'abundant life.'

For us to have abundant life means that we can have everything we want, a life without worries, or cares or anxieties, or suffering.

But the abundant life that Jesus talks about - is about life that is not trouble free, but is life lived in a relationship with God and Jesus.

Of course, one can still ask, what makes it abundant.

By asking such a question we step into an area of faith and belief. From God's and Jesus' perspective abundant life is something different.

As Christians – whether we are firm in our faith or inquiring about Jesus and God, Jesus tells us to do something completely outrageous. Jesus calls us to LOVE – to LOVE God and to LOVE our neighbours! We are called to LOVE, and through this LOVING both God and others, we enter into realm where – yes - life is still messy, there is still suffering, **yet** – it is abundant life because of Easter.

Because of Good Friday –Jesus' death on a cross and Easter Day – when Jesus' rose from death, we know that our problems do not have the last word!

How amazing is this Easter gift we have! To Know that there is no greater gift than the love God has for us in Jesus Christ, we find that life isn't about grabbing everything we want, but it is about receiving the God's love and then giving that love back to others.

So, if any of us feels that this pandemic is overwhelming us – and it does, as that's the reality of it. Let's remember that we have Jesus Christ to lean on, he is our GATE through the fences and walls of life we are to go through at the moment. He is our Good Shepherd, calling us to life that is more abundant with him and God than on our own.

**Amen.**

