

## *Good Shepherd Sunday: Why Sheep Are Smiling in Heaven*

### Reflection on Revelation 7:9, 13a, 14b–17

*“They are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb... For the Lamb who is in the center of the throne will shepherd them.”* (Rev 7:14b, 17a)

#### 1. Heavenly Laundry Service?

Let’s be honest—this line sounds strange: *“They made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.”*

Now if you try that with your actual laundry, you’ll get *anything but* white. But here in Revelation, we’re talking about a holy paradox: **the blood of Jesus purifies, heals, and makes us new.** It’s divine bleach—but with love, not chemicals.

These saints in heaven are the ones who:

- Listened to the Shepherd’s voice,
- Followed Him even when it was hard,
- And didn’t run away when things got uncomfortable (or when the Church asked them to sit in the front pew!).

#### 2. Why Celebrate the Good Shepherd on the 4th Sunday of Easter?

Great question! Why not the 3rd Sunday? Or the 6th?

The Church places **Good Shepherd Sunday on the 4th Sunday of Easter** because by now, the joy of Easter has *settled into our bones*, and we’re ready to hear *what the Resurrection means for our daily life.*

In the early Church, new Christians—especially the newly baptized—needed a reminder: *“Yes, Jesus rose from the dead, but He’s also leading you every step of the way. You’re not abandoned sheep. You’re guided, fed, and fiercely protected.”*

That’s why we read **John 10** this Sunday, where Jesus says:

*“I am the Good Shepherd. My sheep hear my voice... No one will snatch them out of my hand.”*  
(John 10:11, 27–28)

#### 3. A Shepherd Was Always Part of God’s Plan (Old Testament Fulfillment)

This isn’t a new image. God has been talking about shepherding His people since *before sheep were cool.*

**Ezekiel 34:11-12** *“I myself will search for my sheep... I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered...”*

God promised that **He Himself** would come and be the Shepherd. So when Jesus says, “*I am the Good Shepherd*,” He’s not just being poetic—He’s basically saying, “*I am God. I’m the One Ezekiel was talking about.*”

So yes—**Jesus is the fulfillment** of that Old Testament prophecy. No more temporary shepherds, no more “hirelings” who run when wolves come. We now have **the Lamb who is also the Shepherd**—try finding *that* combo on a farm!

#### 4. Revelation: Sheep in Heaven... and They’re Happy!

Now let’s go back to our reading in Revelation.

What do we see? A crowd so big, *no one could count it*. People from *every nation and language* (even the ones who still mumble during the Creed). All in white robes. All rejoicing. Why?

Because the Lamb didn’t just *save* them. He now **shepherds them forever**.

“*They will not hunger or thirst anymore... He will wipe every tear from their eyes.*” (Rev 7:16–17)

This is the **eternal comfort** that Jesus offers. He’s not a part-time Shepherd. He doesn’t lead us halfway and say, “*Good luck!*” He walks us all the way home.

#### 5. So What’s the Point for Us?

Here’s your Good Shepherd Survival Guide:

- **Know the voice of Jesus.** Read the Gospels. Pray. Don’t just follow any TikTok prophet who says “spirituality” with sage in their hand.
- **Stay in the flock.** The Church is messy. So are sheep. But we’re safer together.
- **Don’t be afraid of wolves.** Jesus isn’t scared of them—and neither should you be.
- **Heaven is your home.** No matter what suffering you go through, your Shepherd has a plan to bring you to the green pastures forever.

Jesus isn’t just the Shepherd who carries us. He’s also the Lamb who *became one of us*. He knows what it means to suffer, to be rejected, and even to die. But now He reigns in heaven, wiping every tear and promising, “*You are mine. You will not be lost.*”