**The Eucharist: Celebrating Worthily**

*Fr Louis Fowóyò̩*

Psalm 23, is a psalm of hope, comfort and the expressions of delight in God’s dependable goodness to us. It expresses to us the nature of God that gives in abundance, that can be depended on and that is reliable not to forsake us.

* In it we know the Lord as the greatest of Shepherd in the way He treats His sheep. He supplies, He leads through the right paths. He protects even in circumstances that look very obscure.
* With the Lord, we have one who blesses with prosperity and the one that fills our souls with warm devotion and unspeakable joy.
* This psalm has expressed most powerfully the confidence of man in the providence of God.
* In the Eucharist, we encounter the Shepherd who gives us a reason to be joyful in the world. It is therefore important for us to celebrate it worthily.

1st Reading: Acts 2:14a, 36-41; St Peter calls the attention of the people to the Lord who brought redemption through His crucifixion.

* The duty of every shepherd is to devotedly bring the sheep to the Lord, but this cannot be without patience and love. In love, you let the people know their need for the Lord.
* In this passage, St Peter patiently made the people realize how they have treated the One who came into the world to shepherd them to the Father of Love.
* "Let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."
* This message, confronted the people with their misdeed, yet is not without hope for amendments. "What are we to do, my brothers?" the people asked.
* St Peter calls them to:
	+ Repentance: This includes reforming behavior, expression of remorse and rectification for wrongs, a complete change of life of old to new one in the Lord.
	+ Baptism: This is deliverance from sin and release from the power of evil. It is a means of salvation through which we participate in the death and resurrection of Jesus.
	+ The gift of the Holy Spirit: this is the third person of the Holy Trinity which empowers the followers of Jesus. It is the Spirit that Jesus Himself has promised.
* Repentance cannot but be a challenge especially if we have been found wanting in our life. Any call to rectify bad moral behavior is always difficult but it is benefitting if we heed to the call.
* “For the promise is made to you and to your children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call." He testified with many other arguments, and was exhorting them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand persons were added that day.”

Gospel: John 10:1-10; The story of the Good Shephard is a common one in the Bible. The image of the Good Shepard is one of the images that we place on our walls.

* This story is so important to us in illustrating the role of the Savior who came into the world in order to redeem it. He will go to any length in order to bring redemption to us.
* From the story, we know what distinguishes the Good Shepherd from the other shepherds. The loving concern of the Good Shepherd made Him to lavish His care on the sheep.
* The Good Shepherd makes a lot of sacrifice, even lays down his life for the sheep. He stands as a sign of unity among the sheep. He looks for the erring and weak sheep and bring them back to the fold.
* The compassionate nature of the Good Shepherd makes it difficult for him to withdraw his love from his sheep.