

shepherds would be put into the same sheepfold. At the gate of the sheepfold was a keeper. His job was to watch the sheep through the night. He protected them from thieves and robbers. A thief would have to climb over the fence. The keeper of the sheepfold would be familiar with the shepherds who used his fold. He knew them when they put their sheep in and when they took them out in the morning for pasture. The shepherd would come in the morning to fetch his sheep to lead them to pasture. He would come to the entrance of the fold. He would give a signal and his sheep at his voice would come to the entrance of the fold. The fold would be opened and the shepherd would proceed on his way singing a familiar song in a familiar voice, which the sheep recognized. In this manner, they followed him out to pasture to be fed and watered. Our Lord said: "Amen, amen, I say to you, he who enters not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up another way, is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is shepherd of the sheep. To this man the gatekeeper opens and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them forth. And when he has let out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. But a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers." (John 10)

When Christ told His parable of the Good Shepherd, they did not understand His meaning. They were quite familiar with the imagery, but they did not grasp the spiritual significance, so He went on to explain it in detail. He said: "I am the door." That is, in order to get in or out of the sheepfold, which is the Church—the Kingdom of God—we have to go through Him. He is the one who admits us into the fold. To be one of His sheep in His fold, one has to enter on His terms. Many had come before Him claiming to be true shepherds. Some even claimed to be the Messiah. But Our Lord was not just warning against false Messiahs. He was especially warning against the Scribes and the Pharisees. He was warning against the chief priests of His day. These were the religious leaders who abused their office and authority. They laid heavy burdens on the people and were themselves filled with all manner of corruption. When the Messiah came, they crucified Him instead of heralding His coming. Those

religious leaders were not feeding the sheep. They were using them. They were not shepherds. They were hirelings. They did not care for the sheep but only for themselves. If they were shepherds, they would have cared for the sheep. They would have defended them and protected them and looked out for their interest.

How widespread is this attitude among the bishops of the world today. The best of them either remains silent in the face of the evil, which is the new religion, or they defend it and make excuses for it. A real shepherd does not make excuses. A good shepherd is on the front lines defending his sheep with his life if necessary. The Good Shepherd dies for his sheep. He dies rather than allow the wolf into the sheepfold. Our Lord says: "The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. But the hireling, [the hired hand, the priests and bishops in the religion business,] whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees. And the wolf snatches and scatters the sheep; but the hireling flees because he is a hireling and has no concern for the sheep." When bishops and priests allow heresy to be preached from their pulpits and taught in their schools, when they allow priests to sanction or even counsel immorality in the confessional, when they foster the spiritual and moral corruption of children through evil catechisms and destructive schools, they are hirelings and worse. They foster the work of the wolves, and the wolves devour not the bodies of the sheep but their souls. They send them to hell.

We must be faithful to Our Good Shepherd and to His Church. We are His sheep, and we will be safe if we hear His voice and follow Him. As St. Peter says, "Dearly beloved, Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you should follow His steps. 'Who did not sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.' (Is. 53:9) Who when He was reviled, did not revile: when He suffered, He threatened not, but delivered Himself to him that Judged Him unjustly: who His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree: that we, being dead to sins, should live to justice: 'by whose stripes you were healed.' (Is 53:4-5) For you were as sheep going astray: but you are now converted to the shepherd and bishop of your souls." (I Peter 2:21-25)