

## OUR FEARLESS SHEPHERD

Jesus tells us He is the Good Shepherd who will lay down His life for his flock. This is so true. But He also contrasts Himself with the hired hand who runs in fear when a wolf is spotted. Jesus is reminding us that He has no fear in what is being asked of Him by the heavenly Father. He has no fear of sacrificing His very life for us. The words that are used to contrast who He is and just a hired hand are concern and fear. He has no fear so He can tell His disciples, "Be not afraid." He also is connected by love to the flock He shepherds. This is the kind of leadership He offers us.

After my Eagle Scout Court of Honor when I received my medal, there was a special gathering held by the Scout Council. All the Eagle Scouts of the geographical area were invited. The speaker was a high-ranking Colonel in the Armed Forces. He spoke to us about following a leader. He spoke about trust and he spoke about belief. To follow a leader one must know that the leader has concerns for those they lead. When that is communicated, one is willing to follow that leader more often than not. It was a powerful lesson that I have drawn on throughout my life. Concern and care, compassion and mercy, when shared and communicated, enhances how we get to where we are going.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He communicated with His life that He was willing to die for our sins. He was willing to face death on the cross so we could have life and union with God for all eternity. Only one who is fearless can tell another to be not afraid. Jesus repeats this over and over.

This weekend may we follow the Shepherd and leader who knows no fear and dies for us.



Father John Ouper