

GOSPEL PEARLS

Protecting the flock

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Jesus said to his disciples: I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one

shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”
(John 10: 11-18)

One of the main tasks of those who look after the flock is to feed the sheep entrusted to him. To do this, a shepherd calls each of them with his voice and leads them to pasture. IN this way, they learn to associate the shepherd’s voice with the loving care with which he tends to them. The supreme Shepherd of the Church is Jesus and the men called to this task are His representatives: bishops and priests who have to lead the flock not their own ideas but with Jesus's teachings. Let us, therefore, pray for our pastors so that they always follow Jesus faithfully.