

**Gayle Addis**  
**REFLECTION**  
**MONDAY, May 9, 2022**  
**Liturgy of the word**

In the reading from Acts, Peter was reproached and questioned for having visited uncircumcised Gentiles and eaten with them thus becoming impure. He was guilty by his association with those considered "others". He had stepped outside the boundaries of what some members of the early community thought appropriate and necessary and the preferred norm.

He defends himself, explaining that his experience of God's Spirit coming upon the gentiles convinced him that in God's sight there are no barriers between Jews and non-Jews...there are no "others".

Today, we would talk about this in terms race. Whiteness is not the norm. In God's sight all are one.

The gospel readings from yesterday, today, and tomorrow the from the 10th chapter of John. John uses the metaphor of the shepherd to tell us what God is like. Unlike some of the religious leaders who did not shepherd the people with justice, mercy, and care, Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He assures us that he knows his sheep (us) intimately and no one can take us out of his hand or separate us from his love, concern, and care. We are one with him and with his Abba God. From experience we discern his voice and follow him.

Today, Jesus says that he is the gate, and we are to enter eternal life through him. That life is not just the hereafter but begins now. It begins when we take on the qualities of the good shepherd. When we protect life, show concern and care for all others, create a nourishing, welcoming, inclusive environment and guard the dignity of each person we are good shepherds after the example of Jesus.

When we work for the eradication of whatever brings harm, violence, and death to others, whether individually, or in wars or within a system, we are enabling others to enter the sheepfold – the beloved community.

Then, we are like Jesus, loving whom he loves and as he loves. Today, let us be good shepherds to one another.