

## **Monday of the Fourth Week of Easter – Prayer for the Week**

Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him who calls us each by name and follow where He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Have you ever wondered what Jesus is doing now? He rose from the dead nearly two thousand years ago. What has he been up to? Sitting on a throne listening to angelic top 40 tunes? Is he deeply immersed in the administration of heaven's bureaucracy? Neither of those options seems appropriate. But what do we imagine that he is doing?*

*This prayer assumes we know the answer. Jesus has risen from the dead to be your shepherd today. He is the first fruits of those who will rise, but he rose so long before the rest of us because right now he has something to do. He has risen from the dead in order to take care of you. Too often, I think we imagine Jesus ascended into heaven and sat down upon its throne. And stays there. Our prayers become a long-distance call. But read again the accounts of Jesus appearing to his disciples. They were in a room, afraid. They were walking on a road despondent. They were weeping beside a tomb. Jesus showed up in the daily and difficult moments of real lives.*

*In these days of pandemic, we are kept from gathering in our church building. I acutely feel a hunger to partake of the sacrament with my fellow Christians. But I am comforted to know that the Jesus who shows up in bread and wine in the sacrament is the same one who walks the road with me unperceived. The same Jesus is present and attuned to my grief, fear, and puzzlement. He shepherds me right now.*

*God be with you until we meet again. In Jesus' love and mercy, Pastor Wulf*