

Dear Friends,

Today we celebrate Good Shepherd Sunday. Jesus says, **"I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them."** (John 10:11-12) Jesus is our Shepherd who defends us against "a wolf", which is Satan, the father of all evil. But the truth is that our modern society does not take seriously the power of the Evil One and, in consequence, it does not see the need of a Shepherd who would defend us against his power.

Is Satan for real? To many people, the Devil is the funny man dressed in a red suit with a tail, carrying a pitchfork who is in charge of hell. Of course, the hidden message of this cartoon-like figure is that a real Devil and a real hell do not exist, or if it does, it is a place to continue partying with friends. Unfortunately, some Christians tend to ignore the power of the Devil. But Scripture calls him our enemy, **"Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for [someone] to devour"** (1 Peter 5:8).

Satan is aware that his reign on earth is not forever, and he is campaigning extra hard to deceive as many people as possible. In many areas, the Devil seems to be succeeding quite well. Some people actively seek his will and worship him. They invite the Evil One to enter their lives, and Satan always accepts an invitation when it comes. The problem is that once he comes, he does not want leave, even if we ask him to do it. Satan's interference in human life is not new. He was busy in Bible times. The Book of Job describes Satan walking to and fro on the earth and then going into heaven to accuse believers. When Christ was on earth, He was tempted by Satan (Mark 1:12-13). In addition, the Gospels relate several instances where Christ cast demons out of individuals.

Scripture warns us that it is extremely important that we are fully aware of the power of Satan. Christians must not underestimate him. If we misjudge his strength, we will become his victim. Apostle Paul urges us to **"put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground"** (Ephesians 6:11-17).

Satan spends a good deal of his time accusing believers before the throne of God. But Christ, the Good Shepherd, died to free us from Satan's power (Hebrews 7:25). Without Christ we cannot hope to win against Satan - with Jesus, we have great victory! Through Christ we have all the power we need to defeat Satan. **"The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack."** (Ps. 23:1) **"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear? The Lord is my life's refuge; of whom should I be afraid?"** (Ps. 27:1).

Wishing you a blessed week,
Fr. Krzysztof

P.S. I am very much humbled by the results of my evaluation and grateful that I can continue ministering in this place. I am very much aware of my shortcomings and struggles I have in following Christ and being a "good shepherd". Thank you so much for accepting me as I am. Looking forward to continue travelling with you towards God.

