

Texts of the devotions on Misericordias Domini, April 18, 2021

Music (Maria Jerosch, violin; Ulrike Jerosch, piano)

Edward Mollenhauer: "The Boy Paganini" - Fantasia for violin and piano in G major

Text for the sermon (Ezekiel 34, 1-2, 11-16; read by Sabine Petrick)

GOD's Message came to me: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherd-leaders of Israel. Yes, prophesy! Tell those shepherds, 'GOD, the Master, says: Doom to you shepherds of Israel, feeding your own mouths! Aren't shepherds supposed to feed sheep?' GOD, the Master, says: "From now on, *I myself* am the shepherd. I'm going looking for them. As shepherds go after their flocks when they get scattered, I'm going after my sheep. I'll rescue them from all the places they've been scattered to in the storms. I'll bring them back from foreign peoples, gather them from foreign countries, and bring them back to their home country. I'll feed them on the mountains of Israel, along the streams, among their own people. I'll lead them into lush pasture so they can roam the mountain pastures of Israel, graze at leisure, feed in the rich pastures on the mountains of Israel. And I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep. I myself will make sure they get plenty of rest. I'll go after the lost, I'll collect the strays, I'll doctor the injured, I'll build up the weak ones and oversee the strong ones".

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezekiel+34%3A1-16&version=MSG>

Music (Maria Jerosch, violin; Ulrike Jerosch, piano)

Edward Mollenhauer: "The Boy Paganini" - Fantasia for violin and piano in G major

Sermon (Pastor Wolfgang Knopp)

"Dear parishioners, the text from Ezekiel which today's sermon is based on speaks of the good shepherd. Ezekiel, the prophet, hears the word of God, and this God is furious about those shepherds who do not look after their people well, and he says, *I, God, want to be my people's shepherd myself. I shall empower the weak, I shall raise the ones who have broken down, I shall care for the ones who need my strength.*

If you have spent time with a shepherd, you will be able to see an astounding ability in them:

Shepherds watch their flock and see immediately if one of their sheep is ill, perhaps, or unable to keep up with the others. Normal human beings like ourselves, we can recognize groups of people or things six or seven in number – we can tell those at a glance. Shepherds have their eye on hundreds of those sheep and see at once if one of them is lame, has turned sick, is not well. This look at the sheep in the shepherd's care is important for the flock, so that no sheep is left behind, dies, or gets worse.

The shepherd we hear about from Ezekiel says, *In the same way that the shepherds look after their flock, I shall look after humans. And my watchful eye is on everyone. And I shall spot anyone who is lame, limps, is weak, cannot complete their way. And I*

shall go to them and strengthen them and not overlook them, instead I shall be with them. This shepherd does not say this to the people who lived then, but to all people – through Ezekiel, the prophet.

I want to be the good shepherd. For the shepherds who are responsible for this people sometimes do not do a good job. But I, the good shepherd, shall always be at the side of the human beings. And that is a very encouraging word. That we are not dependent on other humans, who may be our shepherds to lead us, but that this God takes pity on humans and is the shepherd. That he has his eye on humans, in fact on everyone, and that no one is overlooked; but that this God keeps an eye on all people created. That he wants to lift them up, strengthen them, give them life.

Today we especially think of these words about the shepherd in the Old and the New Testament. And this image of the shepherd is a very protected image, a very heartening image – to know we are not simply dependent on human strength, but that this good shepherd is with us on our way to accompany us. This gives us strength at a time that requires a lot of strength from us.

May this good shepherd always be with us on our way and guide our feet onto a good path.”

Music (Maria Jerosch, violin; Ulrike Jerosch, piano)
Lothar Kosse: "Wonderful shepherd"

1. You are a wonderful shepherd,
who leads me to fresh water.
You have so richly spread
the king's table for me, for me.

2. You are my walking stick and staff.
Even walking in a dark valley
I don't fear danger any more,
for you are here with me, with me.

*Chorus: I come, I come to your table.
I come, I come, and I am sure:
You are my wonderful shepherd.*

3. You have anointed me with oil,
filled my cup to the brim.
In your hands
my soul turns calm, it turns calm.

*Chorus: I come, I come to your table.
I come, I come, and I am sure:
You are my wonderful shepherd.*

The Lord's Prayer

Vater unser im Himmel. Our Father in heaven.
Geheiligt werde dein Name. Hallowed be your name.
Dein Reich komme. Your kingdom come.
Dein Wille geschehe, Your will be done,
wie im Himmel, so auf Erden. as in heaven, so on earth.
Unser tägliches Brot gib uns heute. Give us today our daily bread.
Und vergib uns unsere Schuld, And forgive us our sins,
wie auch wir vergeben unsern Schuldigern. as we forgive those who sin against us.
Und führe uns nicht in Versuchung, Lead us not into temptation,
sondern erlöse uns von dem Bösen. but deliver us from evil.
Denn dein ist das Reich und die Kraft For the kingdom, the power
und die Herrlichkeit in Ewigkeit. and the glory are yours now and forever.
Amen. Amen.