

**Reading—*St Ignatius Loyola***

There are very few people who realise what God would make of them if they abandoned themselves into his hands, and let themselves be formed by his grace. A thick and shapeless tree-trunk would never believe that it could become a statue, admired as a miracle of sculpture, and would never submit itself to the chisel of the sculptor, who sees by his genius, what he can make of it. If only people would let themselves be formed by the grace of God.

**Prayer— *Frank Topping***

Sometimes it's hard to imagine that I am known to you, Lord:  
That the Good Shepherd knows my name and see my distress,  
Knows my doubts, hears my questions;  
But sparrows fall and my heavenly Father knows.  
The hairs on my head are numbered, and the Shepherd does know me,  
Better than I know myself.

Good Shepherd, when the events of my life worry,  
disturb, or even frighten me, when anxiety makes it difficult  
to think straight, let me hear your voice.  
Lead me beside the still water of your peace.  
Good Shepherd, as I am known to you, be known to me in goodness and  
mercy throughout this day, and all the days of my life. **Amen.**

**Blessing.**

Lord Jesus, Good Shepherd, you laid down your life for the sheep:  
Defend those for whom you shed your blood.  
Feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, seek the lost,  
convert the wandering, bind up that which is broken.  
Stretch out your hand from heaven and touch the head of each one of us.  
May we feel the touch of your hand and receive the joy of the Holy Spirit,  
and live in your peace for evermore. **Amen.**

**Be Still**

**Jesus, the healer, is the Good Shepherd**

As we pray, let us first remind ourselves that God is already with us.

Good shepherd, lead us to recognise that you are already in our midst,  
loving and caring. **Amen.**

**Prayer**

Lord Jesus, we are your people, the sheep of your flock.  
You care for us as a shepherd guards his own,  
Lying in the gateway of the fold at night, shielding us from harm.  
You know us through and through, looking for the lost,  
Bringing back the stray, binding up our wounds, and building up the weak.  
It is by name that you call us, and where you lead you invite us to follow.  
Inspire us to trust you more and lead us now to springs of living water.  
**Amen.**

**Reading—*Archbishop Desmond Tutu***

God is like the Good Shepherd who goes out looking for the lost sheep (Luke 15:4). We are misled by the religious pictures which depict Jesus as the Good Shepherd carrying a cuddly white lamb on his shoulder. No; a lamb will hardly stray from its mother. It is the troublesome, obstreperous sheep which is likely to go astray, going through the fence, having its wool torn and probably ending up in a ditch of dirty water. It is this dirty, smelly, riotous creature which the Good Shepherd goes after, leaving the good, well-behaved ninety-nine sheep in the wilderness, and when he finds it, why, he carries it on his shoulder and calls his friends to celebrate with him.

**Prayer—*Sheila Cassidy***

Lord of creation, moulder of our fragile clay, shape us in your image.  
Spin us round, if you must, until we're dizzy.  
Hollow us out, if you must, until we're empty of all that is false and useless.  
Fill us daily with living water that we may carry your life  
to a world dying of thirst. **Amen**