First Reading  Acts 13:14, 43-52
A reading from the Acts of the Apostles
We are now turning to the gentiles.
Paul and Barnabas carried on from Perga
till they reached Antioch in Pisidia. Here
they went to synagogue on the sabbath
and took their seats.
When the meeting broke up, many Jews
devout converts joined Paul and
Barnabas, and in their talks with them
Paul and Barnabas urged them to remain
faithful to the grace God had given them.
The next sabbath almost the whole town
assembled to hear the word of God.
When they saw the crowds, the Jews,
prompted by jealousy, used blasphemies
and contradicted everything Paul said.
Then Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly,
'We had to proclaim the word of God to
you first, but since you have rejected it,
since you do not think yourselves worthy
of eternal life, we must turn to the pagans.
For this is what the Lord commanded us to
do when he said:
I have made you a light for the nations,
so that my salvation may reach the ends
of the earth.'

It made the pagans very happy to hear this
and they thanked the Lord for his message;
all who were destined for eternal life
became believers. Thus the word
of the Lord spread through the whole
countryside.

But the Jews worked upon some of the
devout women of the upper classes and
persuaded them to turn against Paul and Barnabas
and expel them from their territory. So they
shook the dust from their feet in defiance
and went off to Iconium; but the disciples
were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 99:1-3. 5. R. v.3
(R.) We are his people, the sheep of his
flock.
or
(R.) Alleluia.
1. Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the
earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before him, singing for joy. (R.)

2. Know that he, the Lord, is God.
He made us, we belong to him,
we are his people, the sheep of his
flock. (R.)

3. Indeed, how good is the Lord,
eternal his merciful love.
He is faithful from age to age. (R.)

Second Reading  Rv 7:9, 14-17
A reading from the book of the Apocalypse
The Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd
and will lead them to springs of living water.

I, John, saw a huge number, impossible to
count, of people from every nation, race,
tribe and language; they were standing
in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb,
dressed in white robes and holding palms
in their hands. One of the elders said to me,
'These are the people who have been through
the great persecution, and because they
have washed their robes white again in the
blood of the Lamb, they now stand in front
of God’s throne and serve him day and night
in his sanctuary; and the One who sits on the
throne will spread his tent over them.
They will never hunger or thirst again;
neither will the sun nor scorching wind will ever plague them,
because the Lamb who is at the throne will be
their shepherd and will lead them to springs
of living water; and God will wipe away all
tears from their eyes.'

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 10:14
Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my sheep, and mine know me.
Alleluia!

Gospel  Jn 10:27-30
A reading from the holy Gospel according to
John
I give my sheep eternal life.
Jesus said:
'The sheep that belong to me listen to my
voice;
I know them and they follow me.
I give them eternal life;
they will never be lost
and no one will ever steal them from me.
The Father who gave them to me is greater
than anyone,
and no one can steal from the Father.
The Father and I are one.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Reflection
by Greg Sunter

Shepherds in the first century did not have a
particularly good reputation. Whilst the task
itself was a responsible one, it was usually
undertaken by hired help - usually young
men or even boys. Being hired help, they had
little allegiance to the flock and were generally
regarded as basically untrustworthy and often
accused of illicitly selling off the sheep’s milk and
even the occasional lamb. They lived for months
at a time out in the hills with the sheep; often
risking their lives in defence of their flock, yet still
regarded with suspicion. Shepherds were held
in such low regard that they could not appear
in court as a witness. Yet, despite this grim
picture of shepherds, Jesus described himself
as the Good Shepherd. With that one word, he
acknowledged the reputation of shepherds but
utterly dismissed it by describing himself as
a shepherd – but a good shepherd. He chose
to describe himself as the worst of all occupations
but raised the status to unimpeachable heights.

In describing himself as the good shepherd,
Jesus joined a distinguished list of biblical
shepherds: Abraham, his son Isaac, and
grandson Jacob were all shepherds; Moses
was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro,
when God appeared to him in the burning bush
and revealed God’s name; and the great King,
David, began life as a humble shepherd-boy.
So, despite the poor reputation of shepherds in
Jewish society, some of the greatest leaders of
the Jews began life as shepherds.

Today’s gospel passage follows the famous ‘good
shepherd’ passage in the gospel of John and
continues on the image. The passage portrays
Jesus as ‘claiming’ his flock; guaranteeing them
not only safety but also eternal life. This oath of
loyalty and commitment is all the stronger and
more remarkable in light of Jesus’ rehabilitation
of the status of shepherds.
St Mark the Evangelist was the author of the first synoptic Gospel. He is believed to be the same man referred to in the Acts of the Apostles as John Mark; a disciple of Jesus and John the Baptist and the cousin of St Barnabas. Mark travelled with St Paul and St Barnabas on missionary journeys to preach the gospels. He was a close companion of St Peter; it is considered that his gospel represented the teachings and memoirs of St Peter. He later travelled to Alexandria in Egypt where he continued his evangelisation. The church in Alexandria claims that St Mark became their first bishop and that he was eventually martyred there in the first century. As an evangelist St Mark is often symbolised as a lion, and he is the patron saint of Egypt.

Jesus’ sheep will never be lost. Help the sheep follow the path to the shepherd.