

**ICCH**  
**International Catholic Community of Heidelberg**

St. Michael's Church, Kirschgartenstr. 35, 69126 Heidelberg Südstadt  
06221/13020 – office Fr. Christof Heimpel

Today's readings: Acts 4:8-12 | 1 Jn 3:1-2 | Jn 10:11-18

Welcome Father Peter Amowe

## **April 26, 2015 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**

On the Fourth Sunday of Easter, traditionally called Good Shepherd Sunday, we encounter the Good Shepherd who knows his flock intimately. For those who heard Jesus claim this title for himself, it meant more than tenderness and compassion; there was the dramatic and startling degree of love so great that the shepherd is willing to lay down his life for his flock.

Unlike the hired hand, who works for pay, the good shepherd's life is devoted to the sheep out of pure love. The sheep are far more than a responsibility to the good shepherd. They are the object of his love and concern. Thus, the shepherd's devotion to them is completely unselfish; the good shepherd is willing to die for the sheep rather than abandon them.

The beauty of Jesus, our Good Shepherd, lies in the love with which he offers his life even unto death for each and every one of his sheep. In so doing, he establishes with each one a direct and personal relationship of intense love. Jesus' beauty and nobility are revealed in his letting himself be loved by us. In Jesus we discover the Father and his Son who are shepherds who care for us, know us and even love us in our stubbornness, deafness and diffidence. John's gospel portrays Jesus as the life-giving shepherd.

Shepherds have power over sheep. As we contemplate Jesus, the Good Shepherd, we call to mind everyone over whom we exercise authority – children, elderly parents, our coworkers and colleagues, people who ask us for help, people who depend on us for material and spiritual needs. Whatever title we bear, the rod and staff we carry must be symbols not of oppression but of dedication. Today's readings invite us to ask for forgiveness for the times we have not responded to those for whom we care, and ask for the grace to be good shepherds. We fix our eyes anew on the Good Shepherd who knows that other sheep not of this fold are not lost sheep, but his sheep.

Jesus Christ as the great reconciler is the Good Shepherd, who has come into the center of every great conflict in order to establish beauty, unity and peace. May it be ever so for each person who strives to be a good shepherd today, in the Church and in the world. As we enter those places of conflict and tribulation in our own times, may the Lord use us as his instruments to establish beauty, nobility, unity and peace.

*[shortened from: <http://saltandlighttv.org/blog/category/rosicareflections>]*



### **FOR THE NEXT WEEKS...**

- ***ICCH activities***  
**May 3:** Social gathering Sunday – **May 10:** confessions after mass
- ***cultural program in St. Michael***  
**April 26,** 7pm: choir concert “Israel Shalom” – **May 9,** 7pm: Musical for teens “Global Playerz”

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If you would like to be added to our email list please send your contact information to:  
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