Acts 2: 14, 36-41
On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd with a loud voice: ‘The whole House of Israel can be certain that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.’

Hearing this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the apostles, ‘What must we do, brothers?’ ‘You must repent,’ Peter answered ‘and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself.’ He spoke to them for a long time using many arguments, and he urged them, ‘Save yourselves from this perverse generation.’ They were convinced by his arguments, and they accepted what he said and were baptised. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.

Psalm 22. 1-6. R. v. 1
The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

1 Peter 2: 20-25
The merit, in the sight of God, is in bearing punishment patiently when you are punished after doing your duty.

This, in fact, is what you are called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow the way he took. He had not done anything wrong, and there had been no perjury in his mouth. He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was tortured he made no threats but he put his trust in the righteous judge. He was bearing our faults in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our faults and live for holiness, through his wounds you have been healed. You had gone astray like sheep but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

John 10: 1-10
Jesus said: ‘I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.’

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them.

So Jesus spoke to them again: ‘I tell you most solemnly, I am the gate of the sheepfold. All others who have come are thieves and brigands; but the sheep took no notice of them. I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe; he will go freely in and out and be sure of finding pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.’

Reflection
Sheep have relatively poor eyesight. Because of the shape of their heads they have mainly lateral vision and limited forward vision. However, sheep compensate for their poor vision with excellent hearing. Put simply, sheep rely more on sound than on sight, which is why they engage in a lot of bleating. So voice-recognition is very important for sheep which is why Jesus stresses in today’s Gospel that the sheep follow the shepherd ‘because they know his voice. They will not follow the stranger because they do not know the voice of stranger.’

It is very important for us also to know the voice of the Good Shepherd, who is among us though we cannot see him. We have to learn to recognise his voice and listen to him. This is not easy as there are many voices out there, some of them attractive and enticing, that claim to be the voice of the Good Shepherd but are not. In this regard the Gospels are very important. In them we meet the Good Shepherd who proclaims the great command of love, who forgives, who is challenging and merciful, and who reveals himself not only in his words but also in his actions of reaching out to lepers and to the outcast, to the sad and needy, bringing healing and hope into their lives. We should only listen to shepherds whose lives and teaching are consistent with Jesus, the Good Shepherd.