

042218
Easter 4
Series Theme: Resurrection
Reflection Title: The Give and Take of Life
John 10:11-18
Rev. Emma Chattin, Preaching

First Reading ~ John 10:11-18

[Jesus continued speaking.]

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away — and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as God knows me and I know God. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason God loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from God."

Second Reading ~ From Richard Rohr in *Wandering In Nature*

Psychologist and wilderness guide, Bill Plotkin, believes—and I agree—that to “save our souls” we need to reconnect with nature. To rediscover who we truly are—and who our siblings are—we must become intimate with our natural surroundings. The wisdom of nature can’t be understood with our thinking mind. We have to experience it with our being and let it speak to us through all our senses.

Begin your wandering by finding a threshold (perhaps an arched branch overhead or a narrow passage between rocks). Here offer a voiced prayer of your intention and desire for this time. Step across the threshold quite deliberately and, on this side of your sacred boundary, speak no words, but watch and listen for God’s presence.

Let the land, plants, and creatures lead your feet and eyes. Let yourself be drawn, rather than walking with a destination or purpose in mind. If you are called to a particular place or thing, stop and be still, letting yourself be known and know, through silent communion with the Other. Before you leave, offer some gesture or token of gratitude for the gift nature has given you.

When it is time to return to the human world, find your threshold again and cross over—and now you have learned to watch for God in all things.