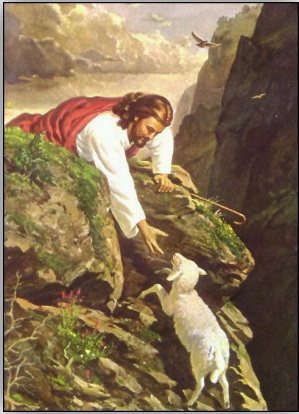


## FAITH IN THE NARRATIVES OF THE WORD OF GOD



Lord, it is difficult to understand that the shepherd leaves ninety-nine sheep and goes after the one that is lost.

How many, Lord, live their faith received at the baptismal font through the care and affection familiar to a religion, often burdened with a weight that does not offer convictions that can withstand the intense cold of winter, even though the Lord himself assured: "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" Mt 16:18.

How many who followed this Word and, in the course of their lives, thought of other paths, left and did not go alone. They took with them multitudes who preferred to follow the new, perhaps in search of promises that better fit their comfortable vision of the world and the church.

How many, Lord, have made novelty their truth, which has blinded them to the beauty of the complete Truth, without cuts or denials.

How many, Lord, are lost sheep who carry in their flesh the pain of finding themselves alone in the constant search for understanding of the new appeals that attract more and more, but do not respond to the demanding questions that arise, nor do they calm the pain of discoveries that cast to the ground the illusion of a world that seeks to extinguish the truth received in its origins by its ancestors.

The lost sheep finds itself at a crossroads when making decisions between turning back and accepting the wisdom of the discoveries that attract it, that fascinate it, that made it enter into known truths, but rejected when in the flock in which it was born.

Would these be the lost sheep for the shepherd who wants to keep the flock together? Would it be any and all sheep, including myself, who looks to the horizon and seeks to discover signs of dreams not even imagined, but hidden in the impossibility of the concreteness of life? Could it be the sheep that get lost in the alleys and sewers of a cruel world that, in its indifference, passes by, looks and moves on without showing mercy? But these are also lost sheep.

So, Lord, we are all sheep who need Your grace in our daily lives to remain faithful to the Good Shepherd who does not want a lost sheep in His flock and, therefore, goes after it and places it in the place that was prepared for it.

Lord, more than ever, the world needs shepherds who do not fear the wolf that devours the entrails of their sheep. They have been thrown into ignorance of appeals that do not offer the happiness they desire, seeking a world that does not exist.

Lord, we are all shepherds and sheep who need to discover in our daily lives our mission to care for and be cared for so that the seed thrown into the earth can be Life and offer Life in abundance.



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