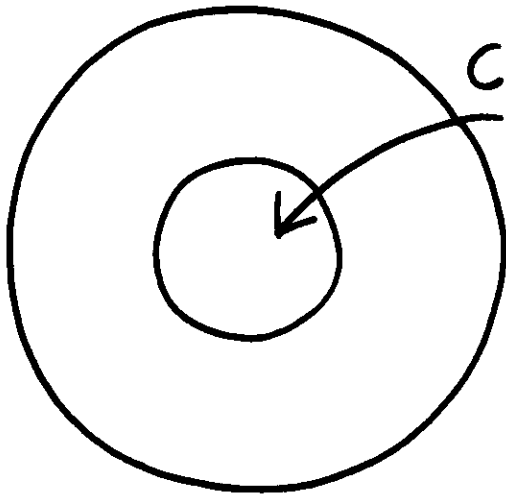
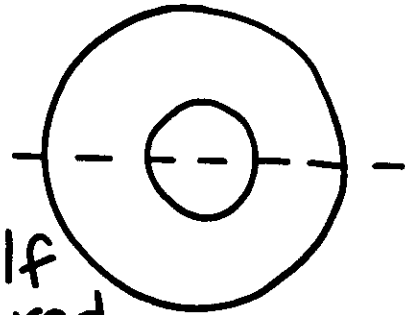




# • SHEEP PUPPETS •

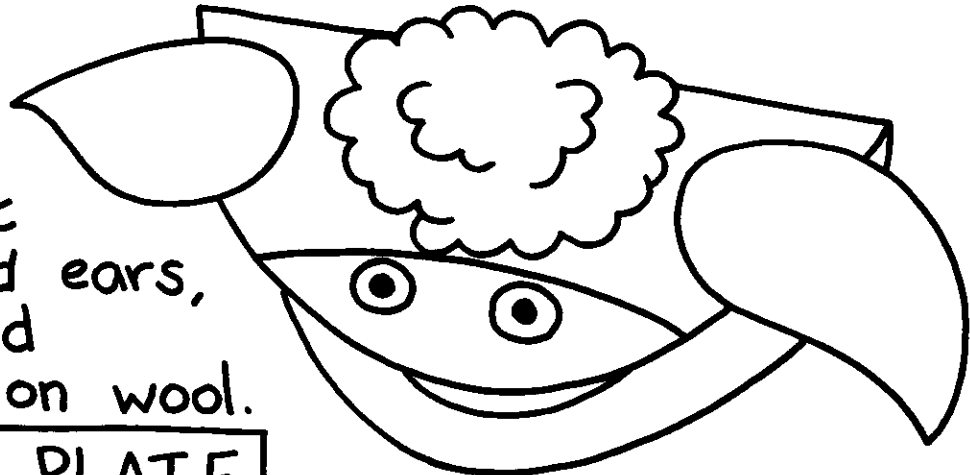


Colour the  
middle of  
the plate  
red.



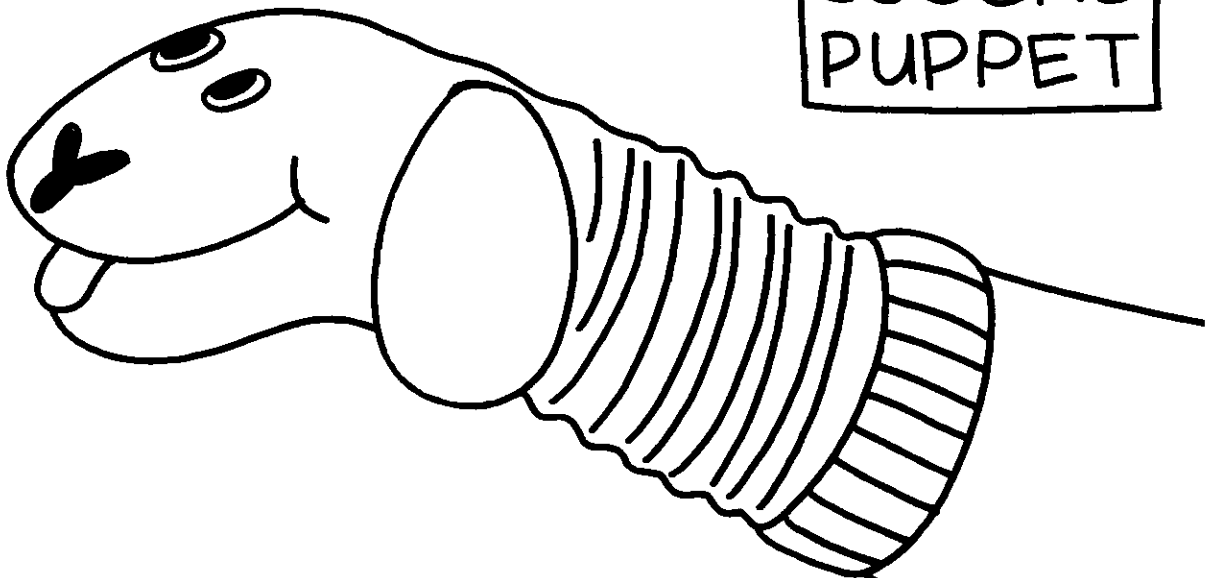
Fold in half  
with the red  
inside.

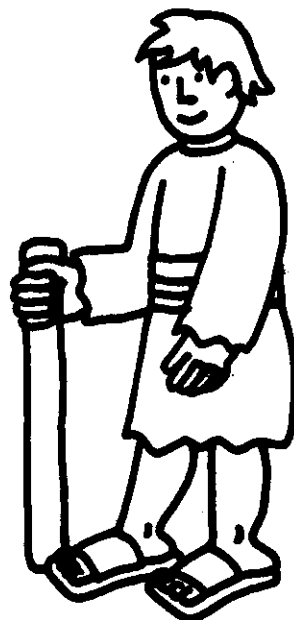
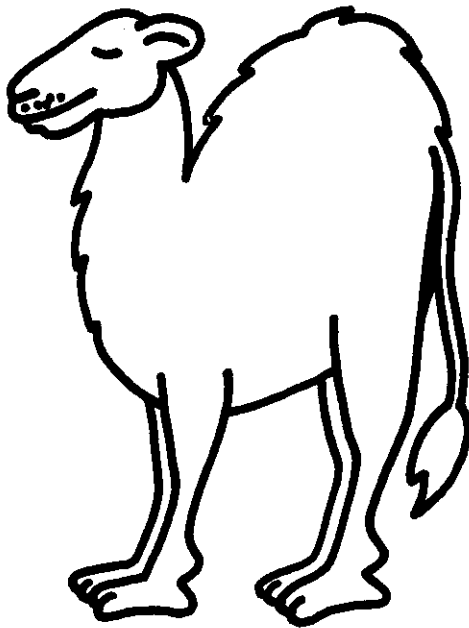
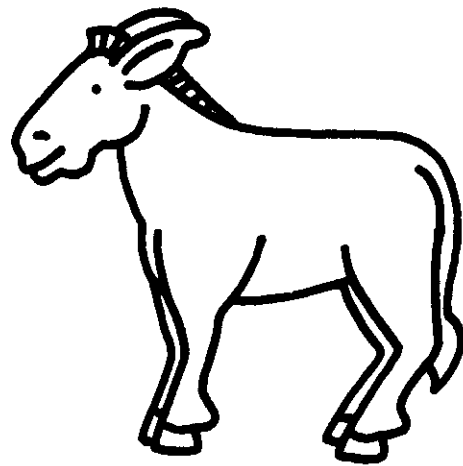
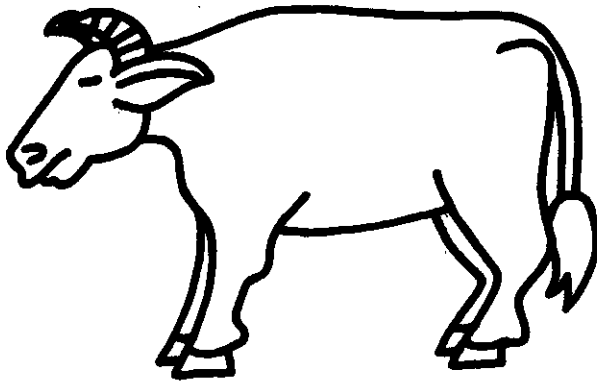
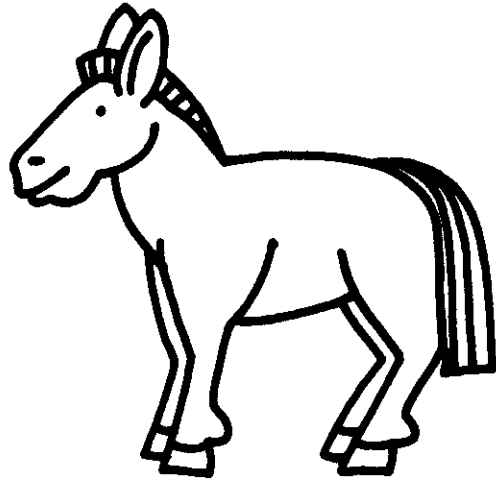
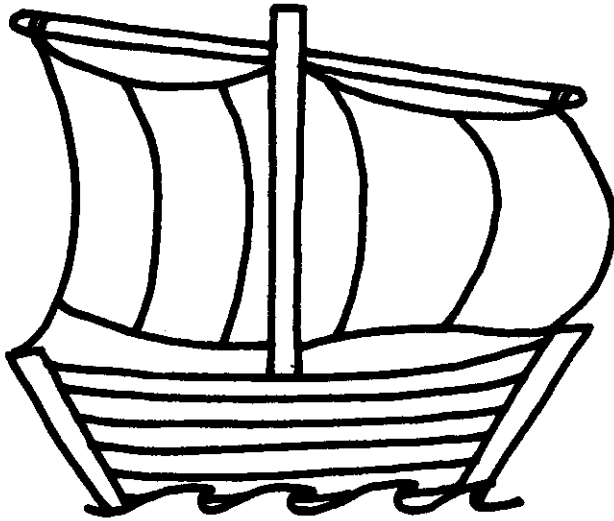
Add cut  
out card ears,  
eyes and  
cotton wool.



PAPER PLATE  
★ PUPPET ★

« SOCK »  
PUPPET





## Fourth Sunday of Easter

### The Good Shepherd

#### INTRODUCTION

Jesus takes care of us just as a good shepherd takes care of his sheep. He knows each one of us, and we know him and are glad to follow him wherever he leads.

#### SIGN OF THE CROSS

#### LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and say Candle Prayer 2.

#### SORRY

Listen carefully to this reading:

God is full of kindness and love, and always ready to show us the path to follow. He leads us with patience and understanding, and forgives us if we stray and lose our way. When we look to him for help, he rescues us from harm and helps us to try again, because his forgiveness is unending. (Psalm 25:10-16)

(Pause for a few moments of silence.)

Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd.

Forgive us if we have wandered  
away from your path  
and guide us back to your love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

#### GLORIA

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 3.

#### GOSPEL (JOHN 10:11-15)

One day Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd, who is ready to die for his sheep. A man who is hired to look after the flock does not really care about it, because he knows that the sheep do not really belong to him. When the hungry wolf appears, the man runs away, and the sheep are worried or scattered. I know each of my sheep by name, and they know the sound of my voice. They will always follow me, and I am ready to give up my life for them."

#### DISCUSSION

A shepherd is someone who looks after sheep. What do you think makes a good shepherd? A good shepherd cares for all the needs of his sheep: finding them pasture and water and shelter from the weather, and protecting them from wild animals and danger. He watches over them at all times and knows each of them individually.

What did Jesus say about the hired man? A hired man was paid to look after a flock of sheep. The sheep did not belong to him, and he didn't particularly care about them. So when a wolf appeared, the hired man worried more about his own safety and abandoned the flock.

How would you describe a sheep to someone? They are timid and gentle animals, which like to be kept together within their flock. They are not particularly clever and get themselves into all sorts of trouble unless someone takes care of them.

Jesus is the "Good Shepherd," and we are his flock. He told this story to make us understand that he cares for us as much as the shepherd cares for his sheep. He watches over us at all times and knows each of us by name. He goes before us to guide us and keep us from all harm. He takes care of all our needs, and we can trust in his goodness.

Jesus' love was so strong that he was willing to suffer and die on the cross for our sakes. His sacrifice meant that we can follow him to his heavenly kingdom, where we will share eternal life with him.

#### ACTIVITY

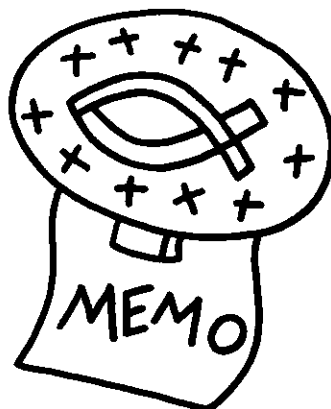
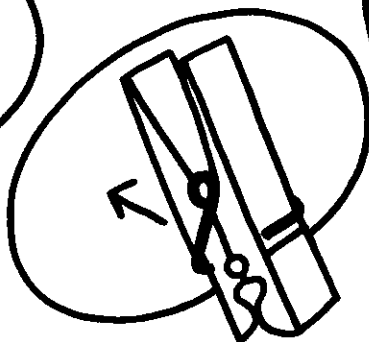
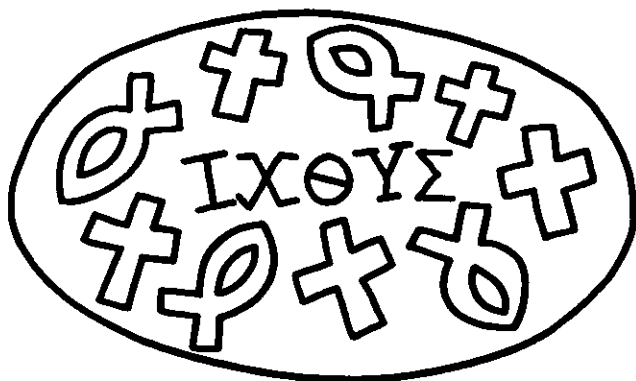
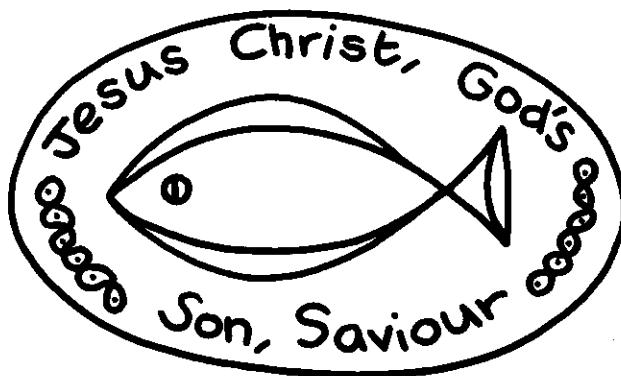
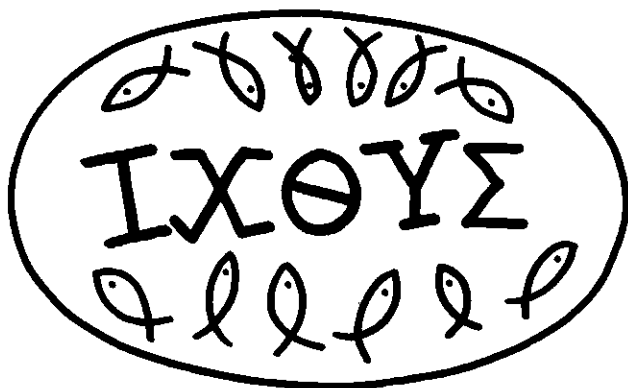
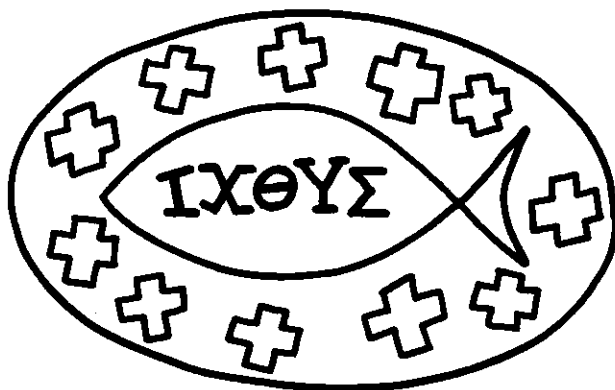
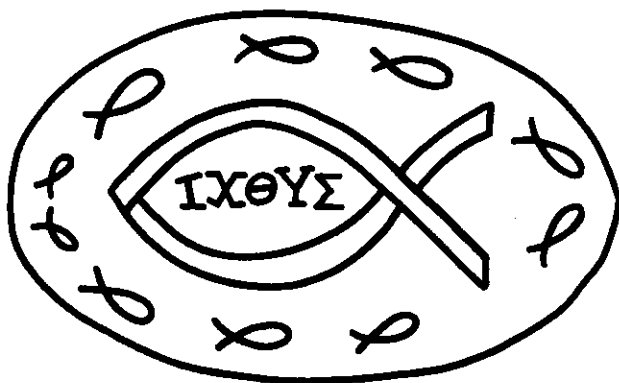
Using the template given (it will need to be enlarged slightly), cut out some sheep masks from stiff cardboard. Attach these to a stick and help the children to glue cotton balls to the masks.

#### CREED

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd,  
and we are your flock.

Help us to know your voice  
and always follow you.



# Fourth Sunday of Easter

---

## Focus

A central candle with pictures or models of sheep arranged around it.

## Introduction

What would you do if you looked out the window and saw a flock of sheep passing by? You'd probably be so amazed by the sight that you'd leap to your feet and go to take a closer look! Flocks of sheep and the shepherds who cared for them were a familiar sight in the time of Jesus, and he used them in his parables to help people to understand what he had to say.

## Gloria

## Gospel Acclamation

Light the Gospel candle and sing Acclamation 2.

## Gospel

A reading from the Gospel of St John (10:11-18)  
(See page 381.)

## Reflection

*Has anyone ever visited a farm and had the opportunity to feed a lamb? What happened and was it an enjoyable experience?*

*Jesus described himself as a 'Shepherd'. What does a shepherd do?*

A shepherd is the name given to someone who looks after sheep. They are responsible for their well-being and care. Unlike today, at the time of Jesus shepherds would have been a very familiar sight.

*What makes a shepherd good at his job?*

A good shepherd knows each sheep in his flock, and can tell them apart even though they might all look the same to the untrained eye! He loves and cares for them, and is ready to go to any lengths to prevent them from coming to any harm. The shepherd is rather like a loving parent, watching over the little ones in his care.

*If Jesus is the Good Shepherd, who is his flock?*

Anyone who follows Jesus the Good Shepherd, wherever he leads, belongs to the flock that he loves and cares for.

*When are Christians officially welcomed into Christ's flock?*

When a person is baptised they are welcomed into a community of faith, the flock which is the Church. God calls them by name to follow his loving ways.

*Did the 'Good Shepherd' give up his life for his flock?*

Jesus loved his flock so much that he was ready and willing to die on the cross for the sake of those who choose to follow him. By dying he destroyed the sins of the world, and by rising to new life at Easter he offered us the chance of new life with God for ever.

Read the following prayer to the children:

The Good Shepherd takes care of all my needs.  
He leads me to lush green meadows where I can rest,  
and crystal clear pools to refresh me.  
He protects me from every kind of danger  
and guides me along the path of goodness.  
When night falls, and darkness surrounds me,  
I am not afraid.  
I know that God is always beside me  
to calm all my fears.

*(Adapted from Psalm 23:1-4)*

## Activity

Make sheep sock puppets using clean old white socks and cut-out eyes, noses and tongues. Glue knitting yarn or cotton wool on to the body of each sheep.

OR

Make paper plate puppets, using small paper plates folded in half, with cut-out card ears and eyes, and stick cotton wool on the top.

## Intercessions

As brothers and sisters in one loving family,  
together let us pray to our heavenly Father:

Christ the Good Shepherd calls us to follow him;  
let us pray that Christians everywhere will listen to his voice.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Christ the Good Shepherd gave up his life for us;  
let us pray for all who have suffered and died  
in his name.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Christ the Good Shepherd protects us from harm;  
let us pray for people endangered by war,  
violence and hatred.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Christ the Good Shepherd knows each of us by name;  
let us pray for those who feel alone and uncared for.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Knowing that our heavenly Father is listening,  
in the silence of our hearts  
let us share our own unspoken prayers with him.

*Silence*

Loving Father,  
hear the prayers of the flock gathered here before you,  
as we place our loving trust  
in the Good Shepherd who leads us to you.  
Grant this through Jesus our Lord.

**Amen.**