

St. Ambrose (340-397), studied law at Rome, entered the public service, and then, while living in Milan, was unexpectedly chosen to be Bishop, and was ordained in 374. He was a true shepherd and teacher of the faithful, and showed charity towards all. Through his work and writings, he defended the true faith against the Arians.



First Reading: (*Isa 40:1-11*) Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord 's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of

good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Ps 95:1-2, 10-13

R./ Here is our God coming with power

Gospel: (*Mt 18:12-14*) Jesus said to his disciples: "What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

REFLECTION

Jesus speaks a logic which the world does not understand easily, because, he is the good shepherd who gives his life for the sheep and for him every sheep counts. The logic of the world would never be to save the one sheep that is lost, but to protect the ninety-nine that are in one's custody. The gospels, as we know, are full of paradoxes and in order to understand the divine paradox, we need to understand the life of Jesus, who teaches us to forgive our enemies, who asks us to conquer the aggressor by showing the other cheek and who gives us life by his death. **When we are lost and broken, when our spirit is low and when our hope turns into despair, always remember: Jesus is the good shepherd who goes after the least, last and lost.**