



Answer the call of the shepherds, not the quacks

A hunter snuck up on a duck and was about to fire when the duck yelled, "Don't shoot and I will give you a hot stock tip." The hunter lowered his rifle and responded, "Okay, what's the stock tip?" "It's a company called Sounds Like A Duck and it manufactures a duck call and the share price went up two points this week," the duck replied.

The hunter immediately left and purchased 1,000 shares, figuring that if anyone could determine an authentic duck call it would be a duck. Two weeks later the company went bankrupt and the hunter drove furiously back to his blind to find the duck and exclaimed, "I just lost thousands of dollars from your lousy stock tip."

"Big deal," the duck replied, "you lost a few thousand dollars, we lost our early warning system."

The challenge for us and for every disciple of Jesus is to listen to his voice in the midst of competing voices demanding our attention, in the midst of noises that assault our senses and in the midst of conflicting messages that distract us and

challenge our beliefs. Many times we remark, "It is hard to be a true follower of Jesus Christ, to follow all his ways and teachings."

As we look around, sometimes it's hard to hear Christ's message in our world and it seems that more and more his mes-

sage is being silenced by others.

However, true followers of Jesus know his voice and know that his voice and message often is not heard in a loud boom or with clashing jargon, but in a soft and gentle way urging us to stay on track.

If we work to listen, the voice of the Good Shepherd can be heard in the midst of trauma and turmoil, speaking to our hearts more than our ears, pointing out the path of what is truly of God and authentic.

I think the problem is the fact many times we do not

want to listen. When we hear his challenge calling us to forgive one another, love our enemies, give to those who have less, take time to pray and be with our heavenly Father, serve one another, we practice selective hearing. And quickly we replace the

the material world. Often, it only takes a gentle voice or a loving invitation for someone to begin to hear the shepherd's voice and follow after him. The church needs shepherds and leaders to guide her flock. Let us look around our parishes, our schools and our homes and become more aware of who might be called to serve. Let us pray, encourage and support them as they discern this beautiful calling.

Each of us has a beautiful calling to be followers of the Good Shepherd. We must listen to his voice and live his message. Let us pray that we might not be misled by other voices or calls that try to trick us into temporary happiness. Let us not listen to the quacks. Let us, as the sheep of his flock, show the world there is a better way to live and treat others. After all, the world often sees us Catholics as odd ducks.

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Readings for April 13 Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 36-41; 1 Peter 2:20-25;
John 10:1-10

Good Shepherd's voice with the call of the world: get even, get revenge, take all you can get, do what feels good, and more money and things will make you happy.

This coming Sunday we celebrate World Day of Prayer for Vocations. All Catholics throughout the world are encouraged to pray for and encourage young men and women to become priests or sisters.

It's no wonder that many are not answering God's call to become priests and sisters because they are bombarded with the call of

[Back to top](#)