

# Shepherd me O God

P: I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.  
"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

This is a service of thankfulness and gratitude to our Bishops, priests, evangelists and all those who work to convey the message of love of our great God and Saviour. Amen.

## **Opening Hymn**

Are you sitting idle?  
Still there's work to do;  
In the Master's vineyard  
There's a place for you:  
Be a faithful servant,  
Ever ready stand.  
Where the Master calls you—  
Lend a helping hand!

*Lend a hand, lend a hand,  
Lend a helping hand;  
Weary ones are falling,  
Lend a helping hand!  
Lend a hand, lend a hand,  
Lend a helping hand;  
Jesus still is calling,  
Lend a helping hand!*

Is your voice now silent?  
There are songs to sing;  
Come and swell the chorus,  
Make His praises ring!

Till the strains are wafted  
Over, sea and land,  
Reaching up to heaven—  
Lend a helping hand!

Do your prayers no longer  
Reach the throne of grace,  
Asking that some wand'rer  
Might his steps retrace?  
Earnest prayer may keep him  
From the sinking sand;  
Yours today may save him—  
Lend a helping hand!

Lyrics : J. B. MacKay Music: John Robson Sweeney

## Kauma

**Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson**

**Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy**

P. Glory be to the Father our Creator, to the Son our Redeemer and to the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us.

C. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

P. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest.

C. Blessed is He that has come and is to come again in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

P. Holy art thou, O God.

C. Holy art thou, Almighty God.

P. Holy art thou, Immortal Lord.

C. O Lord, the Messiah who was crucified for us have mercy on us.

P. O Lord, have mercy on us.

C. O Lord, have mercy on us and bless us.

P. O Lord, accept our prayers and worship and have mercy on us.

C. Glory be to you, O God.

P. Glory be to you, O Creator.

C. Glory be to you, O King the Messiah; who has mercy on us sinners. Bless us, O Lord.

(Let us sing together the prayer that Jesus taught us)

**All: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name,  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is done in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, Forever. Amen.**

(Cong. to be seated)

**1st Lesson: Exo.40:1-16**

**2nd Lesson: Heb.10:8-25**

## Meditation

**L:** There is a lovely legend of Moses which tells of an incident when he had fled Egypt and was keeping the flocks of Jethro in the desert. A sheep of the flock had wandered far away. Moses patiently followed it and found it drinking at a mountain stream. He came upon it and put it upon his shoulder. "So it was because you were thirsty that you wandered away", said Moses gently without any anger, at the toil the sheep had caused him and carried it home. When God saw it, He said: "If Moses is so compassionate to a straying sheep, he is the very man I want to be the leader of my people." A shepherd is one who is ready to give his life for his sheep; he bears with their foolishness and never stops loving them. That is what Jesus does for us. Jesus is the one who established the new covenant and made possible the new relationship between God and man. It was he who took away the terror and showed us the love of God. Jesus is the one who died. To show men what God was like and to open the way to Him, it cost the life of Jesus. Our new relationship with God cost His blood.

Jesus is the real, authentic, ideal, perfect, or Good Shepherd, and we are his flock, or sheep. He teaches, sanctifies, and governs us. He cares for us and guides us always. In the family, parents are the shepherds; in the Church, priests. Let us all pray and be thankful for those who have already been called to be shepherds that they may serve faithfully. Today's Church needs shepherds just like Jesus, who lay down his life for his flock.

We need to start talking about vocation to the priesthood and religious life at dinner tables. We need to pray that God may choose from our families to answer this special calling. There is no substitute for parents in the family. Similarly, there is no substitute for the priesthood in the Church. Let us pray that parents may sacrifice whatever it takes to raise their children in a way that is pleasing to the living God. Let us also pray that the Lord may inspire young men and women of our time to answer the call to sacrifice their lives to serve the Church as priests. And let us be ever thankful for our priests, bishops and evangelists who have made this great sacrifice to shepherd and share God's love in this world.

### Hymn - Shepherd me O God

*Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,  
beyond my fears, from death into life.*

God is my shepherd, so nothing I shall want,  
I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love,  
I walk by the quiet waters of peace.

Gently you raise me and heal my weary soul,  
you lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth,  
my spirit shall sing the music of your Name.

You have set me a banquet of love in the face of hatred,  
crowning me with love beyond my pow'r to hold.  
By Marty Haugen

**L: Easow Mar Timotheos** (formerly Rev. V. T. Koshy) was a bishop of the Mar Thoma Church from 1975 to 1988. In his earlier days he spent a lot of time studying and working with the Sihora Ashram in Madhya Pradesh. He was known as "Koshy Babu"

among the villagers in and around Sihora. His missionary work before becoming a bishop was based on identifying himself with the economically backward people. He was engaged in poultry farming and agriculture. He had been to Japan on two occasions to obtain training in these fields. Even after becoming a bishop, his primary focus was on care for the needy and downtrodden.

In 1974, Rev. Koshy's name was proposed for the selection of Bishops. On hearing this he requested the Metropolitan not to include his name for the Bishop post. He considered himself unworthy of such a big calling. The then Metropolitan, Juhanon Mar Thoma asked Rev. Koshy to stay with him for a few days before making his decision. With the advice and compulsion of his senior ashram friends and others, he finally agreed to his candidature for the Bishop election. He never asked anybody to vote for him. While the election was going on in Tiruvalla, he spent time in fasting and prayer at the St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church in Kozhencerry. When asked if he would be disappointed at not being selected, he replied with a smile that he is also as human as anybody else. This was a post he had not asked for, but now that he was nominated he would obviously be disappointed if not selected. He was always frank and clear in his views and thoughts, never questioning his role as a servant of the Lord.

#### **A man of prayer and fasting.**

His life of prayer and deep spiritual experiences were his special characteristics. For him, prayer was part of his life. He talked to the Lord as he would speak to his earthly father. He used to spend hours and hours in prayer. On certain days when there was a special need, he would pray the whole night without eating any food. Thirumeni used to fast regularly, four times a week. In addition to this, he used to fast for special needs and requirements. During the construction of the Chungathara College, a huge amount was required to pay off the debts. Thirumeni abstained from dinner for forty days and spent time in prayer for help. Help did come from a charitable organization in Germany and all debts were cleared.

"Easow Mar Timotheos- a glowing morning star, shined for the people of the land for a short while. At his sudden demise in 1988, the then Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi testified Thirumeni as the 'great apostle of India'. That was the influence he extended in the hearts of the people within a short span of time." He passed away in the Andaman Islands and through the intervention of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, a special Indian Navy plane was arranged and his body was brought to Kerala.

**Easow Mar Timotheos** was a devout servant of the Lord who gave of his life to sharing God's word by becoming a true shepherd to his people.



### P: The Cross I Bear

I drag this cross from town to town  
To show the world the grace I've found.

You may think this task odd or grim;  
But I do this for the love of Him.

Christ bore a much heavier weight  
So we may enter Heaven's wondrous gate.

Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice;  
A million lambs could not pay the price.

He took upon the world's sin and shame  
And will bear yours, just speak His name.

You may scoff and you may jeer,  
But you're the reason my mission's clear.

I'll bear the cross in my Savior's name  
For you are the reason the Messiah came.

(Cong. to stand)

### Intercessory Prayers

L: Look with mercy, O Lord, on your holy church throughout the world. Heal her divisions. Guide and prosper all endeavours for unity and concord among the churches. Incline the hearts of leaders and people to love. We remember and pray for our Bishops- Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom-Mar Thoma Valia Metropolitan, Rev. Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma- Metropolitan, Rt. Rev. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus-Suffragan Metropolitan, Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Mar Athanasius, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius, Rt. Rev. Thomas Mar Timotheos, Rt. Rev. Dr. Euyakim Mar Coorilos, Rt. Rev. Joseph Mar Barnabas, Rt. Rev. Dr. Issac Mar Philoxenos, Rt. Rev. Dr. Abraham Mar Paulose. We also remember and pray for the newly consecrated Bishops- Rt. Rev. Dr. Mathews Mar Makarios, Rt. Rev.

Gregorios Mar Stephanos, Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Theethos. Give to each one your holy spirit, so that they may spread your love & message all around.

**C:** We have heard the joyful sound:

Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

Tell the message all around:

Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

Bear the news to every land,

Climb the steeps and cross the waves;

Onward!—'tis our Lord's command;

Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

L: Lord Jesus, you have chosen your priests from among us and sent them out to proclaim your word and to act in your name. For so great a gift to your Church, we give you praise and thanksgiving. We ask you to fill them with the fire of your love, that their ministry may reveal your presence in the Church.

We pray that your power shine out through our achens. In their afflictions let them never be crushed; in their doubts never despair; in temptation never be destroyed; in persecution never abandoned. Inspire them through prayer to live each day the good news that Jesus saves.

**C:** Waft it on the rolling tide,

Jesus saves, Jesus saves;

Say to sinners far and wide,

Jesus saves, Jesus saves;

Sing, ye islands of the sea,

Echo back, ye ocean caves;

Earth shall keep her jubilee,

Jesus saves, Jesus saves.

L: We pray, O Lord, for institutions everywhere established for spreading your life giving gospel. We pray for students who are studying Theology and preparing themselves to be your ministers for the future. We also pray for the new batch of achens who are being ordained currently in various parishes. Dear Lord be with them always as they face a new life and a new challenge every day.

We remember all our Evangelists, and those working in the Missions, Hospitals and Ashrams across the country. Bless them with zeal and hope to face all adversities and problems. We pray for our sexton, office assistants and others who work for the church. Bless them and their families and help us realise their contributions.

**C:** Sing above the toil and strife,

Jesus saves, Jesus saves;

By His death and endless life,

Jesus saves, Jesus saves;

Sing it softly thru the gloom,

When the heart for mercy craves,

Sing in triumph o'er the tomb,

Jesus saves, Jesus saves.

L: We pray for us your people; help us to be an encouragement and support to our achens and our church, not just complainers seeking attention. Guide us to be resourceful in the mission of the church. Help us to contribute generously without expecting in return and let us be ever grateful to our church and be able to spread its message of unconditional love. Jesus saves. Amen.

**C:** Give the winds a mighty voice,  
Jesus saves, Jesus saves;  
Let the nations now rejoice.  
    Jesus saves, Jesus saves;  
Shout salvation full and free,  
To every strand the ocean laves,  
This our song of victory,  
    Jesus saves, Jesus saves.

Lyrics: Priscilla Jane Owens Music: William James Kirkpatrick

### **Gospel Reading**

P: Peace be with you all.

C: May the Lord make us all worthy to listen to His Word.

P: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which proclaims life and salvation to the world as recorded by **St. John. 10:1-11**

C: Blessed is He that has come and will come again. Praise to the Father who sent him for our Salvation. May his blessings be ever upon us.

P: In the days of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, the Word of life, God incarnate of the blessed Virgin Mary, it happened in this way.

C: So we believe and affirm.

(After reading the Gospel the priest says, 'Peace be with you all')

C: We thank you , Lord, that you have given us your gospel which is indeed the light of the world, that we may be drawn closer to you through the living words from your gospel which we have now heard.

### **The Nicene Creed**

We believe in the one true God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all world; Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified also for us in the days of Pontius Pilate; suffered and died and was buried. The third day He rose again, by His Father's holy will, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. He will come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead and of His kingdom there will be no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets and the apostles.

We believe in one Holy Catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and the new life of the world to come. Amen.

(Cong. to be seated)

### **Birthday & wedding offertory**

He leadeth me, O blessed thought!  
O words with heav'ly comfort fraught!  
Whate'er I do, where'er I be  
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

*He leadeth me, He leadeth me,  
By His own hand He leadeth me;  
His faithful foll'wer I would be,  
For by His hand He leadeth me.*

Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,  
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,  
By waters still, o'er troubled sea,  
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine,  
Nor ever murmur nor repine;  
Content, whatever lot I see,  
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me.

Lyrics: Joseph Henry Gilmore Music: William Batchelder Bradbury

### **Offertory**

Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,  
Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve;  
Waiting for the harvest, and the time of reaping,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

*Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves,  
Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves,*

Sowing in the sunshine, sowing in the shadows,  
Fearing neither clouds nor winter's chilling breeze;  
By and by the harvest, and the labor ended,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Go then ever, weeping, sowing for the Master,  
Though the loss sustained our spirit often grieves;  
When our weeping's over, He will bid us welcome,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Lyrics: Knowles Shaw Music: George Austin Minor

### **Honoring of Achens**

## **Message**

### ***Closing thought***

#### **L: Beyond Mere Existence**

Why does it seem so easy  
To slowly grow so cold?  
To lose that fire we once had known  
That burned within our souls

We start to lose the joy  
And life becomes a bore  
We just live from day to day  
With no hope in the Lord

We give up on the dreams  
We once had in our hearts  
We settle down to mere existence  
Alone within the dark

Oh God, our spirits yearn  
To know you so much more  
We don't want to just exist  
But know you as before

To feel your presence in our lives  
And a new song on our lips  
To walk in victory every day  
O Lord, we long for this

Come, O God, and touch us  
Ignite us once again  
So we will burn with holy zeal  
More than we had back then

Fill us with your spirit, Lord  
And we shall be renewed  
So joy can be restored to us  
With brand-new hope in you

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#### **C: Closing Prayer**

All together

I will work for Jesus,  
No matter the cost.  
Looking to save,  
Those who are lost.

Willing to labor,  
Without a fee.  
Looking for those,  
He can set free.

Will travel far,  
Wide as I need.  
Looking for hungry,  
People to feed.

Willing to forsake,  
Life as I know.  
Looking to plant,  
Water, feed, and sow.

Will take up cross,  
With joy and pride.  
Looking to gather,  
for Jesus with pride.

### **Prayer & Benediction**

P: "I'll stay where you've put me; I will work, dear Lord, though the field may be small, and the ground be fallow, and the stones lie thick. Because the field is thine own, only give me the seed, I'll sow it with never a fear; I'll till the dry soil while I wait for the rain, and rejoice when the green of hope appears; I'll work where you've put me."

May the peace of God that passes all understanding bless you to share His love, be empowered with his grace and mercy and keep you from all harm and make you worthy of all good gifts. Amen.

### **Doxology & Kiss of peace**

I am thinking today of that beautiful land  
I shall reach when the sun goeth down;  
When through wonderful grace by my Savior I stand,  
Will there be any stars in my crown?

*Will there be any stars, any stars in my crown  
When at evening the sun goeth down?  
When I wake with the blest in the mansions of rest  
Will there be any stars in my crown?*

In the strength of the Lord let me labor and pray,  
Let me watch as a winner of souls,  
That bright stars may be mine in the glorious day,  
When His praise like the sea billow rolls.

Lyrics: Eliza Edmunds Hewitt Music: John Robson Sweney

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### **Balance**

Once the great St. Anthony of the Desert was relaxing with his disciples outside his hut when a hunter came by. The hunter was surprised to see Anthony relaxing, and rebuffed him for taking it easy. It was not his idea of what a holy monk should be doing.

Anthony replied, "*Bend your bow and shoot an arrow.*" And the hunter did so. "*Bend it again and shoot another arrow,*" said Anthony. The hunter did so, again and again.

The hunter finally said, "*Abba Anthony, if I keep my bow always stretched, it will break.*" "*So it is with the monk,*" replied Anthony. "*if we push ourselves beyond measure, we will break. It is right from time to time to relax our efforts.*"



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