

## Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 26, 2026

Happy Easter!

Jesus uses various images to communicate to us who he is and to teach us something about who God is - the identity and the nature of God. Especially in the Gospel of John, he makes several "I am" statements as they have come to be known over the centuries. For example, "I am the bread of life." "I am the resurrection and the life." "I am the way, the truth and the life." "I am the true vine." And his use of simple words, "I am" are an echo of God's self-revelation to Moses so many, many, many, many centuries prior to this, prior to Jesus' life. Where Moses asked, "When I go to Pharaoh, who should I say is that is sending me?" And God reveals himself as "I am."

So when Jesus says, "I am the bread of life", or "I am the Good Shepherd", or "I am the gate" his deliberate choice of words there are not lost on the people listening to it, nor is it lost on the readers of the Gospel of John in the early Church and all the way down to today. We see Jesus claiming divine identity. He is saying, "I am," "I am the living God." In today's Gospel, the beginning of the tenth Chapter of John and Jesus comes again and uses this phraseology "I am." He says, "I am the gate for the sheep." And in the passage immediately following today's Gospel, he says, "I am the Good Shepherd." Obviously, two very closely related images. But he communicates different concepts, different truths by his use of these different images. Clearly, in the first part he is not saying he is the shepherd because he's saying he's the gate, and the shepherd enters through the gate. So, if he were saying he was both the