

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Homily: Fr. Shijo George

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Today's Word of God places before us a powerful image - a door. In the Gospel, from the Gospel of St. John, Jesus says: "I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved." He does not merely show us the way - He Himself is the way. He does not point to a door - He Himself becomes the door.

When Jesus becomes the door of our lives, we no longer live scattered or divided: we live in communion with Him. In that communion, we become spiritually strong - strong enough to guard ourselves against what is false, sinful, deceptive and destructive.

In the First Reading from the Acts of the Apostles, Saint Peter speaks with urgency: "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." This is not just advice; it is a call to conversion. It is a call to make a decision: to close the doors that lead to sin. Close the doors that weakens soul. Close the doors that promise much but give nothing lasting. And then, open one door that leads to salvation. Enter through Christ.

The Second Reading from the First Epistle of Peter reminds us why this matters so deeply. Christ "bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness." And then those tender words: "You were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls." It confirms that not one is lost anymore; if one chooses to return to Him.

The saints show us what that return looks like in real life. Saint Augustine of Hippo tells us: "Christ is both the Shepherd and the Door." He leads us, "...and He is the very entrance into life." Saint Jerome reminds us that we cannot enter this door with pride; we must bend low. Only the humble can pass through Christ. Perhaps no one lived this decision more radically than Saint Francis of Assisi.



As we know, the Catholic Church celebrates the Jubilee year of Saint Francis of Assisi from January 10, 2026 to January 10, 2027. Francis was born into wealth, comfort, and privilege. Many doors were open to him: success, honor, fame and name, fortunes, and pleasure. But he realized that none of those doors led to true life. One day, in a dramatic and decisive moment, he stood before his earthly father and renounced everything - his wealth, his inheritance; even his family ties. He removed his fine clothes and gave them back to his earthly father, saying in effect: “Until now I have called Pietro Bernardone my father, but from now on, I can say with complete freedom: Our Father who art in heaven!” What a powerful moment! Francis closed every worldly door, and he chose one door alone: Christ. He entered through the narrow gate. He embraced poverty, humility, and simplicity; and in so doing, he discovered a joy the world could never give.

Dear brothers and sisters, the world still offers many doors - wide, attractive, and easy; yet quietly deceptive. They promise happiness, but ultimately lead us away from God and into emptiness. We live in a time when many people feel lost within themselves; struggling with a sense of emptiness and a lack of meaning in life. Jesus warns us: the road is narrow, but it leads to life.

So today, the question is not theoretical, it is deeply personal: Which door am I choosing? What must I renounce? What must I let go of? What door must I close today so that I can fully enter through Christ?

To follow Jesus is not just to admire Him - it is to choose Him: to choose Him as the Door; to choose Him as the Shepherd; to choose Him as the Way. Let us have the courage of Saint Francis of Assisi - to let go of everything that does not lead to God. And then, with trust and humility, let us enter through Christ, the true Gate: the only Door that leads to life.