

Second Tuesday of Advent, December 7

Is 40:1-11; Mt 18:12-14

The parable of the lost sheep is one that I find perplexing. You leave the 99 to go find the one that has lost its way. Who takes care of the 99 sheep left in the field? Can a wolf come and attack? Can they wonder off as a herd, and then returns the shepherd with just one sheep? In our society of management, it might likely that shepherd would be written up for mismanagement.

Then, of course, we are not talking about the norms of society. Jesus trusts that the 99 are safe, and on the right path. He acts contrary to common logic, and goes after the one who is off the path. There are times, that I am grateful that Jesus comes after me.

It is easy for me to consider myself as in the 99 club. Then, suddenly, I am the lost sheep, and may not even know it. For a while, I may enjoy the alternative path. Soon I find my life not aligned with my values. Somehow, Jesus finds me, comforts me, and through his disciples, I return to the 99 club. I am glad that Jesus is a poor manager, but a loving shepherd.

Holy Name Parishioner W.V.