

A Pastor's Prayer to the Good Shepherd

St John Damascene (675-749)

*Monk, Theologian, Doctor of the Church*

*O Christ, my God, You stooped down to me, poor straying sheep, to take me on Your shoulders (Lk 15:5) and have set me down in green pastures (Ps 23[22]:2). You have quenched my thirst at the springs of true doctrine, through the mediation of Your pastors, whose shepherd You were, before entrusting to them Your flock... And now, O Lord, You have called me... to serve Your disciples, by what design of Your Providence I know not, only You know.*

*But, Lord, lighten the heavy burden of those sins of mine that have so gravely offended You, purify my mind and heart. Lead me by the right way (Ps 23[22]:3) as by a light enlightening me. Enable me to proclaim Your word boldly, may Your Spirit's tongue of flame (Acts 2:3) give perfect freedom to my tongue and make me constantly attentive to Your presence.*

*Be a shepherd to me, O Lord and together with me, be the shepherd of Your sheep, that my heart may not cause me to swerve either to right or to left. Let Your good Spirit lead me in the right way, that my actions may be carried out, according to Your will – even to the end.”*

*Amen*