Fourth Sunday of Easter (C)

Gospel text (*Jn* 10:27-30): Jesus said: “My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life (…).″

John 10: knowledge and belonging interrelation between the Good Shepherd and His flock

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today we mull over an essential aspect of the sermon about the Shepherd: the Shepherd and his flock know each other: He calls his own sheep by name, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

Knowledge and belonging are interrelated. The shepherd knows the sheep because they belong to him, and they know him precisely because they are his. "Knowing" and "belonging" are actually one and the same thing. The true shepherd does not "possess' the sheep as if they were a thing to be used and consumed; rather, they "belong" to him, in the context of their knowing each other, and this 'knowledge' is an inner acceptance. It signifies an inner belonging that goes much deeper than the possession of things.

—This is precisely the difference between the true shepherd and the robber: For the robber - ideologues and dictators – human beings are merely a thing that they possess. For the true Shepherd, they are free in relation to truth and love; he does not use them, but gives his life for them.