

In the synagogue at Antioch, St Paul talked to the Jews about this Jesus whom he had encountered on the road to Damascus. His argument was not based on his personal experience, powerful as it was. Paul argued that Jesus is the long-awaited Saviour because in him all the prophecies of old are fulfilled. He is the descendant of King David. He is the one John the Baptist had spoken of. Paul, once a persecutor of Christians became a Christian preacher, a minister of the Gospel. Isn't that extraordinary?

Those who listened to Paul, could have said in response: 'If your Jesus is the Messiah, so why didn't he come to us in person while he was still alive? Why didn't he perform a few miracles among us here? Had he come to Antioch, we would have been delighted to listen to him and even place our faith in him.'

Today also, many people find it difficult to believe because they have never seen him or heard his voice. 'Walking by faith and not by sight' is not always easy. How good would it be to have Jesus himself showing up before us in spirit and talking to us personally? Wouldn't it be easier to follow him then? But instead, Jesus chooses to speak to us in the Bible, and by apostles, imperfect witnesses, and catechists. The Church is now his Body. The Church gives flesh to his Word.

'Whoever welcomes the one I send welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.'

As we await the Pentecost, let us pray to the Holy Spirit to anoint our hearts, so that we may recognize the living voice of the Good Shepherd in the Bible and in his Church built upon Peter, the apostles and their successors.