**The Lord is my Shepherd**

A few years ago, there was an Irish priest who went to London to see a Shakespearean play at the theater where Shakespeare himself directed plays. The greatest Shakespearean actor was acting in this play, so the Irish priest was delighted when after the play, this greatest actor in the world offered to stay after and do a dramatic reading of anything the audience wanted. Someone in the audience raised his hand and asked for a dramatic reading of the “to be or not to be” monologue from Macbeth. The actor performed, and the audience loved it! Someone else asked for the Gettysburg address, and the crowd again gave a loud applause. Another person asked for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I have a dream” speech, and they gave a standing ovation. The shy Irish priest raised his hand and asked if the actor knew Psalm 23. The actor said he did know the psalm, but he would only do a dramatic reading of it if the priest would do it after. The priest was a shy man, so he really didn’t want to, but the actor insisted. The priest finally agreed, so the actor started, “The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I lack. In green pastures you let me graze; to safe waters you lead me; you restore my strength…” He did a marvelous job of the dramatic reading of Psalm 23 and received a standing ovation. Then he called the priest up. Father slowly walked up and reminded the crowd that he was a priest, not an actor. Looking down, he started with much emotion, “The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I lack. In green pastures you let me graze; to safe waters you lead me; you restore my strength…” When he finished there was no standing ovation; there was no applause; the crowd was silent. He looked up and saw the crowd was silent because many had tears in their eyes. The actor thanked the priest and said, “See, this is why I wanted you to recite the psalm. Because I know the psalm, but you know the shepherd. And there is a difference.”

Point of the Story

Many of us cradle Catholics grow up knowing a lot about God and Jesus. We know a lot of facts, but do we really know Jesus personally? Do we have a strong relationships with the living God who loves us infinitely? As we transition to the summer break from PREP, let us move our concentration from learning about God to getting to know God on a personal level. What are ways we can do this? Prayer, the sacraments, talking to God, journaling, etc.