



I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead... and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

JOHN 10:16

Living with Our Instincts

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

We live with a maze of instincts—some from the dark side and some from the light. In her book *Caste*, Isabel Wilkerson describes how cultures tend to consign certain individuals to the bottom of the social ladder. She specifically compares the caste system in India with how the Nazis sought to suppress and eliminate Jews and with the way blacks were oppressed by slavery and even in our own time. She describes the instinct in every society to relegate others to a lower class, always seeking to ensure that we are not at the bottom. This instinct can come from the dark side of people.

There is also an instinct for goodness to others, an instinct of light—to recognize everyone as brothers and sisters. As Saint John notes, “we are God’s children now”

(1 John 3:2). It is the voice of the Shepherd instilled in the human spirit that calls us into one fold, the voice of God urging us to healing goodness.

It is the dark side that nurtures white supremacy. It is the light that enables us to see beyond the color of our skin. It is the dark side that excludes those who seem different. It is the light that welcomes and offers hospitality. It is the dark side that succumbs to fear. It is the light of God’s love that confronts the wolves of hate and urges us to follow. There is always tension between darkness and light. ●

Reflect

How does the voice of the Good Shepherd call you to reject the dark and embrace the light?