

“My sheep hear my voice; I know them and they follow me.”

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Once upon a time, years ago, there was a movie called... **‘Laura.’** You can still see it, occasionally, on T.V. The movie is about a young detective, who is called in to solve the murder of a beautiful young woman, named, Laura. One night, someone knocks on Laura’s apartment door and fires a shotgun into her face, killing her.

For the next few days, the young detective spends all of his time in Laura’s apartment. He checks through everything she owns: her clothes, her books, her record albums, and her photographs. He reads her letters, mail, and even her diary –trying to find a clue to lead him to her murderer.

Then, something strange happens. The detective begins to become totally preoccupied, even obsessed, with Laura. He begins to become emotionally involved. He finds himself falling in love with Laura. He finds himself falling in love ...with a dead person!

Late one night, he’s sitting in the dark, in Laura’s apartment, trying to sort things out. It is very quiet. Suddenly, he hears a key in the lock. The door opens. The late-night visitor flips the light switch. The detective can’t believe his eyes. There stands... Laura! He knew her at once.

“What are you doing in my apartment?” she demands.

The detective quickly explains everything that has happened.

To make a long story short, Laura had gone to the country for a few days, to get away from everything. In that time, she hadn’t heard a radio, read a newspaper, or used a phone. She hadn’t heard of her own death.

It turns out that the murdered woman was someone Laura let use the apartment in her absence.

The movie ends with Laura & the detective falling in love, getting married, & living happily ever after.

That movie contains a 3-part scenario:

- 1st** –is the detective’s study of Laura’s apartment, which leads to his falling in love with her.
- 2nd** –is Laura’s entrance in the doorway and the detective’s recognition of her.
- 3rd** –is the detective’s courtship and his marriage to Laura.

‘So, what’s the big deal about all that?’ you ask.

Well, I am glad you asked that question, because I am, now, going to tell you what the big deal is.

That 3-part scenario just happens to be the very same scenario God has planned for each of us!

Let me count the ways:

- 1st** –God created us and put us in the world to learn about him
–just as the detective was put in Laura’s apartment to learn about her.
- 2nd** –God, in the person of Jesus Christ, entered this world to be recognized by us
–just as Laura entered the apartment and was recognized by the detective.
- 3rd** –God planned for us to fall in love with him and live happily ever after with him
–just as the detective fell in love with Laura and lived happily ever after with her.

The scenario of the movie **‘Laura’** & the scenario of God’s plan for us... helps us to better appreciate today’s Gospel that I just read to you from St. John, which reflects the same 3-part scenario.

Again, let me count the ways:

1st –God put his chosen people in the Old Testament world to learn about him.
2nd –at the appointed time, God, himself, entered the doorway of history in the person of Jesus Christ.
3rd –those, who recognize Jesus to be God... hear his voice, follow him, & have eternal life with him!

This is, of course, that to which Jesus refers in today's Gospel when he says of those who recognize him:

"My sheep hear my voice ...& they follow me. I give them eternal life." For "the Father and I are one."

You may find all this rather intriguing ...or NOT. **BUT** the question remains:
'How does any of this apply to OUR lives?' you ask. ...Glad you asked, again!

To get to that:

1st --I must take you back to the detective in the movie.

Recall how carefully he studied everything in Laura's apartment. He left no stone unturned to learn everything that he could about her... and her world.

As a result, he fell in love with her—even though he never met her face-to-face!

That's what **we** should be doing in **our** world! We should be studying everything about it. And through this study of the world and its many mysteries and beauties, and, yes, even its sorrow, we should be falling in love with the world's ultimate creator... God—even though we've **never met him** face-to-face!

2nd –we should be studying everything about Jesus Christ. We should be learning everything we can about him. For, in Jesus, we **meet God face-to-face, just as the detective met Laura in the doorway of her apartment.**

"Whoever has seen me," says Jesus, **"has seen the Father."** Jn. 14:9

3rd --we should be striving to commit our lives to Jesus, to receive from him, eternal life and to live with him happily ever after—just as the detective committed his life to Laura & lived happily ever after with her.

I now conclude with this prayer:

God our Father, you created us and gave us life. You put us in the beautiful, mysterious world to study it, to ponder it, and learn, through it... about you.

BUT, often, just the opposite happened. The beauties of life kept us **from** you, rather than drew us **to** you. **BUT**... **you did not** abandon us.

You called to us; you shouted to us; you broke through our deafness. You flashed before us; you shone about us; you took away our blindness.

And, suddenly, we began to hear your voice in every sigh, in every song. We began to see your reflection in every star and in every flower.

Then came that unforgettable day, when we heard your voice & saw your presence in Jesus, your Son. Help us listen to Jesus, follow him, and receive from him... eternal life. Help us freely choose your plan for us and live happily ever after with you & Jesus, in the unity of the Holy Spirit...and all our loved ones, who have preceded us in death...as well as those who will follow us in death.

May that Almighty God, our Abba, so bless you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.