4th Sunday of Lent – Wanting more

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;
his rod and your staff— they comfort me.

He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;
his rod and your staff— they comfort me.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me;
your rod and your staff— they comfort me.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the
house of the LORD my whole life long.

Psalm 23

What comfort, what peace. “I shall not want.” Oh, aren’t we consumed by wanting more. I wish
I had more time, more energy, more staff, more peace, more safety, more faith…

Psalm 23 enters my soul reminding me that my cup overflows, I am restored, I have all I need.
We need this message over and over again as we forget to walk with God in the green
pastures and in the darkest valleys. I am reminded in many conversations these days how we
have forgotten that God has been walking with us all along. People young and old are
suffering from grief, depression and anxiety – walking in those dark valleys – as these past
few years catch up with us. Just when I feel as if I’ve been consumed by my own life’s
difficulties recently, a woman whom I hadn’t seen in three years shared with me that she has
felt self-absorbed and is just now able to re-engage. I felt comfort in our openness with one
another, souls a little bit restored.

When meeting with Confirmation students and their parents these past few months, we’ve
talked about the vulnerabilities young people are experiencing as they seek meaning and
connectedness. I encourage the adults – parents, grandparents, youth leaders, pastors,
teachers, coaches, and all safe adults to engage young people in authentic conversations.
“What is bringing you joy these days? What is hard? Who are the safe people in your life you
can go to and talk about anything that may be difficult or bothering you?” When youth (and all
of us) have people reaching out for real connection, they are less likely to fall victim to
someone seeking to exploit them. “For you are with me.”

Pray Psalm 23 as you listen to this inspiring rendition by Bobby McFerrin’s VOCAbuLarieS.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.

Join us each week for our Lenten Prayer series, to keep children and all who provide support to youth
in our prayers as we journey through this season of Lent.