



# Are you in the know?

## Lamb of God

The gospel writer, John, tells us a surprising story. It is surprising in the light of what we know about human behavior. He describes John the Baptist, standing with two of his disciples. The two are John's followers. They look to him as their master.

Jesus passes by. John looks toward Jesus and says, "Behold the Lamb of God." (John 2:36b) He directs his disciples' attention away from himself and towards Jesus. He takes the mantle of master off his shoulders and places it upon Jesus. But he goes further still. He calls Jesus "the Lamb of God." John and his disciples would understand this reference from Isaiah to the suffering servant, upon whom the Lord laid "the guilt of us all." (Isaiah 53:6b) In his suffering, he

*Did not open his mouth;  
He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,  
Like a ewe that is dumb before the shearers. (Isaiah 53:7b)*

This is the One who will offer himself for the sins of the world, a pure and sinless sacrifice.

The gospel tells us John's disciples hear his words and leave him. They follow Jesus, and one of them, Andrew, proclaims, "We have found the Messiah." (John 2:41b)

Who dismisses his followers and acolytes? Who dismisses his admirers and supporters? We watch politicians beg and even buy votes. We watch celebrities humiliate themselves for airtime and print space. Yet John gives up all his power, all his influence, and all his acclaim before the Lamb of God. A true master, he sends his disciples to the Truth and bids them remain there. We might say John is made smaller, or we might say John is made right, in size and in placement, in understanding and in relationship, to Christ, the Lamb of God.

This is to be our attitude as we pray to Jesus, the Lamb of God. We pray as the Body of Christ is broken open before us and for us in the Eucharist.

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
Have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
Have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
Grant us peace.*

We ask for mercy. We ask for the burden of sin to be lifted and forgiven. We ask for peace. We demand nothing. We claim nothing. We own nothing. We ask—as beggars, as penitents, as children and the elderly, as all the lowly of the world—ask. Our hands are empty and open, waiting to be filled.

God heaps gifts into our outstretched hand, food that never fails, food for our journey deeper and ever deeper into the heart of God. We receive these gifts as grace, undeserved and freely given. We take Christ into our bodies, into our flesh. We eat not that we might grow and increase, but that like John the Baptist, we might decrease. May there be less of us and more of Christ, Mass by Mass, Sunday by Sunday, until Christ is all in all. May there be less of us and more of Christ, until, like John the Baptist, we are made right, in size and placement, in understanding and relationship to Christ, the Lamb of God.

*Are you in the know...you are now!*



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