

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Gospel text (Jn 1:29-34): John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, ‘A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.’ I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel.”

John testified further, saying, “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the holy Spirit.’ Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God.”

“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”

Fr. Joaquim FORTUNY i Vizcarro
(Cunit, Tarragona, Spain)

Today, when seeing Jesus, we have heard John saying “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.” (Jn 1:29). What may all those people have thought? And, what do we think, ourselves? In the celebration of the Eucharist we all pray “Lamb of God who remove the sins of the world / have mercy on us.” And the priest invites the congregation to the Communion, by saying: “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world...”

When John said, “Behold, the Lamb of God” we should have no doubts they all understood what he meant, as the lamb is a metaphor of messianic character that prophets like Isaiah had already used, and it was very well known to the good Israelites.

On the other hand, the lamb is the animal Israelites sacrifice to celebrate their

Passover, marking freedom for the Israelites from the Egyptian slavery. The Pasch dinner consists of eating a lamb.

And even the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church state that the lamb is a sign of purity, simplicity, goodness, meekness, innocence... And Christ is Purity, Simplicity, Goodness, Meekness and Innocence. Saint Peter will say: “realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct... but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished lamb.” (1Pet 1:18.19). And St. John, in “Revelation” uses thirty times the word “lamb” to describe Christ. Jesus Christ is the lamb that takes away the sins of the world, which has been immolated to give us Grace. Let us fight to always live by Grace, to fight against sin, to hate it. The beauty Grace gives to the soul is so great that no treasure can compare with it. It makes us agreeable to God and worthy of being loved. This is why, the “Gloria” of the Mass mentions the peace of those men the Lord loves, of those who live by Grace.

While urging us to live by the Grace the lamb has given us, Saint John Paul II told us: “Pledge to live by the Grace. Jesus was born at Bethlehem precisely for that reason... To live by Grace is the supreme dignity, the ineffable joy, the guarantee of peace, and the marvelous ideal.”

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

-

“When he was born after me [John the Baptist], it is because the time of his birth does not constrain him within limits: born of a mother in time, he is begotten by the Father out of time.”
(Saint Gregory the Great)

-

“Christ is the ‘lamb’ who takes away the sins of the world. Let us fight to always live by Grace, to fight against sin. The beauty Grace gives to the soul is so great that it makes us agreeable to God and worthy of being love.” (Benedict XVI)

-

“Following the holy Fathers, we unanimously teach and confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: the same perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity, the same truly God and truly man (...), ‘like us in all things but sin’ (Heb 4:15); (...) in these last days was born as to his

humanity of the virgin Mary, the Mother of God.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N° 467)