

## 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME—Year B—M01-D17-Y2021

01. ***“HERE is the Lamb of God.”*** In other translations, the word is BEHOLD — *Behold the Lamb of God*—which is actually what the priest says at Mass when he holds up the Eucharist for a second time AFTER the Consecration.
02. Personally, I prefer the word BEHOLD than HERE. Because, in the biblical sense, behold doesn’t mean to simply see—but ***to keep hold of and to cling to—to give yourself to and belong to—to be deeply invested in, and devoted to.***
03. So, when John the Baptist says: *Behold the Lamb of God*, he doesn’t just mean *see the Lamb of God*—but ***to keep of hold of Him and cling to Him—to give yourself to Him—to be deeply invested IN Him, and devoted TO Him.***
04. In the 2009 movie, AVATAR, one of the biggest money-makers of all-time, the blue aliens greet one another with the words: “I SEE YOU” — which means far more than simply I see your body. It means I see ***who you really are—I see your essence—I see your soul—I see your heart—and not just things that can be perceived with the senses.***
05. It’s the same with the words: *Behold the Lamb of God* — to behold the Lamb of God is to truly see the Lord — ***to see Him for Who He really is, and not how we want or expect Him to be*** — to see Him not in a superficial, external way—but to see ***His very Essence, His very Soul, His very Heart.*** And so, to *behold the Lord* is to come to know Him in way that is very personal.
06. This is why John the Baptist says in another Gospel, *I myself did not know Him*—which is a strange thing to say about one’s cousin — but what the Baptist means is that—***he didn’t really see Jesus for Who really is until his eyes were opened by the Holy Spirit. (PAUSE)***
07. All during Advent and Christmas we have been celebrating the coming and revelation of God’s Son to the world—but as we now enter this period of ordinary time, ***it’s a good opportunity to reflect***

**on what the revelation of God's Son means to us in a personal way — how has this revelation really changed our behaviour, and impacted our lives — do we truly see the Lord for Who He really is — do we see the Lord even in the midst of this terrible pandemic.**

08. Recently I preached about the Heart of Joseph, and the Heart of Mary. Now I would like to talk a little bit about the Heart of Our Lord.
09. Because, to truly behold the Lamb of God is **to see the Heart of Jesus — for it is in the Heart of Jesus, that we will truly see the Lord for Who He really is — and it is in the Heart of Jesus that we will come to know Him through PERSONAL ENCOUNTER and PERSONAL EXPERIENCE—**and not just what we have been told and taught about Him.
10. And when we really see the Heart of Jesus, we will not only come to love Our Lord more—**we will fall IN LOVE with Him — for we will see in His Heart love beyond ALL TELLING—the greatest love story ever told—His limitless, personal love for each of us.**
11. For to behold the Heart of Jesus is to ALSO see how HE BEHOLDS US—because in Jesus, **we see a Heart which knows us intimately, better than we can ever know ourselves — and a Heart which loves us intensely—more than anyone can ever love us.**
12. Moreover, in the Heart of Jesus we will see **the true nature of God—and not how it has been distorted by the world, and the devil.** Because the world and the devil tell us **EITHER that God doesn't exist—OR that if He does exist, He's very distant and impersonal—that He really doesn't care about us, and is indifferent to our suffering—that He has in fact abandoned us and is completely unavailable to us.**
13. But when we really make the time and effort to BEHOLD the Lamb of God, we see that none of this is true. For, in Jesus, we see a Heart **SO IN LOVE with humanity—that He freely, and joyfully, chose to**

**strip Himself of infinite power and majesty to embrace human limitation, and experience pain and hardship.**

14. Because the God Who always existed—Who has no beginning and no end—**Who holds the entire universe in the Palm of His Hand**—went through EXTRAORDINARY lengths to be present to us—to be accessible and available to us—stripping Himself of eternal power and majesty to embrace the frailty, the limitations, and the weaknesses of human nature.
15. And so, God is not AT ALL distant or impersonal—**RATHER, He is so close to us that we can see Him with our own eyes**—and touch Him with our own hands — **so close to us that He is ONE OF US AND ONE WITH US.**
16. And **WHENEVER** we truly **BEHOLD** the Lord, we will see a Heart which is not at all distant from us, but one that is truly with us—**that is closer to us than our own skin** — a Heart that cares profoundly about everything that affects us, **even the very smallest things** — a Heart **NOT** indifferent to our suffering—but one which **shares deeply in our suffering** — a **Heart that bleeds for us and suffers right along with us**—a Heart that feels our pain **EVEN** more intensely than we do — a **Heart deeply devoted and invested in our ultimate good and well-being with love beyond all telling**—a Heart that is truly with us in this time of pandemic.
17. But if we really want to see how the Lord is truly with us—**and has not abandoned us in this age of covid**—we need to do more than see Him, we need to **BEHOLD HIM** — **that is we need to see His very essence, His very Heart** — we need to come to know Him not in a superficial way, but in a real, and personal way — **we need to keep hold of Him and cling to Him.**
18. The thing that separated the Apostles from the religious leaders of the time—and why the Apostles were able to truly see God present in their midst in the Person of Jesus Christ (while the religious leaders were **NOT able to**)—**is that the Apostles were really**

searching for something more—and were aware that they didn't have all the answers.

19. They too were living in difficult circumstances, including **major restrictions to their freedom — not because of a pandemic, of course**—but because the people of Israel had been invaded by a different kind of entity—and were being occupied by a foreign power, the Romans. **And like most of Israel at the time, the Apostles falsely believed that all their dissatisfaction with life was the result of this foreign occupation.**
20. STILL, because the Apostles were NOT satisfied with their lives and the way things were—they instinctively knew that **there had to be more to life than what they were experiencing at the time.**
21. In other words, the Apostles were very much in touch with **their SPIRITUAL AND EMOTIONAL POVERTY**—and their **great desire for something more in life.** And so, when Jesus entered their lives, they instinctively knew that He was both **the KEY and the ANSWER TO this search.**
22. And, as we hear in today's Gospel, their reaction to Jesus being THE ANSWER to their search for something more was **to start following Him right away, but from a distance**—until Our Lord turns to them and says: **“What are you looking for?”**
23. This is one of **THE MOST important and penetrating questions Jesus asks in the Gospels**—a question He asks each of us today—what are you looking for? **In other words, what are you searching for in life? Are you satisfied with your life or are you seeking something more? Do you have deep and lasting peace and joy no matter what life throws your way, or is your happiness dependent on your circumstances?**
24. To this powerful and penetrating question, the Apostle's respond with a question of their own: **Rabbi, where are you staying?** But what they were really asking Jesus is: **Rabbi, are you the answer to**

*our searching, to our hopes, to our desire for something more in life?*

25. Jesus then says to them: ***Come and see***. In other words: ***Come and spend time with Me — come and see what I'm all about — come and get to know Me — come and enter a close friendship with Me — come and leave your expectations and pre-conceived notions behind; and you will find out, whether or not, I am the answer to your hopes—to your search for something more in life.***
26. Because Jesus, **Who is the very incarnation of humility**—wasn't interested in parading Himself around with splendour and grandeur — **declaring that He was the Son of God in obvious and irrefutable ways**. He wanted people to come to really know Him personally — **to find out for themselves Who He really was, and what He had to offer**.
27. And, in order to do this, the Apostles in today's Gospel had to leave behind everything they knew—their entire way of life. But the biggest challenge for them was to leave behind **their own judgments, their own opinions, their own expectations and preconceived notions of WHO the messiah WOULD be, and WHERE the messiah COULD be found**.
28. Today, we too are faced with the same challenge—to **leave behind our judgments, our opinions, and our expectations of where God is to be found and where Jesus is to be seen**. For God is very much with us in this time of pandemic — **He is very much with us in our struggles and hardships** — He is NOT DISTANT, and has not abandoned us in these uncertain times as the world and the devil would have us believe.
29. Because suffering of any kind—**EVEN the suffering inflicted by covid—CANNOT prevent us from seeing God in our midst**, and from experiencing His love and Presence, unless we allow it to. This doesn't mean that we will be able to avoid challenges and

hardships—but it does mean that we have nothing to fear—**because God is truly with us, and holds each of us in the Palm of His Hand.**

**30.** And so today, Jesus says to us the same things He said to the Apostles: **“What are you looking for? If you truly desire something more out of life—don’t follow Me from a distance, but come and see what I’m all about—**come and enter a close and intimate friendship with Me.

**31.** Come and spend time with Me in prayer and silence—come and see whether or not I’m the answer to **all your longing, all your hopes, all your search for something more in life—**come and immerse yourself in My Heart—for it is there you will find **ALL that you are looking for. AMEN.**