

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time – 01-18-2026

“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.’”

John the Baptist was very clear about Jesus: A man who ranks ahead of him because he existed before him. The only conclusion to be had from this is that Jesus Christ is God and John instinctively knew it.

John was well aware that his cousin Jesus was conceived and born three months after him. His mother Elizabeth surely would have relayed the circumstances of Mary’s visit to them many times over the years.

In other words, historically speaking, John existed before Jesus in time and John knew it but Jesus existed before John in eternity because Jesus is God.

Furthermore, by referring to Jesus as the “Lamb of God” he was also letting us know that he was somehow aware of Jesus’ sacrificial mission.

At Mass today just before Holy Communion, I will raise the consecrated host and say the same words that John the Baptist

said over two thousand years ago, “Behold the Lamb of God. Behold him who takes away the sins of the world.”

I will point out the same Jesus that John the Baptist pointed out except for one difference.

Jesus has already fulfilled his sacrificial mission.

The only thing left for us to do on our part is to allow his saving grace to take its effect in our lives.

I heard an explanation on Ave Maria radio that can help us to understand a little bit of how this might work.

The host used the example of the manufacture of antibiotics. He said, just because an antibiotic has been manufactured and proved effective in the fight against infection it can't work until it is consumed by the one who is sick.

In this sense, what Jesus did on the cross is not effective either until we open ourselves up to the grace of his sacrifice.

The Sacrament of Confession is the ordinary means and consequently the most effective means by which we allow the Blood of Christ to work its saving grace in us and bring us into communion with Jesus Christ and his Church.

Strictly speaking, the Most Holy Eucharist, Holy Communion, is only the Sacrament of eternal life when we are in full

communion with Jesus Christ and his Church. Otherwise, according to Saint Paul it could very well become the Sacrament of death.

It's not God's will for anyone that they should suffer eternal damnation but he ultimately puts the burden on us because he won't violate our free will.

The burden doesn't have to be heavy because his mercy is very light. Our sins cannot separate us from God unless we let them.

Again reflect on the words, "Behold the Lamb of God. Behold him who takes away the sins of the world."

But let's finish the phrase from Mass. "Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb."

And now let's consider our response: "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."

What is that word? The ultimate word is "absolve," "I absolve you of your sins." A word that can only be heard with perfect clarity in the Sacrament of Confession.

Let's not wait another moment. For Catholics, the confessional is the perfect place of mercy where the precious blood of the Lamb is poured out for our salvation.