

PRAYING TOGETHER AS A LITTLE FLOCK AT MASS
19th Sunday Ordinary Time Year C, 11th August 2019

The Gospel passage today from Luke begins,

***“Do not be afraid, little flock,
for it is your Father’s pleasure to give you the kingdom.
Sell your possessions and give alms.
Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out,
an unfailing treasure in heaven,
where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit.”***

LITTLE FLOCK

Each time we gather for the celebration of the Eucharist,
we come together as a *‘little flock’*.

We translate the Greek word *‘mikron’* as little.

Our English word *‘micro’* comes from the Greek *‘mikron’*

Small enough to be humble.

The image of ‘flock’ reminds us that we are
a community that follows the shepherd, Jesus.

Because of its total trust in the shepherd, we need not fear.

OUR TREASURES

We do not need to hoard possessions.

Our treasure does not wear away.

It does not rot away. It does not spoil. It cannot be stolen.

Our great treasure is God’s continued deep and intimate love,
with Jesus as our shepherd.

God’s love does not drive us, but invites us to grow in love,
to make a difference by actively loving.

We are not called to be a driven community,
but a loving community.

Jesus is the Saviour, the Shepherd, showing us the way.

The little flock is alive and active,

not overcome by fear and paralysis

The Holy Spirit prompts us and helps us to pray.

LAMB OF GOD

When we gather in Eucharist as a little flock,
as a faith community,

we humbly profess our reliance on God.

Using the insight of *John the Baptist* in the Gospels,

we profess Jesus as the *Lamb of God*.

We pray in word or song, three times to Jesus as *‘Lamb of God’*.

We pray to Jesus under the humble title of *'Lamb of God'*.
Jesus shows us how to be a humble family, a humble community.
In love, Jesus calls us to be humble.

Then the celebrant leads us with these words

*'Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.'*

As a community, as a little flock, we respond together:

*'Lord, I am not worthy
that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word
and my soul shall be healed.'*

It is Jesus who takes away sin.

It is Jesus who heals us.

Every time we gather at Mass, we pray to Jesus as Lamb of God.

Let us note what has already happened before we profess Jesus as Lamb of God.

Having already gathered as community in prayer, we

- Prayed to God as Trinity in the sign of the Cross
- Reached out to the mercy of God and asked God to have mercy on us
- (on Sundays and special occasions also giving glory to God)
- Prayed our community opening prayer
- Humbly greeted and listened as a little flock, to the Word of God in scripture
- Responded to the Word with a psalm, and a verse before the Gospel
- Pondered on God's message to us here and now
- (on Sundays and special occasions also professing the creed of our beliefs in God)
- Prayed for our intentions and for others this day
- Presented the gifts of bread and wine to God
- Professed the holiness of God,
- Humbly prayed as a little flock, as Jesus becomes truly present in the Eucharist during the Eucharistic Prayer.
- Professed together the presence of Jesus during the memorial acclamation
- Acclaimed together our response to God by word or song in the Great Amen.
- Prayed our family prayer - the 'Our Father'
- Exchanged the Sign of Peace.

And then we prepared humbly to receive Jesus in Holy Communion by beholding him as Lamb of God.

PERSECUTION AND THE LAMB

Later in the new Testament we read of the struggling early church community during a time of persecution, while professing Jesus as the Lamb of God.

Jesus is called the Lamb frequently in the last Book of the Bible, the Book of Revelations in chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 22.

PRAYER

We remember Christians who likewise are persecuted in places in the world today. And we pray for the Chaldean Catholics whose Bishops are meeting in Synod in Baghdad over these days. Chaldean Patriarch Sako and Archbishop Warda have already this month drawn our attention to the plight of Iraqi Christians. Now is a critical time for whether Iraqi Christians will survive in their homeland or not.
[pause and pray]

We pray today for the church communities in Papua New Guinea and the ethical issues and challenges they face, including Manus Island, climate change and equal access for all.
[pause and pray]

At all Masses this commitment weekend we celebrate as families present their children for preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation in October. We pray with the families now.
[pause and pray]

Let us journey together in prayer.

Let us pray.

Fr. Gerry

[Readings:<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/081119.cfm>]

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FR. GERRY HEFFERAN



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