

'LAMB OF GOD HUMBLY BEFORE US' - HOMILY – 15 JANUARY 2017

Last Sunday the Gospel highlighted the **SURPRISE** of the **MAGI**.
Humbly we know that the light of Jesus Christ is for all nations, not just for ourselves.

The Sunday before, the Gospel highlighted the **SURPRISE** of the **SHEPHERDS**.
Humbly we realise that God chose the shepherds to share the Good News on that first Christmas.

The Shepherds show us our need to be humble.

This Sunday comes another **SURPRISE** as Jesus is named **LAMB OF GOD**.

Some of us can relate to nicknames we might receive.

Grandma might call a grandchild *"pet"* or *"love"* or *"blossom"* or *"sweetie"* or *"honey"* or many other names that come to mind.

She might ask a grandchild for something - *"be a good dear and bring that over to me"*.

Some nicknames are given to us by someone who loves us. And with it a humility.

And there are many other names that lovers might have for each other.

At every Mass throughout the world, we call Jesus by the name **"LAMB OF GOD"**.

A Lamb is not an image of a mighty weapon or a warlord.

It is not an image of a dictator or a corrupt political leader.

It is not even an image of someone powerful yet gloating over their power,

Or status or wisdom or wealth or connections.

It is a humble image.

It is an image of the **PASSOVER LAMB**.

In John 1:29 and 1:36 we hear John gives witness to Jesus as the *"agnos tou theou"* Lamb of God.

1:29 *"Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

1:36 *"Look, here is the Lamb of God!"*

Later in John 19, he will refer three times to the suffering and death of Jesus on Preparation Day (for the Passover). In John 19:14, 31 and 42.

In 19:36 a phrase about the Passover Lamb is quoted,

"None of his bones shall be broken" - from Exodus 12:46 and Numbers 9:2.

St Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians 5:7 says,

"... For our pascal Lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed"

We draw upon Isaiah 53:7 in the 'Suffering Servant' account, Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12.

Isaiah 53:4 - *"borne our infirmities"*

Isaiah 53:7 - *"like a lamb that is led to the slaughter"*

Isaiah 53:12 - *"yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors"*

Jesus the Christ is the **SUFFERING SERVANT** foretold in Isaiah in the Old Testament.

Jesus is the **LAMB OF GOD**.

We, as disciples of Jesus, are called **LAMBS** in John 21:15.

Many times in the Book of Revelation, the last Book of the Bible,

Jesus is called the Lamb, as persecuted Christians called on Jesus as the Lamb of God.

On this Sunday we call Jesus the Lamb of God.

Three years ago, on Sunday 19th January 2014, Pope Francis spoke about the Lamb of God. Some of his insights included:

"The verb that is translated as "take away" literally means "to lift up", "to take upon oneself".

Jesus came into the world with a precise mission:

to liberate it from the slavery of sin by taking upon himself the sins of mankind.

How? By loving."

Later Pope Francis explained what it means for us as church today:

"We Christians must do this:

replace malice with innocence,

replace power with love,

replace pride with humility,

replace status with service.

Being disciples of the Lamb means not living like a "besieged citadel",

but like a city placed on a hill, open, welcoming and supportive.

In means not assuming closed attitudes

but rather proposing the Gospel to everyone,

bearing witness by our lives that following Jesus makes us freer and more joyous."

Pope Francis spoke of this Reading from John's Gospel on [World Day for Migrants and Refugees](#).

He addressed the ethnic community representatives as he said:

"... the Church is a people on a journey towards the Kingdom of God which Jesus Christ has brought into our midst.

Do not lose the hope in a better world.

My hope is that you might live in peace in the countries that welcome you, while preserving the values of the cultures of your homeland."

- **ARE WE HUMBLE ENOUGH TO BE INSPIRED BY JESUS CHRIST AS THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY OUR SIN?**
- **ARE WE HUMBLE ENOUGH TO BE CALLED LAMBS?**
- **ARE WE HUMBLE ENOUGH TO WELCOME MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES INTO OUR PARISH FAMILY?**
- **ON THIS [WORLD DAY FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES](#), ARE WE HUMBLE ENOUGH TO WELCOME EACH OTHER OVER A CUPPA?**
- **ARE WE HUMBLE ENOUGH TO LIVE AS PEOPLE OF HOPE?**

Let us pray.

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – Lamb of God Humbly Before Us – 15 January 2017]

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/011517.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook15012017>]

[Pope Francis: Angelus 19 April 2014 http://bit.ly/Angelus_190414]

[Pope Francis: http://bit.ly/WorldDayofMigrantsandRefugees_2017]