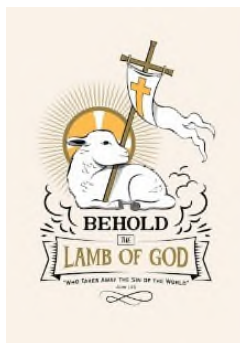


BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD

LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



Continuing with reflecting on the parts of the Mass, today we will focus on the Lamb of God. As the priest breaks the host into pieces for distribution of Holy Communion, did you know that the bread that is broken on the altar is Christ's body? We all realize that the Body of Christ was broken on the cross. It is from the wounds of our Lord that our salvation is to come forth. It is in the midst of a broken world that the Lamb of God makes himself known. As we sing the Lamb of God chant, we are invited to consider the redemption that Christ promises for a broken world and for our brokenness.

The words that we sing are taken from the Gospels when John the Baptist approaches Our Lord (after Jesus' Baptism) and says: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." Now at Mass, we stand before the Eucharistic presence of Christ each week beholding, loving, and contemplating the gift of the Eucharist.

Our response is "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed." The text is taken from Matthew's Gospel. The centurion, whose servant is at home paralyzed, asks Jesus to heal his servant. As we know, Jesus said he would. Then the centurion cries out "Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed." (Matthew 8:8)

The Lamb of God will make us worthy. The Lamb of God himself, both the host and the food, will prepare a place in our hearts to welcome the living God.

This week as we sing the familiar chant, Lamb of God..., try to recall how beautiful and overwhelming this gift of Jesus is that we have before us. How can we become what we eat?

Have a blessed, joyful, and prayerful week ahead!