

Dear Padre,

I thought only priests and bishops should distribute Holy Communion at Mass. In my parish, the priest allows laypeople to help him, and I thought laypeople couldn't because our hands are not consecrated.

You're not the only person with this concern, so thank you for taking the time to write. The distribution of holy Communion has nothing to do with "consecrated hands." Ordinary ministers of Communion include bishops and priests, as you rightly identify, but also deacons and installed acolytes. Of the four ordinary ministers, only the hands of bishops and priests are consecrated. Laypeople are extraordinary ministers and are installed to help the priest so that everyone can receive holy Communion without long lines or wearying the (sometimes elderly) priest. Most extraordinary ministers of Communion approach this ministry very prayerfully.

Your question brings up the subject of the full participation of the laity in the Mass, which is part of a highly contentious theological discussion on social media. There is an unfortunate conflict between so-called "traditional Catholics" and "Vatican II Catholics" or, as they are often misrepresented, "Novus Ordo" Catholics. Some Catholics are led to believe that the "new Mass" is not authentic, even though it has been the ordinary form of the Mass for well over fifty years—that is, since the authoritative Second Vatican Council. Many good and faithful people suffer with doubt and anxiety as a result of this confusion.

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|---|
| January 19 | January 20 | January 21 | January 22 | January 23 | January 24 | January 25 |
| Weekday | Weekday | St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr | Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children | Weekday | St. Francis de Sales, Bishop and Doctor of the Church | Third Sunday in Ordinary Time |
| 1 Sm 15:16-23 Mk 2:18-22 | 1 Sm 16:1-13 Mk 2:23-28 | 1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51 Mk 3:1-6 | 1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7 Mk 3:7-12 | 1 Sm 24:3-21 Mk 3:13-19 | 2 Sm 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27 Mk 3:20-21 | Is 8:23-9:3 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17 Mt 4:12-23 or 4:12-17 |



FRANCESCO XAVIER ESPINOSA / CATHOPIC

A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV
Ours is a time marked by a growing search for spirituality, particularly evident in young people, who are longing for authentic relationships and guides in life. Hence, it is important that the Christian community be farsighted in discerning the challenges of today's world and in nurturing the desire for faith present in the heart of every man and woman.

MESSAGE TO SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS, ROME, MAY 28, 2025



THOMAS GARRIDO / CATHOPIC

Our Parish COMMUNITY

January 18, 2026
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
Isaiah 49:3, 5-6 / 1 Corinthians 1:1-3 / John 1:29-34



Behold the Lamb of God!

ANN M. GARRIDO

Of the many names Scripture provides to help us ponder the mystery of Jesus, one of the most intriguing is the name that John the Baptist offers at the opening of today's gospel: "Behold the Lamb of God!" (John 1:29).

Scripture scholars debate what John means here. Is he alluding to the Passover lamb—that unblemished lamb whose blood the enslaved Israelites were to post over their doorways? The angel of death knew to "pass over" these homes. Perhaps John was saying that by Jesus' blood, the people would be freed from death.

Or was John thinking about the guilt offerings mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures when priests offered animal sacrifices to God as a way of seeking the removal of their sins? Leviticus mentions use of a scapegoat who would carry the sins of the people away into the desert. (See Leviticus 20-28.) Could John have understood that Jesus would bear the sins of the world?

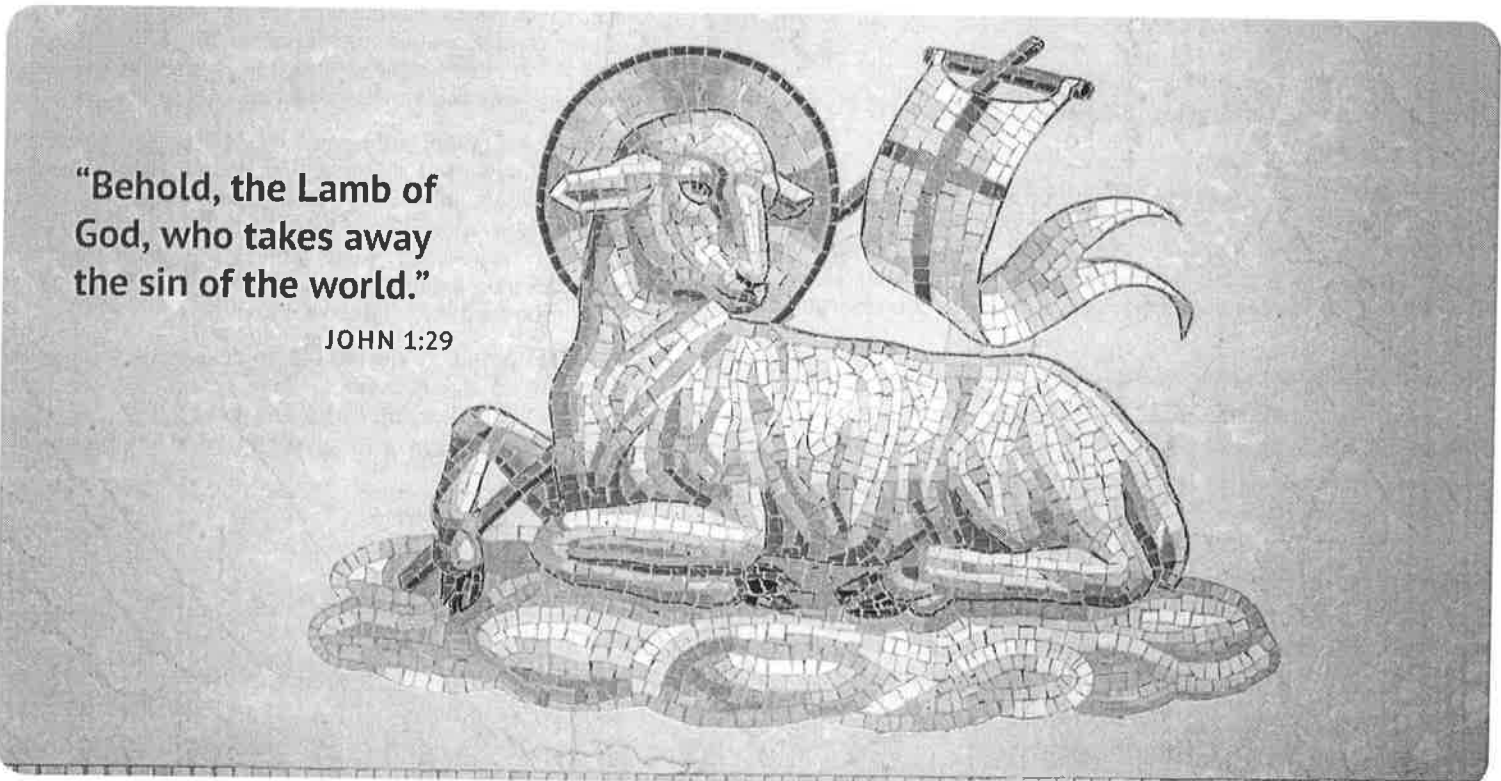
Or did John have in mind the great constellation Aries, the ram, considered the prince of the stars of the sky, the center from whom all the other constellations were mapped in ancient times? Perhaps John was pointing out that Jesus was the center around whom heaven and earth revolve, like the ruling lamb mentioned in the Book of Revelation.

Today at Mass, when the host is elevated and you hear John's words again—"Behold the Lamb of God!"—take a moment to savor these words anew.



LEARN ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

Reflect
Which understanding of the "Lamb of God" resonates with me?



Office hours are Wednesday & Thursday 7:30 am—5:30 pm.

If there is an Emergency you may call Corinne at 715-250-0567 or
Father David at 920-228-1814. Thank-you.

St Mary's Mass schedule in Black Creek: Saturdays @ 4 PM,
Sundays @ 8 AM, Tuesday—Friday @ 7:30 AM

Father David Greskowiak—Administrator

Sunday 1/11/26 = \$1,582.00 Attendance = 86

Amount needed per week - \$ 1,583.27

Mass Intentions

01/18/26—Remembrance of Lew Erb by Barb Erb

01/25/26— Elaine Letter (86th Earthly Birthday) by Letter Family

Mass Servers –

01/18/26— Alex & Reagan Krings, Nina Drossart

01/25/26— Malachi Gray, Jamesen Boerst, Beau Diemel

Ministers of the Word –

01/18/26— Sam Krings

01/25/26— Randy Short

Hospitality

01/18/26— Karen VanLanen, Daid Nowak, Anita Wegner

01/25/26— Bernie Weier, Amy Guyette, Keith Pennings

Upcoming meetings

Social Concerns Meeting—Sunday, January 25 after Mass

RE NEWS:

Class Wednesday 6:30—7:45 PM

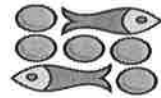
Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry

Wednesday, January 21 4—6 PM

Saturday, January 24 9—11 AM

Thank you for all the donations so far this year!!

December Report = 40 Families, 100 people, and 15 kids.



Mass Intentions that are available for the year of 2026:

March 22; April 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; May 25; August 30; September 20,
(Picnic), 27; October 4, 18, 25; November 8, 15, 29 Deer Hunter's
Mass, Thanksgiving, 29; December 13, 20, Christmas Day, 27, and
New Years. You may contact Corinne at the office to reserve your
dates.

Happy Birthday!

January 18 Norbert Short; 19 Charles Beschta; 21 Jamie Martin;
22 Joanne Heinemayer; 26 Jared Peters; 28 Eli Inman; 29 Landon Fischer,
Ami Hanus, Sierra Peeters; 30 Jack Banker, Keith Pennings

Message from Fr. David

I want to thank everyone for your cards, gifts, goodies and oth-
er food items that you gave me this Christmas season. I deeply
appreciate them. They remind me of how blessed I am to be
among you. Thank you once again so much for them, and may
God richly bless all of you always!



January 7, 2026

Dear Priests, Pastoral Leaders and Parish Staff,

May the peace of Christ be with you as we begin this new year.

You may remember when we met as leaders for our Jubilee
Day of Encounter on October 28, 2025, I reviewed the “Disciples
on the Way” discipleship pathway and introduced my plans and
vision for the Share Jesus years. I write to you today to share that
on Sunday, January 11, during the 9:00 am Mass at St. Francis
Xavier Cathedral, I will promulgate my pastoral invitation, “Sent
on Mission: A Pastoral Invitation to Share Jesus with Others.”

My request is that on the weekend of January 17-18, you make
your parishioners aware of this invitation and how to access a
copy. I also ask that you introduce my plan for the reciting of the
“Prayer to the Holy Spirit,” each week during Mass. I have
included some sample language below for you to share:

On Sunday, January 11, Bishop Ricken promulgated his
pastoral invitation “Sent on Mission: A Pastoral Invitation to
Share Jesus with Others.” A few print copies are available by
request at the parish office, and the invitation can also be
accessed on the diocesan website at dioc.io/sent S.E.N.T.
Beginning next week, in a diocesan act of trust and unity, we
will begin reciting the “Prayer to the Holy Spirit” following
the “Universal Prayer.” Prayer cards will be provided in your
pews.

I also wanted to make you aware that around January 15, your
parish will receive a mailing with ten print copies of the pastoral
invitation for distribution (the digital version will be LIVE
January 15 at this link: <https://dioc.io/sent> to share in your
communications and on your website).

Also included in the mailing will be Holy Spirit Prayer cards for
placement in your pews. I am calling upon the entire diocese to
entrust ourselves to the Holy Spirit in a profound way. And as I
mentioned above, in a diocesan act of trust and unity in the Holy
Spirit, over the next three years I am asking you to pray with the
faithful this traditional “Prayer to the Holy Spirit” together every
Sunday following the “Universal Prayer.”

Additional copies of the pastoral invitation and “Prayer to the
Holy Spirit” cards will be available by request. Please contact the
Office of Divine Worship & Sacraments at 920-272-8341
or jmontano@gbdioc.org for these items and any additional
questions.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

David L. Ricken

Most Reverend David L. Ricken, DD, JCL
Bishop of Green Bay

Reflection on the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Here is an excerpt from an article titled: “2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A, Sunday January 18, 2026” found on the “Young Catholics”
website—young-catholics.com:

The Spirit Rests on Jesus

The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A continues the story of Jesus after his baptism. John the Baptist sees Jesus and tells the people that he is the Lamb of God. He also explains that he saw the Spirit come down on Jesus and remain with him. This was a sign that Jesus was the one sent by God.

The Spirit resting on Jesus shows that he is chosen for a special mission. He has come to bring people back to God. John was sent to prepare the way, but now his role is to point people to Jesus. He tells them that Jesus is greater than him because Jesus is the one who will save them. John did not know who the Messiah would be at first. But God gave him a sign. The Spirit coming down on Jesus showed John that Jesus was the one. This moment confirmed everything John had been preaching.

The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A reminds believers that Jesus was chosen and sent by God. He is not just another teacher or prophet. He is the Son of God, filled with the Spirit, ready to lead people to salvation.

Called in the Womb

The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A includes a reading from Isaiah about God’s servant. The passage says that the servant was called from the womb. This means God had a plan for him before he was even born. The same idea is found in the reading from Paul. We were all chosen by God before birth to do his work.

This reminds people that life has meaning from the very beginning. Each person is known and loved by God before they are even born. No life is an accident. Everyone is part of God’s plan. It can be hard to understand what God is calling someone to do. Even the prophets struggled at times. But the reading from Isaiah gives hope. It shows that God has a purpose for each person, even when life is difficult.

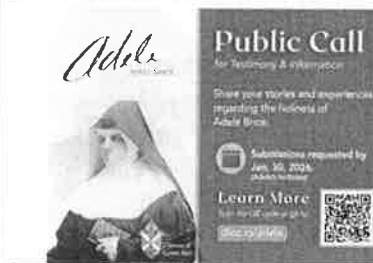
The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A invites believers to think about their own call. God calls people in different ways, but he calls everyone to follow him. Like the servant in Isaiah, each person is meant to bring God’s light to the world.

The Lamb of God

The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A focuses on John the Baptist’s words about Jesus. He calls Jesus the Lamb of God. This is an important title. It connects Jesus to the sacrifices of the Old Testament. The lamb was offered to take away sin. John is telling people that Jesus will be the sacrifice for them.

At Mass, the “Lamb of God” is prayed before Communion. This prayer is a reminder of what Jesus did. He gave his life so that people could be free from sin. He took on suffering so that others could have new life. His sacrifice shows how much God values each person.

Because Jesus is the Lamb of God, every human life has dignity. If Jesus gave his life for all people, then every life is important. The sick, the poor, the unborn, the elderly—every person matters to God. The 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A calls believers to remember what Jesus has done. His sacrifice is not just something from the past. It is something that continues to bring people closer to God.



Please note that the deadline for submitting testimonials to the Chancellor has been removed, as persons can now submit testimonials at any time.

Adoration for the Nation—An opportunity to pray for our country!

Dear Pastors and Pastoral Leaders,

Bishop David L. Ricken invites your parish to join Adoration for the Nation in 2026—a Eucharistic prayer initiative seeking our nation's healing and renewal as we prepare for its 250th anniversary.

All parishes are encouraged to dedicate a Holy Hour (or longer period of adoration) during the first 26 weeks of the year, culminating in adoration on July 3 at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. An Adoration for the Nation Team will help promote the effort and encourage participation, especially among young adults.

Thank you for your prayerful leadership of the faithful during this time.

We will be having these Holy Hours on Wednesday, 28 January 2026 at the following times:

St. Mary's 3:30—4:30 P.M.

St. Lawrence 6:30—7:30 P.M.

(In case of bad weather, or school cancellation, the backup dates will be Wednesday, 4 or 11 February.)

These time periods are intended to coincide with the times of Religious Education instruction in our respective parishes, so that our Religious Education students can participate in them. These Holy Hours are open to everyone in our parishes who would like to come and pray for our nation as we approach its 250th birthday. Thank you, and God bless America!