

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. ●



THEODORE / CORBIS SYGMA

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



FRANCISCO XAVIER ESPINOZA / CATHOLIC

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



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?

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

JOHN 1:29





The
Catholic Church
in Pocahontas County
West Virginia

OUR MISSION
Love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
soul, mind,
and strength.
Love your neighbor as yourself.
(Mark 12:30-31, NAB-RE)

ST. JOHN NEUMANN PARISH & CHURCH OFFICE, 714 Tenth Avenue, Marlinton WV 24954
ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST MISSION, 92 Catholic Church Road, Rts 250 & 92, Bartow WV 24920
ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX CHAPEL, 6332 Snowshoe Drive, Snowshoe WV 26209
Telephone: St. John Neumann 304-799-6778, St. Bernard of Clairvaux 304-572-0847
Website: PocahontasCatholic.org
E-mail: Pastor@PocahontasCatholic.org



Patty Bryant
Margaret Bryant
Ann Burke
Danielle Cade
Dick Connor
Drema Moore
Cynthia Olson
Quinn Riffle
Tristan Sizemore

EUCHARIST THIS WEEK

Monday	8:00 a.m.	St. John
Friday	8:00 p.m.	St. John
Saturday	5:30 p.m.	St. Bernard
Sunday	9:00 a.m.	St. John
	11:30 a.m.	St. Mark



St. John Neumann Church is open for private prayer every day during daylight.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered before each Eucharist or by appointment, and at St. Bernard on Saturdays 4:30-5:00 p.m.

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is available any time upon request.



Please call the Church office (304-799-6778) if you know of a parishioner who is sick, in the hospital or nursing home, homebound, deployed, or in prison.

To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact WV Child Protective Services at 800-352-6513.
To report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact the Diocese at 888-434-6237 or 304-233-0880.
To report suspected cases of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse by a bishop or eparch, please contact ReportBishopAbuse.org or call 800-276-1562.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."
(John 1:29, NAB-RE)

ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTES

- **Second collection this Sunday** at St. John Neumann and St. Mark the Evangelist is for the Church in the developing world (divided equally among the collections for Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, and Africa).

- **Marlinton Care Team** will meet this Monday (January 19) at 6 p.m. at Marlinton Presbyterian Church. On the agenda are February Senior Lunch



meal planning, update on the video license for showing movies, and ideas for a spring community event.

- **Family Resource Network drive-through food pantry**



will be this Wednesday (January 21) from 9 a.m. to noon, and 1-3 p.m. at 503 Third Avenue in Marlinton.

Please remain in your vehicle and have your vehicle trunk or back empty and clean, to help us load quickly and safely.

- **Community Dinner** is this Thursday (January 22) at Marlinton Presbyterian Church 5:00-6:30 p.m. It's a traditional brown beans and corn bread meal. It's free and open to the public, so why don't you plan to attend and bring your family and friends with you?

MOTHER OF GOD

	<u>attendance</u>	<u>collection</u>
St. John Neumann	28	\$25.00

LAST WEEKEND

	<u>attendance</u>	<u>collection</u>
St. John Neumann	30	\$870.00
Fund for the Poor		\$200.00
St. Mark the Evangelist	14	\$480.00
St. Bernard of Clairvaux	58	\$1,075.00
Fund for the Poor		\$407.00
total	102	\$3,032.00

Lectionary for Mass for use in the Dioceses of the United States, second typical edition, Copyright © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine; Psalm refrain © 1968, 1981, 1997, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved. Neither this work nor any part of it may be reproduced, distributed, performed or displayed in any medium, including electronic or digital, without permission in writing from the copyright owner. Used with permission.

First Reading (Isaiah 49:3, 5-6)

The LORD said to me: You are my servant,
Israel, through whom I show my glory.
Now the LORD has spoken
who formed me as his servant from the womb,
that Jacob may be brought back to him
and Israel gathered to him;
and I am made glorious in the sight of the LORD,
and my God is now my strength!
It is too little, the LORD says, for you to be my servant,
to raise up the tribes of Jacob,
and restore the survivors of Israel;
I will make you a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10,
Grail translation, 1963)

Response: Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

I waited, I waited for the Lord
and he stooped down to me;
he heard my cry.
He put a new song into my mouth,
praise of our God.

You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings,
but an open ear.
You do not ask for holocaust and victim.
Instead, here am I.

In the scroll of the book it stands written
that I should do your will.
My God, I delight in your law
in the depth of my heart.

Your justice I have proclaimed
in the great assembly.
My lips I have not sealed;
you know it, O Lord.

Second Reading (1 Corinthians 1:1-3)

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus
by the will of God,
and Sosthenes our brother,
to the church of God that is in Corinth,
to you who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus,
called to be holy,
with all those everywhere
who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
their Lord and ours.
Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Acclamation (John 1:14a, 12a)

The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us.
To those who accepted him,
he gave power to become children of God.

Gospel (John 1:29-34)

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.'
I did not know him,
but the reason why I came baptizing with water
was that he might be made known to Israel."
John testified further, saying,
"I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven
and remain upon him.
I did not know him,
but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me,
'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain,
he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'
Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

Reflection (2023)

St. Paul says “you ... have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be holy.” And for what purpose? The prophet Isaiah says to be “a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

In all honesty with ourselves, we probably don't think of ourselves as holy or sanctified, or think of ourselves as somehow the means of salvation for the world. But in fact, imperfect as we are, God has chosen each of us for that purpose: “to be a light to the nations,” and to lead others to salvation. It might be through our words, but more than likely it is through the way we live and the way we act.

Reflection (2026)

John the Baptist says "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." We hear these words and we say these words every time we celebrate the Mass. But I am not sure we really understand the significance of those words.

Jesus is the Lamb of God – a lamb is sacrificed at Passover, but at the last supper, the lamb is Jesus, so the sacrifice is not of a lamb which cannot save, but of the Christ who can save, by dying and taking away our sins.

18 January 2026
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year A

Penitential Rite

Lord Jesus, you are the Lamb of God: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you take away the sin of the world: Christ have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you feed us with your body and blood: Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

Prayer of the Faithful

Almighty Father, with humble hearts, we come before you to speak for our needs and for the needs of all in the world:

- for the Church, that we will promote peace where there is conflict, we pray
- for our political leaders, that they will govern with honesty, justice, and a spirit of service, we pray
- for immigrants and refugees and exiles, that they will be treated with dignity and respect, we pray
- for the people of Beth Israel Synagogue, for their healing, recovery, and rebuilding, we pray
- for the civil rights of all people, especially the oppressed and the marginalized, we pray
- for those who have died, that they will be saved, we pray
- and for your other intentions

(pause)

for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, we pray

Merciful Father, you guide us through times of difficulty, and you give us strength when we are weak. We ask you to hear our prayers, and show us your ways. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.