

He Is the One, or: Where Healing Awaits You

Sermon for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (A),
17th/18th January 2026, at St Sebastian's Cathedral
John 1:29–34

Form the Holy Gospel according to John

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. ³⁰ He is the one of whom I said, 'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' ³¹ I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel." ³² John testified further, saying, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. ³³ 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.' ³⁴ Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

How can I become a whole, just, and good person? Where will all that is making me ill, all that belittles me, all that so often seems to take my breath away, be taken from me? Where can I find this?

John and his contemporaries were also on such a quest. They were searching for what would make their lives whole. Searching amidst their fears of not being good enough.

Searching for a hopeful sign—something to show them: I am enough, God accepts me. They sensed: despite all you might reproach yourself for—despite all that you call sin—there is a point, a place, a sign that tells you: you belong, you belong to God.

It was on this search that people came to John, whom they called the Baptist. And John offered this sign of baptising people, immersing them in water. It was indeed a sign, a ritual of purification, for John spoke of this act as meaning repentance, a new beginning, the forgiveness of sins. And John baptised, asking people to change their lives. Presumably, he was seeking all this change for himself as well. He always spoke about one who was still to come—someone greater than himself.

And this one does come. This One, for whom John and all the others have been waiting, appears in Jesus. John recognises him. He identifies that this person means healing. John puts it into words: “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.” By this, John is saying: Look, here is the one we have been waiting for so long. Look, here is the one who means healing. This is healing from all that takes our breath away: for you and for me.

And John is also able to say what he has observed in this Jesus. He has seen what gives him the certainty that this Jesus truly promises healing. For this Jesus is a man of the Holy Spirit: in the form of a dove, the Spirit came to Jesus

and remained. That's why John, in this man coming towards him, can recognise the Son of God. This stranger is suddenly everything, the long-awaited one. The one who promises healing.

And this phrase, "Behold the Lamb of God"—see this person who can be everything for you—John spoke these words back then to the people with him at the Jordan. And through time, he says these words to you and me as well. Before every Communion, before every moment in which you are allowed to partake in God, you hear this phrase each time: "Behold the Lamb of God!" and we reply: "Lord, I am not worthy, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed." And perhaps, by this, we mean: Lord, you know exactly how I am. You know my quest for wholeness, for healing, my search for acceptance, perhaps my search for a new beginning: Make me whole, heal me in my soul, at my root, in my entire being. Perhaps you say to yourself: Jesus, I see this healing in you!

You probably know very well what you are searching for. You know the sides of yourself that need healing. You know where you need support. And it is precisely with this awareness that John presents this Jesus to you: See the Lamb of God! See this person in whom the Holy Spirit dwells! See the Son of God! He will make you whole—if you allow it.

He is the one who wants to make you whole.

Dear brothers and sisters, being open to this Jesus is something you and I must practise anew every day. Every day, you may choose for yourself that this Jesus has meaning for you, so that you can say: he is the one. He is the one. He is the one who makes you whole. He is the one who lifts you up into your greatness. He is the one who delights in seeing you walk through your life with your head held high and full of self-worth.

If you wish, here's a suggestion for you: Start your day with a simple prayer. Jesus, you are the one I am waiting for: only say the word, and my soul shall be healed.

By Deacon Thomas

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