

## The Holy Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to John 1:29-42

The next day he (John) saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me." I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.' And John testified, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.'

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, 'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter).

## The Gospel of Christ

### Reflection

*There was a time when seeing Christmas lights while driving would elicit a cry from someone in the car of 'look, look, look, look, look!' The proclamation was intended to be an invitation to check out the decorations and a reminder of the joy of the season. Look, look, look! In how many other ways is the proclamation an invitation to share something we value and get excited about with others?*

'Look, here is the Lamb of God!'

*John the Baptist was deeply impacted by the experience of baptising Jesus. He bore witness to the Spirit descending like a dove and saying: 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.' That moment revealed to John that he had fulfilled his purpose, he had prepared the way for the Messiah, and things were going to get interesting.*

*'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' The proclamation was intended to be an invitation to share something John valued about which he hoped others would get excited. John was sharing what he knew, what he had experienced, so that others could choose to seek their own experiences of Jesus.*

*We may not have a physical human being to which we can point and say: 'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' Nevertheless, we believe that God remains present in meaningful ways. We recognise God's presence through worship, and sacraments as we gather as a community of faith. We experience God's presence in prayer, especially in those moments when we hold each other and our concerns in prayer. We feel God's presence in sacred moments and spaces throughout our days. These are wonderful gifts that nurture us in meaningful ways.*

*'Look, here is the Lamb of God!'. We value God's presence and seek to share what we know with others. This space points to that presence through outward and visible signs that are familiar to many. The cross is a reminder of the physical, tragic, and grace-filled journey of Jesus. There are candles signifying our faith in the light of Christ and the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit. The greenery around the space reminds us of God's love in creation. The shape of the space is meant to look like an upside-down boat to signify our journey together as a family of faith.*

*'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' These symbols of God's presence are common to many churches as important signs of our collective faith. We have added a few specific to our shared journey that serve as signs for ourselves and anyone who comes into this space. The banner challenges us to continually remember and seek to live out the five marks of mission. The pride flags serve as physical signs of affirmation and inclusion that have been appreciated by numerous people. The thank you bank serves as a type of grounding as we celebrate gratitude and, inspired by that gratitude, share our gifts with others.*

*'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' The proclamation is an invitation to share something we value and get excited about with others. It is also an invitation to act. When John said it, the two disciples with him embraced the message and followed Jesus. Actually, they left John to follow Jesus and John didn't seem to mind one bit. He had shared an experience he valued with excitement and was happy to see his disciples get the message! John revealed God's presence in a way that enabled others to respond without worrying about what it meant for his life and journey.*

*'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' The proclamation is an invitation to share something we value and get excited about with others. It is also an invitation to act. We are signs of Christ's presence right now. Those who come to the clothing cupboard, and those for whom we have recently provided food, feel that presence. Members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community who recognise our efforts to be affirming and inclusive feel that presence. Those who have come to trust that St. Paul's is a loving, caring community, feel that presence. The story we tell by our actions inside this space and beyond matter and are one way in which we proclaim: 'Look, here is the Lamb of God!'*

*Like John the Baptist, faith brings us to a place where we seek to proclaim: 'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' through word and action. May we continue to be nourished by God's presence in Sacrament and Word, as we seek to point to God's presence in our Church, families, community, and world. This we pray as we sing together: 435 Take My Life, and Let It Be*