

***John 1:29-34***

The next day he (John) saw Jesus coming toward 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 Gospel of the Lord***

**Reflection Questions**  
**For John 1:29-34**  
**John's Baptism vs. Jesus' Baptism**

- 1) **The Context:** The context for this passage is all of chapter 1 of John's gospel but particularly verses 19-51. The first verses of John's Gospel state clearly Christ's preeminence (e.g. His existence at the foundation of the world). This is important because we will see John using similar words in this passage to explain who Jesus is. Witness is a central theme in John's gospel. We see John witnessing to who Jesus is and Jesus witnessing to who God the Father is. The witness of John at the beginning of Jesus' ministry is crucial in order to explain to the priests and Levites that this is the One for whom they have been waiting. John also witnesses clearly to his own disciples about Jesus. John wants to make sure that His disciples know whom they are ultimately to follow. Once John has accomplished this witnessing task, he fades into the background of the story.
- 2) This passage opens with "the next day" which refers to the day after John had explained clearly to his disciples that he was not the Messiah but that he had come to make path of the Lord straight. This passage begins with John clearly outlining for his disciples his role in relation to Jesus and not wanting to diverge from it. What can we learn from the humility of John the Baptist as we too are called to point to Christ and not to ourselves?
- 3) John cries out "Behold, the Lamb of God". This phrase reminds us of; **1)** the paschal (Passover) lamb (Exodus Chp. 12) whose blood was used to ensure that the firstborns of the Israelites would not be killed and that they would have deliverance from the Egyptians, reminds us of **2)** the lamb that God provided to Abraham to take the place of Issac (Gen. 22:8-13), **3)** the lamb in the Suffering Servant Songs of Isaiah (pointing to a Messiah that will save His people through His own suffering), **4)** Jeremiah's meek lamb that is lead to the slaughter (Jer. 11:19), **5)** the sheep that were sacrificed daily in the temple, **6)** the blood of Jesus, the true Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7), and finally, **7)** the lamb from the Book of revelation Chp. 5 who has conquered everything (Rev. 5:5). The Jewish people would have been familiar with the Old Testament references to the Lamb of sacrifice and to

their own practices. John would have seen the “Lamb” as an image of the end times where the victorious Lamb of God would bring judgment upon the earth (Rev. 17:14). We, as contemporary Catholic Christians, have all of the scriptures to tell us who the Lamb of Sacrifice is. How do we see Jesus as the Lamb of Sacrifice to end all sacrifices? What does this mean for us personally and for our Catholic Christian communities? In what ways do we engage this sacrificial lamb at every mass? In what ways do we meet Him in every Sacrament?

- 4) This Lamb of God atones for the “totality of the world’s sin” (all people, past, present and future) all at once (1 John 2:2). We can find it difficult to grasp this idea for ourselves much less try to explain it to others. How would you explain (to your children, your co-workers, family members) how the Lamb of God has conquered all sin, evil and death by His self-sacrifice on the cross? How do we explain this concept in light of the fact that we still experience vast amounts of sin and evil in the world?
- 5) In verse 30, John makes it clear to His disciples that Jesus not only ranks ahead of him in stature but also that Jesus existed before all time (John 1:1-5) and that therefore, they should listen to Him and follow Him as they would follow GOD because He is God. Why would this concept be difficult for his disciples to digest? Why might they choose not to follow Jesus?
- 6) The Spirit descended like a dove and remained on Jesus. The Greek word used here is ‘meno’ (to remain, to abide with). The gospel writer tells us that John saw the Spirit descend. The verb for the word “saw” in this context means “to have seen...and to continue to see”. For John, the Spirit’s descent upon and indwelling within Jesus is an ongoing event. How is the Spirit’s descent upon us and indwelling also an ongoing experience? Because the Spirit of God abides with Jesus, His promise that the Spirit will abide with us (John Chp. 14) is not empty. What are some signs that the Spirit of God has never left His Church or His people?
- 7) In verse 33 John makes a clear distinction between the baptism that he offers and Jesus’ baptism. What is the difference between John’s baptism with water and Jesus’ baptism with the Holy Spirit?”

8) Jesus received a special indwelling of the Holy Spirit at His Baptism before He began His ministry. In what ways is the Spirit's indwelling presence inextricably related to the ministry we do in His Name? This week is National vocations week. In our Baptism, as the Holy Spirit descends upon us and remains with us, we are given a vocation (a role in His mission). What are the connections between your own Baptism, the Holy Spirit's presence within you and your mission in Him? When did you first discover your vocation in Him?