

Homily – Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

First Reading - Isaiah 49:3,5-6; 1

Second Reading - Corinthians 1:1-3;

Gospel - John 1:29-34

Today's readings speak to us about **calling, identity, and witness**. In the first reading from Isaiah, God reminds His servant that he was formed in the womb for a purpose – not only for himself, but to be *“a light to the nations.”* In the second reading, Paul reminds the Corinthians that they, too, are *called* – called to be holy, called to belong to Christ. And in the Gospel, John the Baptist shows us what it means to live out that call: he points to Jesus and says, *“Behold, the Lamb of God.”*

John the Baptist had a powerful ministry. People listened to him, followed him, and respected him. Yet when Jesus appears, John does not hold on to his followers or his importance. Instead, he steps aside and directs everyone to Christ. His mission was not to make a name for himself, but to prepare hearts for Jesus. That is true discipleship.

John calls Jesus **“the Lamb of God.”** This was not a casual title. For the Jewish people, the lamb was a powerful image. A lamb was offered for forgiveness on the Day of Atonement. A lamb was sacrificed daily in the Temple for the sins of the people. A lamb's blood saved the Israelites on the night of the Passover. And the prophets spoke of a servant who would suffer like a lamb led to the slaughter. By using this title, John is saying clearly: *Jesus is the One who gives His life so that we may live.*

For us, this title is very familiar. At every Mass, just before Communion, we pray or sing, *“Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world.”* These are not just ritual words. They are a declaration of faith. We are saying that Jesus carries our sins, our struggles, our fears, and our brokenness. We are saying that we trust Him to bring mercy where there is guilt, peace where there is anxiety, and hope where there is discouragement.

The Gospel also reminds us that **faith is meant to be shared**. When Andrew encounters Jesus, he does not keep the experience to himself. He brings his brother Simon to Jesus. Later in the Gospel, Andrew brings a boy with five loaves and two fish. Later still, he brings Greeks who want to see Jesus. Andrew may not preach long sermons, but he does something very important – he brings people to Christ.

This challenges us. Many of us are comfortable coming to church, praying quietly, and keeping our faith private. But today's Gospel reminds us that discipleship is not passive. To know Christ is to be drawn closer to Him, and to allow our lives to point others toward Him. Witness does not always mean preaching. Often it means how we speak, how we forgive, how we treat others, how we respond to suffering, and how we live with integrity and love.

We invite people to good restaurants, good doctors, or good schools without hesitation. But when it comes to faith, we often hold back. Sometimes we feel religion is too personal. Sometimes we feel unqualified. Sometimes we wonder whether our Church would appeal to others. But if Christ truly brings meaning and hope to our lives, then love should move us to say, in one way or another, *“Come and see.”*

As we continue this Eucharist, let us listen again to John's words: *“Behold, the Lamb of God.”* Let us ask for the grace to recognise Jesus more deeply in our own lives – and the courage, like John the Baptist and Andrew, to point others to Him by the way we live.