



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 15, 2023

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, and joy!

“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.” John 1: 29

How well do we know Jesus? How deep is our knowledge and understanding of Him whose nativity we celebrated on December 25th? Can we truly identify Him as John the Baptist had identified Him?

After all the many festivities we had, with all the singing and parties and sharing of gifts, our focus on the celebration may be forgotten. Such questions are posed for our reflection this Sunday as we now journey in this Ordinary Time. The questions asked can be a stepping board for us not only to know Jesus but also to establish a deeper relationship with Him. Our constant search to find answers to these questions can establish a deeper connection with Him. Ordinary Time will help us understand and enrich our faith in the Christ-Child born for our salvation.

In this so-called journey of life, we have lots of encounters along the way. We meet new friends, connect with family and colleagues, and belong to a certain group or associations that we think can spice up our life. But we see that these are not the be-all and end-all of life. Our lives are made up of a journey not only physically but spiritually. Thus, knowing Jesus and encountering Him can bring much more difference in living out this one life we have.

John the Baptist’s testimony of Jesus, saying, *“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,”* is a profound statement of the truth about Him. He is not only the Son of God, as revealed in the Jordan river at His baptism, but He is the Lamb of sacrifice offered to cleanse us of ALL our sins. Note, I capitalize ALL because it is indeed true. When we come to our self-awareness, realizing how sinful we are, humbling ourselves before Him, and embracing His truth that will direct our lives, we come to a point where we do not only KNOW Him, but we ENCOUNTER Him. We feel His presence. We experience His love and mercy. And when we experience these, it will certainly make a lot of difference when we relate with Him, with one another, and with ourselves.

If ever there is a concrete way of experiencing Jesus is no other than the celebration of the Eucharist. Through this Sacrament, we hear Him speak; we share in this holy banquet where we partake of His body, blood, soul, and divinity. Through our faith, we become aware of His presence. For this reason, we need to be informed about the immensity of this great Sacrament so that we can be transformed into His likeness and act in a manner where we truly manifest that we are the children of God.

When we come to know Christ, we open ourselves to Him and respond to His call for us. Like the Psalmist says, *“here I am, Lord, I come to do your will.”*

Your friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual