

DECEMBER 27

Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist

THE FIRST AND fundamental vision of John concerns the figure of the Lamb who is slain yet standing (cf. Rev. 5:6) and is placed before the throne on which God himself is already seated.

By saying this, John wants first of all to tell us two things: the first is that although Jesus was killed with an act of violence, instead of falling heavily to the ground, he paradoxically stands very firmly on his own feet because, with the Resurrection, he overcame death once and for all.

The other thing is that Jesus himself, precisely because he died and was raised, henceforth fully shares in the kingship and saving power of the Father. This is the fundamental vision.

On this earth, Jesus, the Son of God, is a defenseless, wounded, and dead Lamb. Yet he stands up straight, on his feet, before God's throne and shares in the divine power. He has the history of the world in his hands.

Thus, the Seer wants to tell us: Trust in Jesus, do not be afraid of the opposing powers, of persecution! The wounded and dead Lamb is victorious! Follow the Lamb Jesus, entrust yourselves to Jesus, take his path! Even if in this world he is only a Lamb who appears weak, it is he who triumphs!

The subject of one of the most important visions of the Book of Revelation is this Lamb in the act

of opening a scroll, previously closed with seven seals that no one had been able to break open. John is even shown in tears, for he finds no one worthy of opening the scroll or reading it (cf. Rev. 5:4).

History remains indecipherable, incomprehensible. No one can read it. Perhaps John's weeping before the mystery of a history so obscure expresses the Asian Churches' dismay at God's silence in the face of the persecutions to which they were exposed at that time. It is a dismay that can clearly mirror our consternation in the face of serious difficulties, misunderstandings, and hostility that the Church also suffers today in various parts of the world.

These are trials that the Church does not of course deserve, just as Jesus himself did not deserve his torture. However, they reveal both the wickedness of man, when he abandons himself to the promptings of evil, and also the superior ordering of events on God's part.

Well then, only the sacrificed Lamb can open the sealed scroll and reveal its content, give meaning to this history that so often seems senseless. He alone can draw from it instructions and teachings for the life of Christians, to whom his victory over death brings the message and guarantee of victory that they too will undoubtedly obtain. The whole of the vividly imaginative language that John uses aims to offer this consolation.

Commentary from the General Audience of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, 23 August 2006.



Proper Prayers of the Mass in the Extraordinary Form

ADDENDUM:

COMMEMORATION OF SAINT JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST



SECOND COLLECT

ECCLÉSIAM tuam, Dómine, benígnus illústra: ut beáti Joánis apóstoli tui et evangelístae illumináta doctrínis, ad dona pervéniat sempitérna. Per Dóminum nostrum ...

OF THY GOODNESS, O Lord, shine upon Thy Church, that, enlightened by the teachings of blessed John, Thine Apostle and Evangelist, she may attain to everlasting gifts. Through our Lord ...

SECOND SECRET

SÚSCIPE, Dómine, múnera, quæ in ejus tibi solemnitate deférimus, cujus nos confídimus patrocínio liberáři. Per Dóminum nostrum ...

RECEIVE, O Lord, the gifts we bring to Thee on the feast of him, by whose protection we hope to be delivered. Through our Lord ...

SECOND POSTCOMMUNION

REFÉCTI cibo potúque cœlésti, Deus noster, te súpplices deprecámur: ut, in cujus hæc commemoratióne percépimus, ejus muniámur et précibus. Per Dóminum nostrum ...

WE WHO have been refreshed by heavenly Food and Drink, humbly entreat Thee, O our God, that we may be strengthened also by the prayers of him, in whose commemoration we have received them. Through our Lord ...

DECEMBER 27

Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist

THE FIRST AND fundamental vision of John concerns the figure of the Lamb who is slain yet standing (cf. Rev. 5:6) and is placed before the throne on which God himself is already seated.

By saying this, John wants first of all to tell us two things: the first is that although Jesus was killed with an act of violence, instead of falling heavily to the ground, he paradoxically stands very firmly on his own feet because, with the Resurrection, he overcame death once and for all.

The other thing is that Jesus himself, precisely because he died and was raised, henceforth fully shares in the kingship and saving power of the Father. This is the fundamental vision.

On this earth, Jesus, the Son of God, is a defenseless, wounded, and dead Lamb. Yet he stands up straight, on his feet, before God's throne and shares in the divine power. He has the history of the world in his hands.

Thus, the Seer wants to tell us: Trust in Jesus, do not be afraid of the opposing powers, of persecution! The wounded and dead Lamb is victorious! Follow the Lamb Jesus, entrust yourselves to Jesus, take his path! Even if in this world he is only a Lamb who appears weak, it is he who triumphs!

The subject of one of the most important visions of the Book of Revelation is this Lamb in the act

of opening a scroll, previously closed with seven seals that no one had been able to break open. John is even shown in tears, for he finds no one worthy of opening the scroll or reading it (cf. Rev. 5:4).

History remains indecipherable, incomprehensible. No one can read it. Perhaps John's weeping before the mystery of a history so obscure expresses the Asian Churches' dismay at God's silence in the face of the persecutions to which they were exposed at that time. It is a dismay that can clearly mirror our consternation in the face of serious difficulties, misunderstandings, and hostility that the Church also suffers today in various parts of the world.

These are trials that the Church does not of course deserve, just as Jesus himself did not deserve his torture. However, they reveal both the wickedness of man, when he abandons himself to the promptings of evil, and also the superior ordering of events on God's part.

Well then, only the sacrificed Lamb can open the sealed scroll and reveal its content, give meaning to this history that so often seems senseless. He alone can draw from it instructions and teachings for the life of Christians, to whom his victory over death brings the message and guarantee of victory that they too will undoubtedly obtain. The whole of the vividly imaginative language that John uses aims to offer this consolation.

Commentary from the General Audience of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, 23 August 2006.

Proper Prayers of the Mass in the Extraordinary Form

ADDENDUM:

COMMEMORATION OF SAINT JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST



SECOND COLLECT

ECCLÉSIAM tuam, Dómine, benígnus illústra: ut beáti Joán-nis apóstoli tui et evangelístae illumináta doctrínis, ad dona pervéniat sempitérna. Per Dó-minum nostrum ...

OF THY GOODNESS, O Lord, shine upon Thy Church, that, enlightened by the teachings of blessed John, Thine Apostle and Evangelist, she may attain to everlasting gifts. Through our Lord ...

SECOND SECRET

SÚSCIPE, Dómine, múnera, quæ in ejus tibi solemnitate deférimus, cujus nos confidimus patrocínio liberáři. Per Dóminum nostrum ...

RECEIVE, O Lord, the gifts we bring to Thee on the feast of him, by whose protection we hope to be delivered. Through our Lord ...

SECOND POSTCOMMUNION

REFÉCTI cibo potúque cœlésti, Deus noster, te súpplices deprecámur: ut, in cujus hæc commemoratióne percépimus, ejus muniámur et précibus. Per Dóminum nostrum ...

WE WHO have been refreshed by heavenly Food and Drink, humbly entreat Thee, O our God, that we may be strengthened also by the prayers of him, in whose commemoration we have received them. Through our Lord ...