

New and Corrected Translation of the Mass – Part 26

The *Agnus Dei*

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

*Gen 22.8; Ex 12; 1 Cor 5.7
Lev 16.21; Jn 1.29*

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us**

*1 Pet 1.19; Rev 5.6
1 Jn 2.2*

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.**

John 14.27; 20.26

Immediately after the Pax, the priest begins the Fraction, i.e. breaking the Host, which shows the death of Jesus, whose body was broken for us in the Sacrifice of the Cross (although not one of His bones was broken, cf. John 19.36). The priest takes a small particle of the Host and adds it to the Precious Blood in the chalice. This act, called the ‘commingling’, signifies the Resurrection, the coming together again of Christ’s Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity (even in death His Divinity remained united to all three preceding, which are part of His humanity).

The *Agnus Dei* is a chant which accompanies the Fraction. Everyone says or sings it, using the words of St John the Baptist to point out Jesus as the Messiah. In the Eastern churches the sacrificial gifts are called “the Lamb”. It is the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist that moves us to call Jesus ‘Lamb of God’ at this point of the Mass, cf. “I saw a Lamb standing, as it were slain” (Rev 5.6).

Although St John the Baptist says “the sin of the world” (*singular*), here it is “the sins” (*plural*). Substantially this means the same thing. Note that it is not just our sins that Jesus takes away, but those “of the world”. It is said in the present tense, because the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross was accomplished two thousand years ago, yet its effects must come to us today, “now” being the day of salvation, as Scripture says. Holy Mass does not re-sacrifice Christ, but the fruits of His one, unrepeatable sacrifice are applied throughout all space and time. That is why the Mass is offered for the expiation of our sins now, and indeed, for those of the whole world.

We ask Jesus for the things only He can give us: mercy and peace.