

## Second Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A (2026)

Every culture has a unique way of greeting people. Tibetan monks stick out their tongues to greet people. In the Philippines, elders are greeted by taking one of their hands and pressing it to their forehead. People greet each other with a bow in Japan, and perhaps the most unique way to say hello around the world is in Oman, where men often greet each other by pressing their noses together.

“John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ***‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.’***”

Does that sound strange greeting to you? No “Shalom,” No “Hi, cuz,” or “Good morning.” Not even a “How have you been?” or “It’s great to see you.”

Remember: Jesus was someone whom John almost certainly knew quite well. They were blood relatives (probably cousins). They met many times over the years, played together, fought as kids fight, ate together, and worshipped together. In other words, these men weren’t strangers.

***‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.’***”

Perhaps, John knew Jesus on two levels. In one sense, he knew the “surface” Jesus, the external person, what a person sees at first glance. He certainly knew his personality, his sense of humor, his likes and dislikes.

But John didn't stop there. He also knew the "deeper" reality, the authentic Jesus, the core of who he was. Other people who knew Jesus probably couldn't see him as anyone other than the child of Joseph and Mary, who grew up like any other kid and would probably just follow in his dad's footsteps.

John saw more. Acknowledged more. Embraced more. While almost everyone else saw simply a "good guy," John saw someone who was going to change everything, saw a man whose whole life was infused with the power of God, the goodness of God, the authority of God. And he wanted nothing more than to have everyone else see what he could clearly see.

So often you've heard me say that so much of the spiritual life is about trying to see as God sees. It's often when we look at something the wrong way, or through the wrong lens, that we mess up, make bad choices, commit grave sins. We look at a situation one way, while God looks at it another.

There once was a man on a train with a couple of very young children, barely more than babies. The man sat quietly in his seat whilst these two small children ran wild, yelling and crying, being a general nuisance to all the other passengers. The man didn't seem to notice or care.

Finally, someone spoke up, reprimanding the man for failing to control his unruly, annoying children. The man seemed dazed as he looked into the other passenger's eyes, as though it took a moment for the harsh words to register. His reply: "I'm sorry. We're on our way home from the hospital. My wife just died."

It can be easy to jump to conclusions or make assumptions about someone, and those assumptions can become the brush with which we paint everything related to them.

We see a homeless person whom we quickly deem lazy and irresponsible. Our loving God sees someone struggling, in need of help.

We see a pregnant teen and quickly think: what kind of parents raised her? God sees someone searching for exactly the same things we're all searching for: love, affection, belonging.

We see people of other faiths (or no faith at all) and think they must be displeasing to God. God sees every single person as his son or daughter—equally precious.

In every case, what we're really failing to see is the God within. We often only see the faults and failings, the bad decisions and sinful choices. Yet behind those things is a person beloved by God.

John knew that Jesus wasn't just his younger cousin from Galilee. He was so much more.

The "what" of our lives is easy. The "why" of our lives; well, that's a completely different story.

[Because] ***What You See Is Not Always What You Get.***