

(Not) Seeing, (Un)believing

Emptied and wearied by well-doing, I subjected myself to fools—fantasies that rushed into my void like sewage. I was as wanted and exciting as were those around me. I wanted my dream to come true.

Barely able to choose otherwise, I did. By grace alone (and a friend's help), I made my way to Mass in a strange town and locked eyes with the Crucified over the altar. Bearing my little cross, I embraced Jesus and hid myself in His wounded side. When the priest read the Gospel—John the Baptist who upon seeing Jesus for the first time declared 'Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world' (JN 1:29)—this sinner heard those words for the first time. I saw the Savior.

Though disordered in heart, my gaze was clear upon the One who could order my affections and deliver me from demons. I was the worldly one whose sin needed to be taken away. I marveled at a truth I had never recognized: God became the lamb! Prior to Jesus, men used lambs to atone for sin but now Almighty God is the sacrifice. I passed through His purity into the bloody mess He became and emerged white as snow. Wow. For a few shining moments, heaven descended to this vessel, removing rot and imparting life.

I endured a silly homily about how we are all now like 'little lambs' and wolfed down the holy meal. I rejoiced: 'Jesus just saved me! Again! He alone is the Lamb and I will follow Him wherever He goes. Where He is, I am free.' Sobered and grateful, I became aware of the parish newsletter which featured a 'gay'-identified couple extolling how welcoming this church was to them.

What? In the place of the great exchange—the very site where the Lamb removes sin and reorders hearts? Celebrating 'gay' love before the Crucified struck me as congruent as a cigarette girl hawking her wares in a lung cancer clinic.

The difference? Jesus gave up His breath to restore ours. The Lamb offers more than chemo—He gives us a whole new life, His very being transfused into ours with an offering of water, blood and Spirit (1 JN 5: 7, 8). How weak and short-sighted of the Church to place blinders on its members as to divert their gaze from the Lamb to sexually immoral bonds. Lord, have mercy. Jesus does have mercy, for all who have eyes to see. Behold the Lamb who takes away all our sin...