**Liturgy Matters Lesson #34**

**Behold the Lamb of God**

**By Bishop Chad Zielinski**

I am Bishop Chad Zielinski, serving the Diocese of New Ulm. Thank you for joining me and asking the Holy Spirit to guide us as we continue our lessons on "What Happens at Mass."

And now begins the awesome moment of the Mass, the distribution of the sacred gifts. At this moment, the priest holds up before the people the broken bread and, as one declaring a huge mystery, tells the people to fix their gaze on it. He says, "Behold the Lamb of God!" using the same phrase that the people have been singing. He continues with their same phrase, "Behold him who takes away the sins of the world!" "Happy are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb!" When we receive the Body and Blood of Christ, it is a sacred moment, a moment to be cherished and reverenced. St. Cyril of Jerusalem reveals to us a poetic reflection on how our attitude should be expressed as we receive our Lord when he writes:

“Trust not the judgment to your bodily palate, no, but to unfaltering faith. For those who taste are bidden to taste, not bread and wine, but the anti-typical Body and Blood of Christ. Do not approach then with your wrists extended or your fingers spread, but make your left hand a throne for the right, as for that which is to receive a king. And having hallowed your palm, receive the Body of Christ, saying over it, "Amen." Then, after having carefully blessed your eyes by the touch of the holy Body, consume it—carefully, lest you lose any portion. For whatever you lose is evidently a loss to you as it were from one of your own limbs. Tell me, if anyone gave you grains of gold, would you not hold them with care, on your guard against losing any? Will you not keep watch more carefully, then, that not a crumb falls from you of what is more precious than gold and precious stones?

Then, after you have consumed the Body of Christ, draw near also to the cup of His Blood, not stretching forth your hands, but bending and saying with an air of worship and reverence, "Amen." Bless yourself by also partaking of the Blood of Christ. And while the moisture is still upon your lips, touch it with your hands, and bless your eyes and brow and the other organs of sense. Then wait for the prayer, and give thanks to God, who has counted you worthy of such great mysteries.

This beautiful example is the reverence we should be demonstrating during this most sacred time. This is the example we should set for one another so that there may be no confusion as to what we are receiving in communion. IT IS OUR LORD!

Thank you for joining me today in this lesson on “Behold The Lamb of God.” I look forward to sharing Lesson #35 with you next week as we continue our lessons on the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Let us keep one another in prayer. May God bless you and your families.