

Session 12: The Supper of the Lamb

John 1:29; Revelation 5:6-14; 19:6-9; 1 Peter 2:4-9; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8

Part One: Leader Preparation Guide

Session Overview

Discovery Aim. The group closes every thread with their own hands: Isaac's question from Moriah is answered by the Baptist and enthroned in Revelation; the command to eat is assembled from Egypt to the marriage supper of the Lamb; and the words of the Mass are discovered to be Scripture's own words for both.

Catholic Touchstone. The Eucharist is the pledge of the glory to come, the anticipation of the heavenly banquet, the marriage supper of the Lamb (CCC 1402-1405); at every Mass, at the invitation to Communion, the Church deliberately joins the Baptist's cry and heaven's beatitude over the Host: Behold the Lamb of God; blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

What You Need to Know

Tonight everything comes home. Two threads have run through twelve weeks. The first was sealed at Session 3, when the group left Moriah with Isaac's question unanswered: where is the lamb? Abraham promised God would provide the lamb, and God provided, that day, a ram; readers ancient and modern have heard in the wording a promise held open. The second thread has grown a link nearly every week: the command to eat, from the flesh of the Passover lamb to the covenant meal on Sinai, the manna, the priests' holy bread, the hard words of Capernaum, the upper room, and the table at Emmaus. Both threads end at the same verse, and the group must be the ones to land them.

The lamb thread lands in three steps the group takes aloud: John the Baptist answers Isaac across eighteen centuries, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world; Revelation 5 enthrones the answer, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, between the throne and the elders, worshiped by every creature; and Revelation 19 seats us at his table: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Then the discovery that lifts the roof off: at every single Mass, at the invitation to Communion, the priest, holding the Host over the chalice, deliberately joins and adapts the two verses: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb. Most of the group will have heard those words hundreds of times without hearing Genesis 22, John 1, and Revelation 19 inside them. Tonight they will never unhear it.

The eating thread lands with 1 Peter 2. Session 7 planted a seed under strict hold: the bread of the Presence belonged, by law, to the priests alone (with David's famous exception). Tonight the group reads that the baptized are a holy priesthood, a royal priesthood, built into a spiritual house to offer spiritual sacrifices. The bread the law gave to the priests alone is now offered to a people made a royal priesthood in Christ, received in the Church's communion and rightly disposed. Close with the commissioning ritual: the group assembles the entire eat-command chain aloud, each person taking one link, ending at Revelation 19, and then each is sent with the study's summary sentence. This is a finale; let it feel like one, and end on time so it lands clean.

Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

Genesis 22:7-8, resolved. Where is the lamb? God will provide himself the lamb. The ram in the thicket kept Isaac alive, and the wording kept the question audible. John 1:29 is the answer's announcement; Revelation 5 is its enthronement; the altar rail is its address.

The whole chain, resolved. Exodus 12:8, they shall eat the flesh; Exodus 24:11, they beheld God, and ate and drank; Exodus 16:15, the bread which the Lord has given you to eat; Leviticus 24:9, they shall eat it in a holy place; John 6:53, unless you eat; Matthew 26:26, take, eat; Emmaus, known in the breaking of the bread;

Revelation 19:9, blessed are those invited to the supper. From Egypt to glory, God saves a people by feeding them himself.

Fulfillment. The Eucharist is where both threads live now: the Lamb, standing as though slain, given to a priestly people, as the pledge and beginning of the supper that never ends (CCC 1402-1405). The study ends where every Mass ends: fed, blessed, and sent.

Voices of the Church

St. Ignatius of Antioch (d. c. 107)

The voice that opened this study closes it. Writing to the Ephesians, Ignatius called the Eucharist the medicine of immortality, the antidote against death, that we should live for ever in Jesus Christ (*Letter to the Ephesians* 20). In Session 1 he told us what the bread is; now we can hear what he heard: the bread the fathers ate could not keep them from dying; this bread is death's cure.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

The antiphon *O Sacrum Convivium*, traditionally attributed to him, which the Church still sings and the Catechism quotes (CCC 1402): O sacred banquet, in which Christ is received, the memory of his Passion is renewed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us. Four clauses, and this study has spent a session or more inside each: the banquet, the memorial, the grace, the pledge. The antiphon compresses our twelve weeks into one breath.

St. Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997)

In summary of her constant teaching: Mother Teresa built her whole work on the Eucharist received each morning and Christ served in the poor each day, and she would not let the two be separated: the Lord substantially present in the Host, in the Church's full sense (CCC 1374), is the same Lord truly encountered in the least of his brothers (Matthew 25:40); the modes differ, the Person does not. The supper of the Lamb, she showed a doubting century, does not end at the church door; it sends. Her sisters still begin every day of service at the altar.

Catechism Connection

- CCC 1402-1405: the Eucharist is the anticipation of the heavenly glory; in it we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes and pray Marana tha; there is no surer pledge of the new heavens and new earth than the Eucharist, the pledge of future glory.
- CCC 1344: the pilgrim Church, in the Eucharist, marches toward the heavenly banquet, when all the elect will be seated at the table of the kingdom.
- CCC 1419: Christ, passing from this world to the Father, has given us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him; participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, and makes us long for eternal life.

THREAD WATCH

Where is the lamb: RESOLUTION NIGHT. The three-step landing (John 1:29, Revelation 5, Revelation 19) belongs to the group. Your only job is to put the texts in front of them in order and then read the Ecce Agnus Dei aloud at the moment scripted in the guide.

The command to eat: RESOLUTION NIGHT. The commissioning ritual assembles the chain aloud, one link per person. Assign links before the session if your group is shy; the chain is printed in the guide.

Afterward. Collect honest feedback, celebrate, and point the group onward; the final Take-Home carries suggestions for continuing, including the book that inspired this study's territory.

Session Goals

1. Resolve the lamb thread through the group's own three-step landing.
2. Harvest the priesthood seed from Session 7 with 1 Peter 2.
3. Assemble the complete command-to-eat chain aloud in the commissioning ritual.
4. Discover the Ecce Agnus Dei as Scripture's own words, John 1:29 joined to Revelation 19:9.
5. Send the group with the study's summary and a concrete rule of Eucharistic life.

A note on time. If you must cut, cut the second Win question and the Dig Deeper. The commissioning ritual and the Ecce Agnus Dei moment are the untouchables. End on time; finales that run long stop being finales.

Part Two: Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Leader: Father, twelve weeks ago we heard the hardest words your Son ever said, and we stayed at the table. Tonight, finish what you began in us: answer the oldest question, assemble the longest thread, and seat us, even now, at the supper of the Lamb. Amen.

Win: Opening the Conversation

1. Looking back across all twelve sessions, which single discovery has most changed how you experience Mass?
2. What question did you walk in with, twelve weeks ago, that you would answer differently tonight?

Build: Into the Text

Leader: Announce: tonight we close every door we deliberately left open. Bring out your lists. We start on Moriah.

3. From Session 3, restate the open question: read Genesis 22:7-8 and verse 13 once more. What did Isaac ask, what did Abraham promise, and what did God actually provide that day? So what remained outstanding when Genesis closed?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Isaac: where is the lamb? Abraham: God will provide himself the lamb. And God provided, that day, a ram caught in the thicket. Isaac lived; and the wording, a lamb promised, a ram given, has been heard ever since as a promise held open, so that the question stayed audible for eighteen centuries: God will provide the lamb.

4. Read John 1:29. Standing by the Jordan, what does John the Baptist say when he sees Jesus, and whose question is he answering? Then read Revelation 5:6-14: where is the Lamb now, in what condition, and what is heaven doing about it?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Across eighteen centuries, the Baptist answers Isaac: here is the lamb. And Revelation shows where the answer now stands: a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, receiving the worship of every creature in heaven and on earth: slain, yet standing; the sacrifice complete, the victim alive. Moriah's question has become heaven's liturgy.

5. Read Revelation 19:6-9. What feast does heaven announce, and what does the angel command John to write in verse 9? Then, leader: read aloud, slowly, the words the priest says at every Mass, at the invitation to Communion, holding the Host over the chalice: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb. Group: what did you just hear?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

The marriage supper of the Lamb, and the beatitude: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And the Mass's invitation to Communion deliberately joins and adapts those two scriptures: John 1:29 and Revelation 19:9 (the Missal says called where Revelation says invited, and supper for marriage supper; the joining is the Church's own act of quotation), the Baptist's answer to Isaac and heaven's wedding invitation, said over the Host, to you, every single Sunday.

Give this discovery room. Many will realize they have heard the answer to where is the lamb hundreds of times at the altar rail without ever hearing Moriah inside it. From tonight, they cannot not hear it.

6. One seed remains, planted in Session 7 under strict hold: the law gave the bread of the Presence to the priests alone. Read 1 Peter 2:4-9. What does Peter call the baptized, twice, and what are they built to do? So to whom is the holy bread now given?

ANSWER (*share after the discussion*)

A holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ; and again: a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people. Baptism has done what lineage once did: in Christ, the whole people is priestly.

Now the Session 7 seed flowers: the bread before God's face was most holy, and the law gave it to the priests alone. The true Bread of the Presence is given at every altar to a priestly people: baptized into Christ's priesthood (the common priesthood, distinct in essence from the ministerial priesthood that offers the sacrifice, CCC 1547), and received in the Church's communion, rightly disposed (CCC 1385). What was once one family's lawful portion in one holy place now feeds the whole royal priesthood. Read 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 as the seal: Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed; let us, therefore, celebrate the festival.

The Other Side of the Table

Leader: One last objection, at full strength, in honor of a study that never skipped one.

The symbol-of-union reading. Revelation is apocalyptic literature; its images are symbols, and everyone agrees. The marriage supper of the Lamb is a symbol of final union with God, not a heavenly meal, and certainly not a church service. Linking the Mass to Revelation 19 over-literalizes a metaphor, and a study that has preached restraint for twelve weeks should practice it at the finish line. And the strongest form of the objection is not skepticism about heaven: grant a real eschatological banquet, grant the biblical resonance of the feast; what Revelation 19 still does not establish is the Catholic Mass, its sacrificial theology, or the Real Presence, and no communion antiphon can retrofit that.

7. Strengthen it, then answer it. What is right in the objection, and what does it miss about how symbols, sacraments, and the Church's own liturgy actually relate?

ANSWER (*share after the discussion*)

Right: Revelation speaks in symbol, the supper of the Lamb is an image of union, and no one claims heaven serves courses. Concede it all cheerfully.

What it misses: symbols are chosen, and the question is why God's chosen image for final union is a wedding feast of a slain-yet-standing Lamb, at the end of a Bible whose whole redemption story, as this group can now recite, runs through lambs that must be eaten and covenants sealed at tables. The Mass does not literalize the symbol; the Mass and the symbol both point to the same reality, and the Eucharist is that reality's pledge and anticipation, given now (CCC 1402-1405): the Church eats the supper's first course, so to speak, while the hall is still filling. And it was the liturgy itself, not this study, that set Revelation 19:9 into the invitation to Communion. Restraint means claiming no more than the Church claims; it has never meant claiming less. As for the strongest form: agreed, Revelation 19 does not prove the Mass, and this session never asked it to; twelve weeks of lamb, covenant meal, manna, presence-bread, priesthood, and cup did that work. What Revelation 19 adds is the destination: the same Lamb, the same supper, the pledge (CCC 1402) already on our altars.

DIG DEEPER: The Hidden Manna, One Last Time

Read Revelation 2:17 once more: to him who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna. Then let the group flip back through their own lists: the jar before the testimony (Exodus 16), the golden urn in the ark (Hebrews 9), the promise to the victor.

Ask only this, and let it be the study's last open window rather than a closed door: if the manna waits in heaven, and the supper of the Lamb is heaven's feast, what do you suppose the Church has been tasting all along?

The Commissioning

Leader: Stand the group in a circle. Assign one link to each person (double up as needed) and have them proclaim the chain in order, reference and phrase, around the circle:

- Exodus 12:8: they shall eat the flesh that night.
- Exodus 24:11: they beheld God, and ate and drank.
- Exodus 16:15: it is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.
- Leviticus 24:9: they shall eat it in a holy place.
- John 6:53: unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood.
- Matthew 26:26: take, eat; this is my body.
- Luke 24:35: he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.
- Revelation 19:9: blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Then say over the group: From Egypt to glory, God saves a people by feeding them himself. You have seen the whole table set. Go to it every Sunday like people who know what is on it, and bring someone hungry with you. Amen.

Send: Taking It With You

8. You are now someone who knows what the Eucharist is. What is your concrete Eucharistic rule of life from here: Mass, adoration, thanksgiving after Communion? Name it aloud; the group is your witness.

9. Who in your life is standing where you stood twelve weeks ago? What is one real step to bring them to this table, or this study, this year?

Live It This Week

- Sunday, at the Ecce Agnus Dei, hear all of it: Isaac's question, the Baptist's answer, heaven's invitation, and answer Amen like a person invited by name.
- Begin your named rule of Eucharistic life this week, not next.
- Write down the one sentence from this study you most want to still believe in ten years, and put it where you will find it again.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Revelation 19:9

Closing Prayer

Together: Lamb of God, slain and standing, you were the answer before we knew the question, and the bread before we knew our hunger. Keep us at your supper all our days, and when the hall is full and the feast begins, let every one of us be found at the table. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Part Three: Leader Reference Card

Passage	Used For
Genesis 22:7-8, 13	The open question restated; live discovery
John 1:29	The Baptist answers Isaac; live discovery
Revelation 5:6-14	The Lamb standing as though slain; heaven's liturgy
Revelation 19:6-9	Marriage supper; the beatitude; Ecce Agnus Dei moment
1 Peter 2:4-9	Royal priesthood; Session 7 seed harvested
1 Corinthians 5:7-8	Christ our paschal lamb; let us celebrate the festival
Revelation 2:17	Dig Deeper: the hidden manna, final open window
Commissioning chain	Ex 12:8; 24:11; 16:15; Lev 24:9; Jn 6:53; Mt 26:26; Lk 24:35; Rev 19:9
Revelation 19:9	Memory verse