

The Hymn of the Day for the Last Sunday of the Church Year is “Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendor.” This powerful hymn draws out the biblical imagery of heavenly worship and applies it to the Holy Eucharist. As each stanza builds on the previous stanza, the words crescendo to the point where one can almost hear the angels joining their voices!

This hymn uses the wonderful worship imagery that is given to the Church in the Book of Revelation. In 1:5-6 it speaks of the incredible splendor of *Jesus Christ the ruler of kings on earth, who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood...to him be glory and dominion forever and ever*. The first part of stanza 1 ponder this when it reads: *Lord. Enthroned in heavenly splendor. First begotten from the dead, You alone, our strong defender, lifting up Your people’s head*. The last segment of the stanza speaks of Jesus being the living bread.

Verses 5:11-14 depict the thousands upon thousands of heavenly hosts praising Jesus the Lamb. Stanza 2 reflects the picture of this heavenly worship scene in the words: *You as of old in Bethlehem, Here as there Your angels hail you, Branch and flower of Jesse’s stem..we in worship join with them*.

Verses 7:9-17 describe a heavenly picture a wide range of characters. There was *a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages...in white robes, with palm branches in their hands...all the angels...elders and the four living creatures*. They were all in heaven worshipping the Lamb. Stanza 3 echoes the Revelation verses with these phrases: *Paschal Lamb, Your offering, finished Once for all when you were slain, In its fullness undiminished Shall forever more remain...Cleansing souls from every stain*.

This final stanza culminates with the heavenly worship of the Lord by all creation. The following phrases echo this when they state: *with loud hosanna...worship you the Lamb who died...Ris’n ascended, glorified!*

Prayer Lord Jesus Christ, You reign among us by the preaching of Your cross. Forgive Your people their offenses that we, being governed by Your bountiful goodness, may enter at last into Your eternal paradise; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen (Collect for Proper 29C).