



Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday of Lent (B)
February 28, 2021

Let Go and Let God

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

A Vatican mural by Raphael Sanzio, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, depicts the promised Isaac, the son of Abraham's old age, kneeling humbly on an altar. He was the answer to a prayer, a commitment by God that, through this child, Abraham would have descendants as numerous as the stars. Yet God was asking him to sacrifice that hope and promise. And Abraham, although surely not understanding, was willing to obey the Father. It represents the supreme test of faith. Abraham is called "our Father in Faith" for a reason.

Sunday Readings

Genesis 22:1–2, 9a, 10–13, 15–18

I will bless you and make your descendants as countless as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore.

Romans 8:31b–34

He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him?

Mark 9:2–10

And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white.

Abraham is looking up to God, not focused on the creatures, even as much as he loved his son. We also need to be looking up to God in order to rightly value the things below.

Abraham understands that no godly gift should take God's place in the human heart—even something as precious as his God-given child. When dealing with all the good things God gives us, even those he has promised and those we love most, we must be willing to submit to his plans. God doesn't always make sense to us and we are painfully aware that his ways are not always our ways.

Isaac is a young boy, but certainly big enough to put up a fight as his elderly father's plans become evident. Yet we see Isaac kneeling in acceptance of the sacrifice God requests. Although he wants to understand, he doesn't make the reason an absolute. Isaac foreshadows the trusting lamb led to slaughter, the ram whose head will be caught in a crown of thorns, and the Son who will not be spared by the heavenly Father. +

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A Word from Pope Francis

We learn from Abraham to pray with faith, to dialogue, to argue, but always ready to receive the word of God and to put it into practice. We learn to talk with God as a child with his father: to listen to him, respond, argue, but transparent, as a child with his father.

—General Audience, June 3, 2020



REFLECTION QUESTIONS **QUESTIONS** REFLECTION

- Are we willing to lay peacefully within God's plan, even if it means sacrifice? Do we trust his plans more than our own?
- Is anything more important than God's loving plan for us?

Build a Strong Foundation

By Kathleen M. Basi

In the absence of clarity, the only way to hold the course is to stay in touch with the One who sees the big picture. Prayer is the foundation of a lived faith.

Sometimes I think past generations had an easier time following God. The Israelites had the finger of the Almighty carving commandments in stone. The early Church had flesh-and-blood encounters with the Son of God. We, on the other hand, have to make do by asking, “What would Jesus do?”

It seems like an easy question until you start trying to answer it. After all, Jesus never told us how to address terrorism, prenatal testing, or the hookup culture. Even perennial problems like poverty require us to distinguish between collective (governmental) and personal responsibility. As we consider the future, how do we discern a Christian response to sticky moral quandaries?

The answer is as deceptively simple as the question. The answer is prayer. But prayer is more than a shopping list tacked to a rosary or Chaplet of the Divine Mercy. Asking God for what we need is good and holy, but prayer is a two-way street; we also have to listen. Listening requires quiet, and the paradigms that govern modern life leave little room for quiet. Lack of stimulus makes us nervous—we can’t exercise without earbuds streaming music. We can’t eat in restaurants without a widescreen TV in every corner. Smartphones ensure that the web is at our fingertips at all times.



In many ways, this is a blessing; however, it also means God has to shout to be heard. And although God certainly can shout, it’s not his preferred mode of communication.

God doesn’t inscribe messages on billboards; he speaks softly to pilgrim hearts (see 1 Kings 19:12)—those who seek to hear his voice in everything they encounter, who take time to “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalms 46:11). And therein lies the first challenge—to set aside the background noise that fills modern life.

It may not feel like it, but the moral conundrums of generations past were as much a muddle to the people living through them as ours are now. Their

problems look simple because we have the advantage of hindsight. The future will always be shrouded in uncertainty. Confidence comes when we humbly admit we don’t have the answers. It comes when we remove distraction and allow our hearts and minds to be molded into a clearer reflection of God.

If we reflect God, we can trust that we have direction in our stumbling—even if we can’t see the endpoint. +

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**PRAYER**

*Lord, you watch over me
and love me as your child.
Help me to see all people as
your children and treat them with
gentleness, love, and respect.*

—From *Mindful Meditations for Every Day
of Lent and Easter*, Rev. Warren J. Savage
and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

March 1–6

Monday, Lenten Weekday:
Dn 9:4b–10 / Lk 6:36–38


Tuesday, Lenten Weekday:
Is 1:10, 16–20 / Mt 23:1–12

Wednesday, Lenten Weekday:
Jer 18:18–20 / Mt 20:17–28

Thursday, Lenten Weekday:
Jer 17:5–10 / Lk 16:19–31

Friday, Lenten Weekday: Gn 37:3–4, 12–13a,
17b–28a / Mt 21:33–43, 45–46

Saturday, Lenten Weekday:
Mi 7:14–15, 18–20 / Lk 15:1–3, 11–32

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