

Dear Padre,

In Bible times why did people sacrifice animals, children, and other living beings for their own sins?

The practice of human and animal sacrifice is at least as old as written history, including in our own Scripture. Few stories are more chilling than when God asks Abraham to sacrifice his son, or when Jephthah sacrifices his daughter (Genesis 22; Judges 11). In scriptural theology, one's sins merited punishment and even death, but an animal or other person could be chosen to take one's place. God, in his mercy, instituted this animal sacrificial system as a symbol, foreshadowing Jesus' sacrifice for our sins (Genesis 8:20; Hebrews 10:1-18). In the New Testament, Jesus understood his mission as sacrificing his own life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28). His fidelity to that mission was at the cost of death. However, to say that Jesus' death was payment for



our sins is not to say that a vengeful God was appeased by the sacrifice of his own innocent Son. Rather, Christ was willing to liberate us when he "bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that... by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

Thus, "it is love 'to the end (John 13:1)' that confers on Christ's sacrifice its value as redemption and reparation, as atonement and satisfaction" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 616). It is in this sense that Jesus' death was a payment—not one to be exacted—but a unique sacrifice that "completes and surpasses all other sacrifices" (CCC 614).

Fr. Byron Miller, CSSR
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

A WORD FROM Pope Francis

The Catechism firmly states that human power has limits and that "it is contrary to human dignity to cause animals to suffer or die needlessly." All such use and experimentation "requires a religious respect for the integrity of creation."

ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME (LAUDATO SI'), MAY 24, 2015

Calendar

Monday

SEPTEMBER 20
Sts. Andrew Kim Tae-gön, Priest, and Paul Chông Ha-sang, and Companions, Martyrs

Ezr 1:1-6
Lk 8:16-18

Tuesday

SEPTEMBER 21
St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Eph 4:1-7, 11-13
Mt 9:9-13

Wednesday

SEPTEMBER 22
Weekday
Ezr 9:5-9
Lk 9:1-6

Thursday

SEPTEMBER 23
St. Pius of Pietrelcina, Priest
Hg 1:1-8
Lk 9:7-9

Friday

SEPTEMBER 24
Weekday
Hg 2:1-9
Lk 9:18-22

Saturday

SEPTEMBER 25
Weekday
Zec 2:5-9, 14-15a
Lk 9:43b-45

Sunday

SEPTEMBER 26
Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Nm 11:25-29
Jas 5:1-6
Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48



September 19, 2021

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Wis 2:12, 17-20

Jas 3:16-4:3

Mk 9:30-37

The Price of Goodness

We all know genuinely good people. Somehow they are able to live the virtues of their religious tradition. It might even appear that it is easy for them to do so. One would think that such good people would be valued. Well, yes and no. While we might truly value the goodness of others, that goodness can also shame us. And there is the rub. People are uncomfortable with the realization that they are not as good as they think—or not as good as others might view them. Today's readings underscore the price we might have to pay for such goodness.

The first reading describes a plot being devised to get rid of a righteous person whose goodness has become "annoying" (Wisdom 2:12). This is not someone who flaunts goodness; it is a genuinely good person, one who is referred to as "the righteous one" (2:18). (Here "son of God" simply means someone belonging to the people of God.) The plotters insist

that God will come to the rescue if the righteous one is truly good. The petitions in the psalm response are placed on the lips of that righteous one. Like many good Bible stories, this story is open-ended. We do not know what happens. The price paid for righteousness is found in the Gospel passage as well. Here the righteous one is Jesus. Though we know how his story ends, here the disciples did not.

Today we are faced with the starkness of these stories. Are we willing to pay the price of goodness?

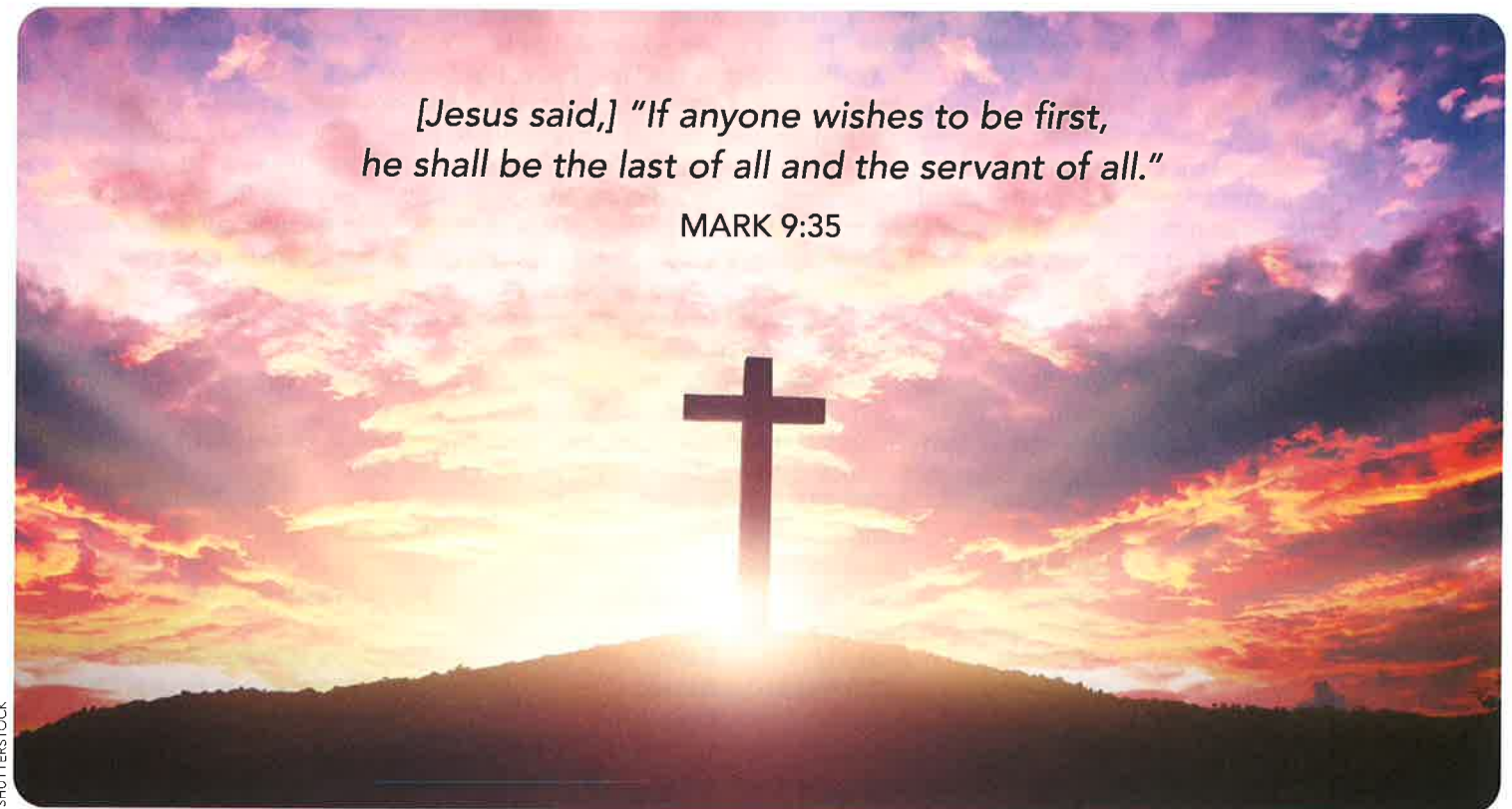
Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- Where in your life do your religious values conflict with social norms?
- Do you ever resent the goodness of others? If so, what might you do about it?

[Jesus said,] "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all."

MARK 9:35





St. Mary's Church
Dalton, NE 69131



All Souls' Church
Bridgeport, NE 69336



Sacred Heart Church
Bayard, NE 69334

Pastor: Fr. James Joseph (308) 250-3730
Address: 701 P Street, Bridgeport, NE 69336

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Jesus said... "If anyone wants to be the first, he must make himself last of all and servant of all..." Mark 9. 35

Today's Gospel tells us that those who would be first must place themselves last and be the servants of all. Jesus invites us to be leaders who serve instead of seeking to be served, to rid ourselves of pride and haughtiness and not to force our authority on others. To illustrate this Jesus identified with a child, the representative of the poor and marginalized and the nameless ones. To welcome such a person in Jesus' name means to offer unconditional acceptance and protection. In the process of welcoming these least ones, Jesus said, you welcome me and the One who sent me. If we dare to accept the Jesus' challenge to welcome the least, last and the lost ones, we are going to be on a collision course with our contemporary culture. We as Church then should be welcoming immigrants, refugees, and all victims of persecution, or social indifference and exploitation.

Dogs seem to have mastered that idea of service better than any of God's creatures. The English novelist D.H. Lawrence once observed: "Nothing but love has made the dog lose his wild freedom, to become the servant of man." The French artist Alfred Barbou said: "The dog has been esteemed and loved by all the people on earth, and he has deserved this affection for he renders services that have made him man's best friend." Perhaps in crafting our own lifestyle, we can use the example of the lowly yet exalted dog.

Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard wrote a series of essays in which he has a rather harsh assessment of those who call themselves Christian but do not authenticate that claim with their lives. Kierkegaard wrote that Christianity is necessarily at odds with worldly norms and even human nature. This is clearly seen in the second reading and the Gospel. While the world seeks ambition, St. James expects the believer to be gentle and humble. In the Gospel, Jesus offers a similar challenge to his disciples. When a person preaches Christianity, it will have its impact only when it is preached not only with the lips but by living it – only then can authentic Christianity be preached. Jesus dared to speak out for justice and right. His teachings were hard. Obviously, the unjust and those lacking in righteousness found him obnoxious. Therefore, he was rejected and crucified. After his death and resurrection, many followers of Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, have followed that life style.

Still others, like Dorothy Day, and Mother Teresa of Calcutta, continue to challenge our interpretation and implementation of the Gospels. Are they now just documents that we relegate to history? Or are they Jesus' story and Jesus' voice begging to come alive through us for the salvation of a needy humanity? Three times in St. Mark's Gospel, Jesus announced that he would be handed over to suffering and death, and three times his disciples did not fully comprehend the truth that he was sharing with them. Following Jesus, who saved us through suffering, would mean experiencing one's discipleship in suffering. Jesus accomplished his mission through service and suffering and ultimately death. It will be the same for those who are prepared to follow him. We are all called to do this, continually. Every day, every moment of the day you and I are called to consider others over ourselves. The needs of our children, the sick, the poor and the elderly call us to be selfless like Jesus.

Every day we have to resist the temptation to selfishness, the temptation to put ourselves before others. Every day we are called to greatness by conquering ourselves. Every day we are called to be the Presence of Jesus for others. The strength to achieve this comes from Jesus Christ on the cross. He made himself weak so we could be strong. We pray today for this strength, the strength to reach out to others, and to serve them in love.

SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK

Date	Day	Time	Place	Intention
9/20	Monday	No Mass Today		
9/21	Tuesday	6:00 PM	Bridgeport	For the newly baptized
9/22	Wednesday	No Mass Today		
9/23	Thursday	6:00 PM	Dalton	Wellbeing of Waite Grandchildren
9/24	Friday	12:00 Noon	Bayard	Special Intention of Regina DeFoe
9/25	Saturday	5.30 PM	Dalton	† Teresa Reilly
9/26	Sunday	8.00 AM	Bayard	† Mary Calkum
9/26	Sunday	10.30 AM	Bridgeport	For People of the Parish

**ALL SOULS
617 P STREET
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336**

MASS TIME
Tuesday – 6:00 PM
Sunday – 10.30 AM



OUR GIFTS TO GOD & CHURCH

ADULTS	\$395.00
CHILDREN	\$5.00
PLATE	\$756.00
SUBTOTAL	\$1,156.00
MASS STIPEND	
TOTAL	\$1,156.00
Heat/ac	\$480.00
BUILDING FUND	\$308.00
APPEAL GOAL	\$6,046.00
DONATIONS	\$3,815.00
BALANCE	\$2,231.00

- Prayer line requests may be made to Carolyn-262-0453 or Teresa-262-0439.
- The rosary is prayed ½ hr before Mass, please come and pray.



**SACRED HEART
1003 AVE B
BAYARD NE 69334**

MASS TIME
Friday – 12:00 NOON
Sunday – 8:00 AM



OUR GIFTS TO GOD & CHURCH

ADULTS	\$440.00
CHILDREN	
PLATE	\$41.00
SUBTOTAL	\$ 481.00
MASS STIPEND	
TOTAL	\$ 481.00
BUILDING FUND	
APPEAL GOAL	\$4,907.00
DONATIONS	\$3,165.00
BALANCE	\$1,742.00

- Prayer line requests may be made to Paula-586-2992.
- The rosary is prayed ½ hr before Mass, please come and pray.



**SAINT MARY'S
718 FRANCIS ST
DALTON NE 69131**

MASS TIME
Thursday – 6:00 PM
Saturday – 5:30 PM



OUR GIFTS TO GOD & CHURCH

ADULTS	\$395.00
CHILDREN	\$1.50
PLATE	\$60.00
SUBTOTAL	\$ 456.50
MASS STIPEND	\$10.00
WEST NE CATHOLIC	\$20.00
TOTAL	\$ 486.50
BUILDING FUND	
APPEAL GOAL	\$6,136.00
DONATIONS	\$6,439.00
BALANCE	(\$303.00)

- Prayer line requests may be made to DeAnn-249-1735.
- The rosary is prayed ½ hr before Mass, please come and pray.

