



build. plant. grow.  
*the word this week*



ordinary  
time



lectionary  
reading

## Cycle B

### Twenty-Ninth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lectionary #146

#### Reading I: Isaiah 53:10-11

This first reading from the prophet Isaiah shows that a true servant of the Lord places themselves in the hands of God and trusts that God will see them through their difficulties. A faithful servant of the Lord is willing to make and be a **sacrifice**. By the time this passage takes place, the nation of Israel has come to believe that the suffering of one can compensate for the sins of many. Isaiah presents the suffering servant as the one designated by God to be the **sacrifice** for the sins of all. Later, this image and reality will be seen in Jesus Christ, who will be the **sacrifice** for the sins of all humanity.

#### Reading 2: Hebrews 4:14-16

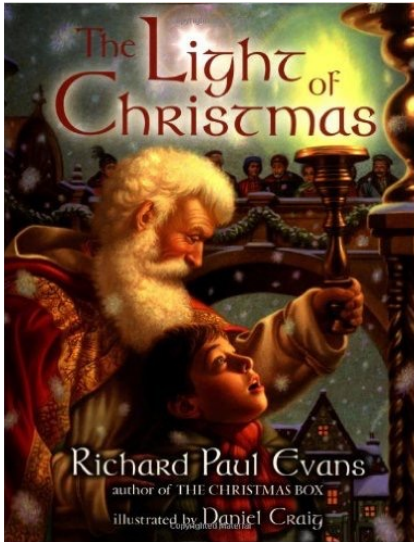
The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews proclaims that Jesus is the true and final High Priest: the priest, altar, and victim of **sacrifice**. Jesus is the atonement for the sins of all, the one who is the intermediary between God and his people. The writer makes it abundantly clear that although Jesus is the Great High Priest, he is not free from the suffering of humanity and that he is like all humans, except in sin. Through Jesus' **sacrifice**, we see that he is both divine and human.

#### Gospel: Mark 10: 35-45

Time and again, the disciples misunderstand Jesus and his mission. In today's reading from Mark's Gospel, we are presented for the third time with Jesus' prediction of his arrest, torture, and execution, yet the disciples still do not see that Jesus has come to be the **sacrificial** offering for the world. The disciples want Jesus to be the Messiah that they imagined rather than the true one that he is. When the disciples ask if they can have positions of prominence in the Kingdom of God, Jesus responds by saying that those positions are not his to give, and asks them if they can *drink of the cup* that he himself is going to drink from. Their affirmative response sets them up to recognize that they too will be called to be a **sacrifice** for the Kingdom. We see that with leadership, there is a need for **sacrifice**.



children's  
story



*The Light of Christmas*

Written by Richard Paul Evans

Illustrated by Daniel Craig

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character  
education  
activity

**Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concerns of dedicated individuals.**  
-Martin Luther King Jr.

## The Light of Christmas

High in the mountains lies the town of Noel, surrounded by walls and a great silver gate. Every year, Alexander and his mother walk the long distance to Noel to watch the lighting of the village Christmas tree. This particular year, Alexander learns that the Keeper of the Flame will be choosing the person who has given the truest gift of Christmas to be the one to light the Christmas tree. On his way to Noel, Alexander helps a poor old man he finds lying in the snow. What Alexander doesn't know is that the poor old man is really the Keeper of the Flame, and because of the Alexander's great kindness and **sacrifice**, Alexander is chosen to light the Christmas tree. Alexander learns that it isn't what you give, but rather how you give of yourself that matters the most. It is an ideal story to convey the virtue of **sacrifice**.

## Expressing Gratitude for the Sacrifices of Others

Step One: Explore whether there are students within the class, school, or parish who have relatives that are serving in the Armed Services. Discuss with your class what **sacrifices** they think someone in the Armed Services might have to make. What **sacrifices** might their families and friends have to make? Invite the students to brainstorm and list those **sacrifices** on the white board.

Step Two: Have the students, along with their families, gather things that might be sent to soldiers overseas. As a class, put together "care packages" for those individuals and have each student make a card to express their gratitude for the **sacrifices** that the soldiers are making.

**Sacrifice is giving up something valued for the sake of something else regarded as more important or worthy.**



**case study**

**Look.  
Feel.  
Know.  
Act.**

## **What could you do today?**

One of the most important things we can do for those who are making **sacrifices** for others is to include them in our daily prayers. You can also ask yourself what **sacrifices** you might have to make to achieve a goal. For example, if you wish to improve at a sport, you will need to **sacrifice** time from another activity in order to devote more time and energy to reaching your goal.

## **Look Feel Know Act**

Throughout history, there have been countless men and women who have lived lives of **sacrifice** to make life better for others. Many of those individuals were never recognized for their **sacrifices**. Think about some of these people, either from history or who you know of in the present day or in your personal life. Write a letter of gratitude and mention the **sacrifice** that you have seen or heard of. If possible, send the letter to the person so that they know that their **sacrifice** has been recognized and appreciated. Make an effort to pay attention to those people in your life who constantly make **sacrifices** for others and for you, and find ways to show your gratitude through words and actions.

The kindness that young Alexander shows to the poor man ends up being a great blessing for him in many ways. First and foremost, Alexander has made a **sacrifice** for the good of a stranger, and this allows him to see that great kindness can lead to unexpected adventures and honor. The Scriptures chosen for today reveal the virtue of being **sacrificial** in the ways that we conduct ourselves and show that throughout our lives, we will be given many opportunities to make **sacrifices**, both large and small, for the good of others.



**closing  
tool**

**Loving Father, help me give honor and glory to your name by following the example of your Son, Jesus Christ, who is the model for living a life of loving sacrifice. Inspire me to call upon your Holy Spirit, who dwells within me, and to be joyful in any sacrifice that I make for others. Amen.**



**Santa Clara  
University**

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