

**SACRIFICE**  
**(3/14/06 TOPIC OF DISCUSSION)**  
**PRESENTED BY FATHER ED JOCSON**

**OPENING PRAYER – from offertory prayer during mass**

**Prior to the main topic of discussion, the following instructions were given:**

**Reviewed definitions as follows:**

- .. Catechumens: Those preparing to receive the Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist**
- .. Candidates: Baptized Catholics preparing to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist, or Confirmation only. Candidates are also those baptized in another Christian faiths preparing to be received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church via Profession of Faith, Confirmation and First Eucharist**

**Fr. Ed invited all participants to attend the Penance Service on the Tuesday before Easter (4/11/06 at 7:30pm), and when making a personal confession to let the priest know that they are catechumens or candidates.**

**Every Sundays is a celebration of Easter. The Liturgical Rites are significant because Liturgy represents our lives and the rituals performed are how we live them out. Everything we do at worship has meaning, but it doesn't end when we leave church. We are meant to take what we have celebrated and live it out in our daily lives; we are to engage in recollection and contemplation in the midst of the ordinariness of our existence (as Blessed Theresa of Calcutta says: contemplatives in the heart of the world).**

**Handouts (purple sheet) were given that describe the “Period of Purification & Enlightenment” which occurs during Lent. This includes the 3 Scrutinies and the Presentations (The Creed and The Lords Prayer). These terms were defined along with how the Sunday ceremonies would be conducted. The visibility of the Catechumens and Candidates in the public nature of these ceremonies presents a valuable incentive to the rest of the congregation. We listen, we are**

renewed in our own faith and follow the example set and are thereby reminded about our own commitment to the faith. During this “Period of Purification & Enlightenment” there will also be interviews conducted of the Elect and the Candidates. Details of this process were distributed (blue sheet).

## **SACRIFICE**

[Genesis Ch.22 Vs. 1-18](#) describes Abraham’s sacrifice. Abraham was visited by three men (may have been the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit). He and his wife Sara were advanced in years but in spite of this they were promised a son who was indeed born to Sarah; his name was Isaac. The above reading describes Abraham’s obedience to God who requested that Isaac be sacrificed as a burnt offering. Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his precious and only son demonstrated his readiness to return to God the gift He had given him. It also demonstrated his obedience and trust in the Father. Abraham put God first even if it meant returning to God the gift he had been given. This should be a lesson to us: We must ask ourselves what is first in our lives; if it is anything but God, it means we are engaged in idolatry. God’s interruption of this act could be interpreted as His mandate to his chosen people namely there must be no human sacrifice; it could also signify a renewal of God’s covenant with His people. This was certainly a test of Abraham’s faith, which is why he is called our Father in Faith. Abraham should be an example to us. We should be willing to return to God all that He has given us; to focus on the Giver rather than the gift; to be possessed by God rather than by the “things” we possess. Abraham was rewarded in the generations that came forth from his one son, Isaac. Abraham’s sacrifice is also a precursor of the Supreme Sacrifice of God the Father’s only Son, Jesus, for all of humanity. This is what we celebrate in the Sacrifice of the Mass. Jesus does not die over and over again, rather His once for all sacrifice at Calvary is re-presented. We recall that gift of our redemption. In reading [Romans Ch.8; Vs.31 to 34](#) we are reminded that God has made a new covenant with us. Jesus seals this covenant with His own Blood as a guarantee to be under His protection as long as we remain in Him.

**In the schematic provided, the elements of “Sacrifice” are presented. These are: 1. THE OBJECT (to be offered), 2. SOMEONE (to make the offering), AND 3. THE CONSUMMATION OF THE SACRIFICE (or complete burning of the offering). In the Old Testament ([Gen.22: 1-18](#)) they were: 1.Isaac (who carries the wood for the sacrifice), 2.Abraham (who offers the sacrifice), 3.Ram (substituted for Isaac and burned as an offering to God). In the New Testament (Rom.8: 31b-34) they were: 1.Jesus (who carried the wood of the cross for sacrifice), 2.Jesus (who offers himself) 3.Jesus (who dies on the cross as a ransom for our sins and is raised from the dead after 3 days). In the Eucharist: 1.JESUS (in the form of bread and wine), 2.JESUS (acting in and through the priest), 3.COMMUNION WITH JESUS (consumed by those present, the sick, the homebound and the dying). Communion, therefore is “Bread for the Journey” for those who are dying (Viaticum); and Bread for daily living, for those of us struggling from day to day. Mass is the ritual; we bring our lives, all that we are, all that we hope to be, all that we do, just as we are, willing to participate fully. We receive the Bread of Life and then take that Bread out into our daily lives to be shared, and to help us grow in awareness of the Gift and the Giver. We enter into this great and inexhaustible Mystery with a sense of awe, realizing that we will never fully understand it but recognizing nonetheless the unspeakable privilege of being part of it. During Mass we are nourished first by the Living Word of God and then by the very Body and Blood of Jesus. As we enter into Holy Week we are reminded, on Holy Thursday, of the institute of this Sacred Ritual at the Last Supper.**

**The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the “Body of Believers – the Church.” In celebrating this sacramental action, the “Body” is united to the Head, that is, the Church herself is being offered through Christ. The lives of the household of the faithful, whole and entire, are offered to the Father through the Son and in the Holy Spirit. Thus, all of our praise, sufferings, difficulties, prayer and good works are united with Christ and His own total offering, His Dying and His Rising. We must bring our willingness to move beyond the single moments of Joy or Sorrow that imprison us in time so that we may experience the dynamic nature of God’s unconditional love that transforms us into the image of his Son.**

**We are called, like Abraham, to be in a covenant with God. We are called to be faithful to our covenant with God; there is to be no other god (nothing, no one) in our lives. Though we all struggle to be faithful to our God in word, thought or deed, we must persevere in our willingness to sacrifice; to extend ourselves to the limit in the pursuit of the “Covenant Bond of Love.”**

**Let us conclude with this reflection: “In what ways am I called by God to make sacrifices in order to be faithful to the “Covenant Bond of Love?”**

**Submitted by,  
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Documenter**