

BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

January 19, 2020 • 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time • John 1:29–34

Living Sacrifice

Our last reading was Matthew's account of Jesus' baptism. This week we read about the same event from John's Gospel. The evangelist John wrote his Gospel decades after the other three evangelists, and so reflects a more developed theology.

John the Baptist tells us that Jesus is not just the Son of God, but the Lamb of God. John is recalling the paschal lamb of the first Passover. Like Moses at the first Passover, Jesus brings his people from slavery to freedom. However, in both cases it took great faithfulness and much sacrifice to reach that freedom. For the Israelites, it was 40 hard years in the desert. For Jesus, it was the sacrifice of his life on Calvary.

Parents know all about sacrifice—giving up the freedom to come and go as we please, to enjoy quiet weekends, or to sleep eight hours a night. We learn to live without new cars or two-week vacations. Sacrifice is just a way of life for parents. It is also the way of life for Christians.

Our acts of sacrifice also need to extend to people beyond our household family. We are asked to give from our bounty and to share our livelihood with those who are in need: they are family, too. Teach your children to sacrifice. We do our youngsters a disservice if we do not help them to give of themselves, and to give generously. When they receive a new toy, help them go through their old toys and choose something they can give away. When it's time to get new school clothes, let them help you pack away last year's clothes and talk

about who you might pass them on to. You might even consider buying a new outfit(s) for other children in need.

Begin each day as a family by offering God all of the day's big and little sacrifices. Ask in return for the freedom to love as Jesus loves with his patient, generous heart.

FAMILY RESPONSE

Decide as a family on one charity that you can help this year. After investigating how to help that charity, determine when and how often you will help.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

What charities have you been involved with in the last year? Are you pleased with your commitment? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?