

Liturgical Year Supplemental Lesson

Lent and Easter

Correlated Materials

Student Text: Chapter 22, pp. 104–7;
Lent and Easter Supplement,
pp. 148–51

LESSON FOCUS

Lent is a time of offering sacrifices to God in order that we may share in his sufferings. If we join our sacrifices with Christ's sufferings, he will turn our sufferings into glory. If we offer sacrifices during Lent, we will share in the glory of Easter.

AIMS

- Students will realize the value of sacrifice in the Bible and in their own lives.
- Students will realize that Lent is a time for sacrifice so that we can be renewed with new life on Easter.
- Students will learn that if we offer our sacrifices with Christ's sufferings, he will turn our sufferings into glory.

MATERIALS

- Bible
- White board and markers
- Materials to make cards (see Focus 2 Optional Activities)

Optional:

- Pictures or visual for Stations of the Cross (see Celebration)

Begin the Lesson

Preparation (10–15 minutes)

Use one or more of the following resources for prayer and student preparation for the lesson.

SCRIPTURE: Student Text, p. 149

“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry” (Matthew 4:1–2).

After he was baptized, the devil tested Jesus' identity as the Son of God. Because of his prayer and fasting, Jesus was able to overcome the temptations of the devil. We should fortify ourselves with prayer and fasting every day, especially during Lent, so that we too can be strengthened against the dangers of the world.

“It is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God ... provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him” (Romans 8:16–17).

Jesus suffered and rose from the dead. We too must suffer so that we can share in Christ's glory.

SACRED ART: Student Text, pp. 105, 148

The Resurrection of Christ, Perugino; *Christ*, Bermejo

Compare the painting *Christ*, which shows the suffering Christ (p. 148), with the painting *The Resurrection of Christ*, which shows the risen Christ (p. 105). In *Christ* we see Jesus' suffering, especially in his eyes. It is as though he is saying, “I did this because I love you.” In *The Resurrection of Christ*, we can see that new life comes from suffering.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN: Saint Patrick's Breastplate, Student Text, p. 97

Proclamation (1 minute)

(Proclaim slowly, then repeat.)

During Lent, we offer sacrifices of self-giving love so that we can be like Christ in his sufferings so that we may share in his glory.

WORDS TO KNOW

Lent: a time of preparation before Easter when we follow Jesus more closely by giving special time to prayer, good deeds, and penance

sacrifice: giving up completely to God something that is dear to us

Biblical Sacrifices

- Sacrifice of Abel: Genesis 4:4
- Sacrifice of Noah: Genesis 8:20–22
- Sacrifice of Melchizedek: Genesis 14:18–20
- Sacrifice of Abraham: Genesis 22:13
- Sacrifice of the Israelites: Leviticus 1:3–9
- Sacrifice of David: 2 Samuel 6:12–19
- Sacrifice of Mary and Joseph: Luke 2:21–24

Lesson Explanation (20–30 minutes)

Explain focus points in your own words or use the discussion points and questions.

Focus 1: Sacrifice is necessary for new life.

- **What is a goal that you have?** (Answers will vary.)
 - **What sorts of things do you have to give up in order to achieve this goal?** (In sports, we give up time to practice to be a good athlete; a musician may give up time to practice to play an instrument well; etc.)
 - Another goal we all have as Christians is to be a disciple of Christ.
 - **What does it mean to be a disciple of Christ?** (To imitate Christ, follow him, draw others to him, etc.)
- It is not always easy to be a disciple of Christ. Just like with our other goals in life, we have to give up something of ourselves in order to become more like Christ.
 - For example, if we want to grow in virtues (habits we form that cause us to do good acts), we have to give up those vices (dispositions that cause us to choose evil) we have. If we want to be humble, we need to be less prideful. In order to be less prideful and think less of ourselves, we need to think of others more; we need to have less focus on our needs.
 - **Name some other examples of what we need to give up in order to be more like Christ.** (Answers will vary. Use these vices/virtues to prompt students: pride/humility, envy/kindness, coveting/generosity, overindulgence/temperance, laziness/diligence, anger/patience.)
 - **Have you ever noticed that when you sacrificed something of yourself, something good came of it?** (Saying a prayer for someone in need, the prayer was answered; giving up personal comforts for another, the person was happy; giving personal time to take care of the sick or poor, the person was helped; etc.)
- **Can you recall any sacrifices in the Old Testament and the benefits of those sacrifices?** (See sidebar.)
 - Abel gave his firstfruits (the best he had to offer), so Abel was blessed by God.
 - Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac, so God replaced Isaac with a ram. Abraham becomes the father of the Israelites, and God promised to give him land and many descendants.
 - Moses offered the unblemished lamb, so the firstborn sons were able to live; and Moses delivered the people out of Egypt.
 - **Because of the sin of Adam and Eve, what kind of a sacrifice had to be made?** (Because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, Jesus had to die for the sins of mankind, in perfect obedience to his Father.)

Every Suffering Turns into Glory

My sufferings	My glory
Being made fun of	Reward in Heaven
Being sick	Suffering with Christ
Being scolded by mistake	Gaining grace

FOCUS 2 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Discuss: If we give Jesus our sufferings, we can turn these sufferings into glory. *How does Jesus turn our sufferings into glory?* (Jesus will take our sufferings and lighten the burden; he will wipe our tears, take away the pain, and actually give us hope and peace.)
- Discuss how suffering can turn to glory. (See sidebar.)
- Have students make a card for someone for Lent, showing that they will make a sacrifice for him. Ask students to pray that God will bless him.

- *What was the benefit of Jesus' death?* (Forgiveness of sins; the gates of heaven were opened; mankind was redeemed.)

Conclusion: Sometimes sacrifice is necessary to achieve what we want in life. Sometimes spiritual sacrifices (prayer, fasting, almsgiving, etc.) are necessary for our spiritual needs. Jesus had to die so that he could rise from the dead. Jesus sacrificed his life so that we could have eternal life.

Focus 2: Lent is a time for sacrifice so that we can share in the joy of Easter.

- **Read** all or part of the Lent paragraphs in Student Text, pages 149–50.
 - **Lent** is a time in the Church year that helps us to prepare for Easter.
 - *What is the color used at Mass during Lent?* (Purple, which is a color that symbolizes preparation and penitence.)
 - Lent is a time of offering **sacrifices** so that we can share in the joy of Easter.
 - *What kinds of sacrifices did Jesus make so that we could share in eternal life one day?* (His Passion, humiliation, crown of thorns, a spear in his side, death on the Cross.)
 - During Lent, we remember that we must share in Jesus' sufferings by prayer, helping those in need, and giving up some of our pleasures.
- **Read** all or part of Easter paragraphs in Student Text, pages 150–51; have students visualize that they are witnessing the events firsthand.
 - *How do you think it would have felt to have been Mary Magdalene and have seen the risen Christ?* (Answers will vary.)
 - *Why do you think that Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first?* (Because he wanted her and all of us to know that he came to save sinners, and Mary represented all repentant sinners.)
 - *What is the color used at Mass during Easter?* (White, which is a color of purity, victory, and joy.)
 - Easter is a celebration of the joy that Jesus Christ is risen!

Conclusion: If we offer up sacrifices during Lent, we will receive blessings.

Review Supplemental Lesson—Liturgical Year: Lent and Easter (3 minutes)

- During Lent, we offer sacrifices of self-giving love so that we can be like Christ in his sufferings.
- If we suffer with Christ, we will also share in his glory on Easter.

Application (15–25 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following for discussion.

- **If not previously done, compare** the art on Student Text, page 148, entitled *Christ*, with the painting on Student Text, page 105, entitled *The Resurrection of Christ*. In the painting *Christ*, we see Jesus' suffering, especially in his eyes. It is as though he is saying, "I did this because I love you." In the painting *The Resurrection of Christ*, we can see that new life comes from suffering.
- **Emphasize** that Jesus had to die in order to be resurrected. Discuss how we must die to self (sacrifice) in order to have new life.
- Sometimes when things go badly for us, we want to complain; instead, as Christians we are called to unite ourselves with Christ's sufferings. That means we are to give our sufferings to him—that is, hand them over to him. ***How do we do this?*** (Pray; ask Jesus to take our sufferings; tell Jesus we want to unite our sufferings with him; etc.)
- Say a prayer of thanksgiving for the trials that come into our lives: Dear Jesus, we want to be like you in all that we do. Sometimes our lives become difficult, and we may even be sad. But you always bring good out of sadness. Thank you for always making the sun shine after it rains; thank you for making us smile even when times are difficult; thank you for dying on the Cross so that we can have eternal happiness with you in heaven. Amen.

Celebration (15–20 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following.

- Stations of the Cross: If possible, take students to church to walk the stations. Or you may use a book that has larger pictures of the Stations of the Cross to display.
 - Recite each Station of the Cross (see Student Text, p. 164, or recite the stations below).
 - After each station, students pray: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.
 1. Jesus is condemned to death.
 2. Jesus carries his Cross.
 3. Jesus falls the first time.
 4. Jesus meets his Mother.
 5. Jesus is helped by Simon of Cyrene.
 6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
 7. Jesus falls the second time.
 8. Jesus speaks to the women.
 9. Jesus falls a third time.

10. Jesus is stripped of his clothes.
11. Jesus is nailed to the Cross.
12. Jesus dies on the Cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the Cross.
14. Jesus is placed in the tomb.

- Quiet students and listen to refrain of “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today.” Go to www.ignatius.com/promotions/adoremus-hymnal/downloadable-mp3s.htm for downloadable MP3s.
- Focus on *The Resurrection of Christ*, the artwork in Student Text, p. 105.

CHAPTER 22

The Perfect Sacrifice

“And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . . For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.”

Hebrews 10:10, 14

Sacrifices

“My bike,” “my dog,” “my toys,” “my room”—from the time we are little, we own things. Often one of the things very young children learn to say is “mine.” That is alright because God has allowed us to own things. Because of the effects of Original Sin in us, however, we sometimes may forget who really owns things and who gave them to us. We can become selfish.

Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and many others never wanted to forget that all that they owned really belonged to God and that he was just letting them use these things for the time they were on earth. They also wanted to adore him, to thank him for his gifts, and to ask for his blessings in the future. And when they sinned, they wanted God to know that they were sorry for having offended him. They wanted to atone for (make up for) their sins. So they took their best animals or their best crops—things that would have been good to eat or could have been sold for a lot of money—and they offered them up to God. By burning them, they offered what

was dear to them and, in this way, gave them back to God completely.

Later in their history the people of Israel still offered **sacrifices** to God. But now, instead of offering the sacrifices themselves, they would go to the Temple and give the best of what they had or could afford to a priest who would offer it up for them. Do you remember which tribe it was that God appointed to be the priests and offer sacrifices for the people of Israel? It was the tribe of Levi.

There were two kinds of sacrifice. The first was of something which did not have blood—like ears of corn, oil, and flour. And then there were the sacrifices which involved blood—animal sacrifices.

Sin Offerings

Every time a sacrifice was made for sins, it had to be an animal sacrifice. Animals were the people’s prize possessions. It was the best thing they could give to God to atone for sins. The

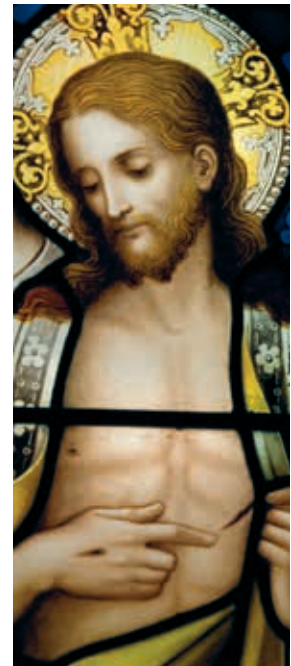
priest would put his hands on the animal’s head as a sign that he would like to transfer the man’s sins onto the animal. And then, after the animal **victim** was killed, the priest would drain its blood and sprinkle it on the altar. The sprinkling of the blood was the important part of the sacrifice because blood was, and still is, thought of as the life of the body. When the blood was sprinkled, it was clear that the life of the animal was being given to atone for sins.

Mission from the Father

When Jesus was a child, the Jews were still offering sacrifices. Once when he was twelve, Jesus and his parents were in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover. He slipped away and went to the Temple to do some special work that his Heavenly Father had given him to do. He must have seen the animals being killed so that they could be offered to his Father. Jesus had a special mission from that same Father. He would grow up and offer to the Father a life of perfect obedience leading to the perfect sacrifice of himself on the Cross.

The Perfect Sacrifice

Jesus Christ’s sacrifice was perfect in every way: 1) Since Adam had sinned, and all mankind in him, sacrifice which involved blood was needed to atone for our sins. The sprinkling or the shedding of the blood was the most important part of the sacrifice; therefore, Christ’s Blood was shed for us on the Cross. 2) The lamb or other animal victim had to be the best of the flock. Jesus is called the “spotless lamb” because he is not only sinless and perfect, but he is also God himself. 3) Jewish priests atoned for sin by putting their hands on the animal’s head to transfer the man’s sins onto it, but an animal



cannot really bear the guilt of man. Jesus *really* took our sins on himself and died for us.

Jesus the Priest

Jesus Christ was not only the sacrifice itself. He was also the one who offered the sacrifice. Because he is God, in a second Jesus could have stopped the men who were killing him! But he freely offered himself as a victim for us. Because Jesus is the one who offered the sacrifice, he is also a priest. Jesus is the greatest priest who offered up the greatest sacrifice ever.

The Mass

That sacrifice is still going on, although the Crucifixion took place once and for all on a hill called Calvary about two thousand years ago. Each time Holy Mass is celebrated, Jesus becomes really and truly present on the altar and offers himself up—his Body and Blood—for our sins, as a renewal of and in remembrance of the sacrifice on Calvary and in memory of his death and Resurrection. The Temple in Jerusalem has been replaced by Catholic churches everywhere and the altar in the Temple and the Cross of Christ has been replaced by the altar in your church!

The Liturgy of the Mass

When the Jewish priests offered sacrifice in the Temple, there were special prayers and ceremonies to go with it.

In the same way, when we go to Mass the priest not only says, “This is my Body” and “This is the chalice of my Blood” over the bread and wine, but we also have prayers and ceremonies that go with this sacrifice. These prayers

and ceremonies with the sacrifice are called the Liturgy of the Mass. They are very important and everyone in the Church takes part in them in certain ways.

Liturgy of the Word

The Mass is divided into two main parts. In the first part, the **Liturgy of the Word**, we listen as someone reads from the Word of God, the Bible. Since the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible to tell us what he wants us to know, the message that comes from it is God himself speaking to us. On Sundays, we hear three readings. Two of them are from the Old Testament, the Acts of the Apostles, the New Testament Epistles, or Revelation. The third one comes from one of the four **Gospels**, which are accounts of the life of Jesus.

Also on Sundays the priest will explain the Word of God to us. This is called the **homily**. The priest is trying to help us understand the message from God that we have just heard in the readings.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Then comes the second part of the Mass: the **Liturgy of the Eucharist**. This is when the actual sacrifice takes place. There are prayers for the living and the dead and prayers of offering, atonement for sins, praise, adoration, and thanksgiving. This is also when we receive Holy Communion, Jesus, our sacred Food, who will help us to put into practice the words of the Bible we have just heard. He will also increase the life of grace in our souls.

“Look, we pray, upon the oblation of your Church and, recognizing the sacrificial Victim by whose death you willed to reconcile us to yourself, grant that we . . . may become one body, one spirit in Christ.”

Third Eucharistic Prayer

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Finally, the priest tells us to “go in peace.” The word Mass comes from the Latin word *missio*, a form of *mittere*, which means “to send.” When the Mass is over, God, through the priest, sends you home with his grace to bring Christ’s love to others and to love and serve him.

We Must Participate at Mass

Think of how great the Mass is! Each Mass is a renewal of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross in memory of his death and Resurrection. It is the most important thing that ever happened in the whole history of the world. It is the greatest act

of worship that we can give to God. Because of this, you are required to participate at Mass at least on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. This means we must listen to the Word of God and offer our prayers and our very selves to God during the Mass. We are also obliged to receive Holy Communion once a year during the Easter Season.

Words to Know:

sacrifice victim Mass
Liturgy of the Word Gospel homily
Liturgy of the Eucharist

Q. 96 What is the Holy Mass?

The Holy Mass is the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, which is offered by the priest to God, under the appearances of bread and wine, in remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Cross (CCC 1341–46).

Q. 97 What is a sacrifice?

A sacrifice is a public offering to God of a thing which is destroyed to give it back to God (CCC 1357).

Q. 98 Is the Sacrifice of the Mass the same as the Sacrifice of the Cross?

The Sacrifice of the Mass is the same sacrifice as the Sacrifice of the Cross; the only difference is in the way it is offered (CCC 1364).

Q. 99 What is the difference between the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass?

On the Cross, Jesus Christ offered himself in a bloody manner; on the altar, Jesus Christ offers himself sacramentally, in an unbloody manner, by the ministry of the priest (CCC 1366–67).

Q. 100 Are we obliged to take part in Mass?

We are obliged to take part in Mass on Sunday and on the Holy Days of Obligation. It is good also to attend Mass frequently, in order to participate in the greatest act of religion, the one that is most pleasing to God, and best for us (CCC 2176).

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Lent and Easter Supplement

“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry.”

Matthew 4:1–2

Easter is really the greatest feast of the Church year—greater even than Christmas! The reason for this is that by rising from the dead on Easter Jesus Christ fulfilled the work he had come to do, and he opened the gates of heaven to all mankind.

Lent

Just as we have Advent to prepare for Jesus’ birth, so we have a special time called **Lent** to prepare for his Passion, death, and Resurrection. During Lent, we take time to think about how Jesus’ great victory at Easter was only accomplished by suffering and death. We also remember that if we hope to share in Jesus Christ’s Resurrection, we must also follow him by sharing his sufferings. We do this by trying always to do what God wants, even when it is hard, and by offering up our sufferings to Jesus. And since Jesus loved us so much that he suffered and died for us, we too should try to love him and each other with a generous love that is ready to make sacrifices. This is why during Lent we unite ourselves

with Christ’s sufferings by prayer, by helping those in need, and by giving up some of our pleasures.

We know that Jesus was born to be King, but he was not the kind of king the people were expecting. “A king needs a crown and a fine robe!” the Roman soldiers must have laughed, for they made a crown out of thorns, pressed it onto his head, and wrapped him in a purple robe. Then they pretended to bow down to him. “Hail, King of the Jews!” they cried as they slapped his face and spat at him.

Jesus, who was a much greater king than David or Solomon, let them do these things because he knew that his was a different kind of Kingdom, one that only his suffering and death would bring about.

“Here is your King,” cried Pontius Pilate to the people of Israel as he handed Jesus over to them to be crucified. As the people took Jesus off to carry his Cross to Calvary (the hill where they would kill him), Pilate had a sign put on the Cross. “THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS,” it said in Hebrew (the language of the people of Israel). It was also written in Latin and Greek so that the Roman and

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My people, what have I done to you? Or how have I grieved you? Answer me!

Because I led you out of the land of Egypt, you have prepared a Cross for your Savior.

Holy is God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal One, have mercy on us.

I opened up the sea before you, and you opened my side with a lance.

I fed you with manna in the desert, and on me you rained blows and lashes. I struck down for you the kings of the Canaanites, and you struck my head with a reed.

I put in your hand a royal scepter, and you put on my head a crown of thorns. I exalted you with great power, but you hung me on the scaffold of the Cross.

My people, what have I done to you? Or how have I grieved you? Answer me!

from the Divine Reproaches, Good Friday Liturgy

Greek people living around Jerusalem could read it.

This made the chief priests furious. "You should not have written, 'The King of the Jews'," they cried. "Write, 'This man *claimed* to be King of the Jews.'"

But Pilate said, "What I have written, I have written," and so the truthful sign was posted above the head of the true King who was dying for his people.

As the dead King hung on the Cross, a soldier came by to make sure that he was dead. With a spear, he pierced Jesus' side, and Blood and water flowed out.

Jesus' friends took his Body down from the Cross and lovingly placed it in a nearby tomb because the Sabbath was just about to start: it was Friday afternoon just before sundown. Later, after the Sabbath was over, they would come back and embalm his Body.

Easter

Early Sunday morning while it was still dark, Jesus' good friend, Mary Magdalene, came to the tomb with spices to prepare his Body for a proper Jewish funeral. But the stone had been rolled away from the entrance! So she ran to tell the Apostle Peter. She also told the Apostle John, whom Jesus had loved very much: "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have put him."

Peter and John ran all the way to the tomb. They went inside. The cloth (called a shroud) in which the Body of Jesus had been wrapped was lying there. Then Peter and John went home, but Mary Magdalene was grief-stricken, and she stood weeping outside the tomb. Then she stooped to look inside, and saw two men in white sitting inside the tomb



where Jesus' Body had been. "Why are you weeping?" they asked.

"Because they have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have put him," she said. Just then she turned away from the tomb and saw a man whom she thought was the gardener. "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" he asked.

Mary thought that this man might have taken Jesus' Body. "Please sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will take him away," she said.

In reply, the man just said, "Mary."

All at once Mary knew who it was. She

turned and said in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

Word to Know:

Lent