

prayer fasting LENT almsgiving

reflections on

Vocation in the context of Lent

2018
4th Sunday

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The gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Lent contains one of the most quoted and powerful verses in all of scripture:

**For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him might not perish
but might have eternal life.**

This verse contains the elements of our faith:

- God's love for the world
- God's gift to us of his son
- the necessity of faith in Jesus
- God's love saves us from destruction
- God's love leads us to eternal life

The first reading for this Sunday is taken from the Old Testament Second Book of Chronicles. This passage describes God's terrible and violent conflict with his people. The people rejected God's messengers and prophets, provoking God's anger, causing the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people. The description is of violence and suffering for the people and a desperate relationship with God. Later out of mercy for his people God relents and restores the people.

In the second reading, St. Paul describes for the Ephesians a relationship with God rooted in love and mercy. The terrible wrath of God described in the first reading is transformed by God's gift to us of his Son.

All that is good comes to us as a gift from God and we have life through faith in Jesus Christ.

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Paul's words to the Ephesians are a joyous and uplifting description of our life of faith in Jesus.

This brings us back to John's declaration that God so loved the world that he gave us his only son so that all who believe in him will not perish but have eternal life.

God does not act by half-measures. His gift of his son is total – given out of overflowing love for the world.

God's goal? That the world might be saved through Jesus.

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