

prayer fasting LENT almsgiving

reflections on

Vocation in the context of Lent

2018
2nd Sunday

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This Sunday's liturgy contains one of my favorite (and dramatic) Genesis stories: Abraham's test of faith (Genesis 22:1-18.)

"Take your son Isaac, your only one, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him up as a holocaust on a height that I will point out to you." When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. Then he reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the LORD's messenger called to him from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham!" "Here I am!" he answered. "Do not lay your hand on the boy," said the messenger. "Do not do the least thing to him. I know now how devoted you are to God, since you did not withhold from me your own beloved son."

In learning about the text, I read that this specific reading has been food for thought, not only in the Christian tradition, but in all of world literature.

Mary McGlone writes that we make a mistake if we focus on Isaac and his trauma (as terrible as it is), but that our reflection/light should shine instead on the test of faith that Abraham is confronted with.

She continues: "God called to Abraham who responded, "Here I am," literally, "Behold me." She further explains "Behold me" could proclaim, "See, I am here to do anything you command." McGlone says that in effect that God made Abraham a promise. Now, do you (Abraham) love me enough to give it all back? Isaac is spared, and Abraham proves his total faith in Yahweh.

In thinking about our vocations and this reading, there may be some common threads. Surely none of us is being asked to offer up our lives as a holocaust, or to offer up to God our children or loved ones.

Rather, think on this: our creator has given us all: our lives, our talents, our struggles, our triumphs, with our vocations, we have an opportunity to 'give it all back'.

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Certainly, Christian Brothers pledge their all in giving their lives in community.

A life attempting (through education) to transform lives and touch hearts is worthy pay-back to our creator. "Behold me. See, I am here to do anything you command."

How will we respond to the challenge?

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