

## Cycle B

### Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Lectionary # 37

#### Reading I: Isaiah 50: 4-7

This prophecy from Isaiah is always the First Reading for every Palm Sunday, no matter what the rest of the cycle of readings looks like. This reading is known as the third of the four “Servant Songs.” In this reading, the servant is not withdrawing from his task even though he is called to suffer from violence and shame. He does not reject his vocation, but submits to insults and beatings. His trust in God makes him the **sacrifice** that is needed. This prophecy from Isaiah foreshadows the ultimate **sacrificial** offering of Jesus Christ for all humanity.

#### Reading 2: Philippians 2: 6-11

This passage of Saint Paul's letter to the Church at Philippi is commonly referred to as a hymn. This hymn celebrates the saving mystery of Christ's obedience and willingness to be the **sacrificial** offering for unity and humility. In fact, Saint Paul discusses the **sacrifice** God made to encourage the people to be unified and people of humility, thus indicating that there was a degree of unrest among the Philippians.

#### Gospel: Mark 14: 1- 15: 47

The Gospel of Saint Mark is often seen as a passion narrative with an extended introduction. The entire focus of Saint Mark's Gospel is of Jesus as the “Suffering Servant.” This is not surprising given the fact that it was written for the early Christians who were indeed suffering for their faith in Jesus Christ. Throughout the entire Gospel of Saint Mark, there is always a mention of those scheming to put Jesus to death. For Saint Mark, Jesus's true identity as the Messiah and the Son of God is most truly recognized in his suffering and death and in his being the **sacrifice** for the life of the world.



build. plant. grow.  
*the word this week*



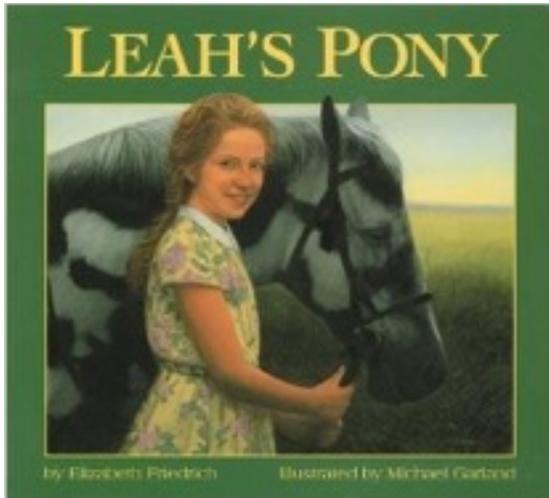
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lectionary  
reading



children's  
story



### Leah's Pony

Written by Elizabeth Friedrich  
Illustrated by Michael Garland  
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character  
education  
activity

**Sacrifice is the willingness to give oneself for the good of another. Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice in that he gave his life for ALL.**

## Leah's Pony

Set during the time of the Great Dust Bowl of the American west, the story *Leah's Pony* revolves around the great love a young girl has for her family and the very great **sacrifice** she is willing to make for them. The beginning of the story talks about the lushness of cornfields and pastures and then the locusts and drought that bring disaster to Leah's family. Amid the locusts and drought, the bank forecloses on Leah's family home. Leah sees her parent's fear as their property goes to public auction. Leah sells her beloved pony so that she can bid on the tractor that is desperately needed for the farm. Her selfless action begins a series of kindnesses that are clearly **sacrificial**.

## Activity: What can I give that will reveal my love and concern?

We are reaching the last week of the Lenten season, which has been marked by three things: an increase in prayer time, fasting, and almsgiving.

Step One: Take some time to reflect on how well you have done in these three areas and know that even if we fail, there is always a new beginning with each new day.

Ask Yourself: How well did I remain faithful to my prayers?

What sacrifice did I make during the Lenten season, and how well did I do in this?

Have I made a contribution to the poor based on the money saved from fasting?

The money that I have saved will need to be offered somewhere. If I have done so, where did it go? And if I haven't made the offering yet, where would I like it to go?

Step Two: Using these questions, design a colorful **sacrifice** card and ask if it can be placed at the base of the altar at Sunday Mass when the offertory is presented. If that is not possible, place it at the Prayer Corner in the classroom.

**As followers of Christ,  
our lives are intended  
to be a “living  
sacrifices,” that is, a life  
consecrated and  
offered to God.**



**case study**

**Look.  
Feel.  
Know.  
Act.**

## **What could you do today?**

Reflect on the different people who make **sacrifices** for you and what those various **sacrifices** are. Once you have done this, think about who you would like to thank with a special Easter card that reflects gratitude and thanks. This week, beginning with Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, is the holiest week for Christians. One of the great marks of Christianity is to be a person of gratitude and to express that gratitude. During the upcoming days of Holy week, take some time to pray as you design and construct a Thank You card for the various people you would like to recognize for the sacrifice they have made for you. Some examples of those you might want to thank would be your parents and other family members, teachers and coaches, and anyone who you know has done something for you or gone out of their way for you.

## **Look Feel Know Act**

There are a great many sacrifices made throughout the world by good people who are compelled to respond to the many needs that they see. Although we may not know who is making these **sacrifices** or where in the world they are taking place, that does not make them any less important and wonderful. In the news, we often hear of the many terrible things that occur in the world today, but those things are small compared to the great many wonderful things that are being done by countless people. There are **sacrifices** being made everywhere. When we hear of these wonderful things, it can help us think about what we could do in our own part of the world. Reflect on what it felt like when you **sacrificed** some time or energy for another person. Remembering these events helps us continue serving and **sacrificing**.

In the story of *Leah's Pony*, we encounter a great **sacrifice** that is made in love and a selfless act that provides for a common good. The readings for this weekend, which is the beginning of the holiest week in the Catholic Church, reflect a selfless and **sacrificial** love. We see the ultimate **sacrifice** and love that God has for us in the life, death, and resurrection of his Son and our Brother, Jesus Christ. **Sacrificial** love always means giving of ourselves with some cost.

**Pray that you will be able to place yourself in the shoes of another person in order to see what it might be like to be in that person's position. Think about what talents or gifts you have that you might offer them even though it may involve some sacrifice on your part. No matter the size of the sacrifice, know that it will have great meaning for the other person or group. Amen.**



closing  
tool



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