

Binding Isaac, Crucifying Jesus

IV Sunday of Lent

The cross lifted high between heaven and earth is offered to humanity as symbol of God's abiding love and the instrument of salvation for those who embrace it in faith.

Jesus is "the great love with which God loved us," Ephesians 2:4; We are challenged to produce this love by means of good works and by a way of life that is committed to living this love.

In the Old testament story of Abraham going up to offer Isaac and binding him to be sacrificed but returned to Abraham alive New Testament scholars see a symbol of Jesus offered up on the cross. Jesus is the true heir God promised to Abraham, (see Genesis 22; Mathew 1:1; Galatians 3:16). Just like Isaac carrying the wood for the sacrifice Jesus too carried the wood for his sacrifice (see Genesis 22, John 19:6).

Thus the "lifted up" son of man is God's offer of salvation and unconditional mercy for humanity at large. It is not just a judgement on the world and those who refuse to turn to it in faith but an offer of grace as well. Today's second reading illustrates this to mean as God's work grace and his gift,

In this sacrificial death and resurrection of Christ God is extending the blessing offered to Abraham to all the nations.

Ref: Sunday Bible Reflections by Dr. Scott Hahn