



## Saint Thomas Aquinas: Sacrifice

**Introductory Prayer:** Thank you Lord Jesus for instituting the Sacraments for our salvation. We believe that you died for each of us and trust in your saving work in our life. You are love itself, and you feed us in the Sacrament of your love as often as we worthily receive you. May Saint Thomas Aquinas intercede for us that we may grow in faith, hope and love.

Feast Day: Jan. 28 **Father James Kelleher, SOLT video #1:** ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=l20RSWGlq\\_w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l20RSWGlq_w))

### John 19:31-37 Sacred Heart of Jesus

Since it was preparation day, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the sabbath, for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn one, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken and they be taken down. So, the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may come to believe. For this happened so that the scripture passage might be fulfilled: Not a bone of it will be broken. And again, another passage says: They will look upon him whom they have pierced.

**Father James Kelleher, SOLT video #2** ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=9j-NgBDNmdY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9j-NgBDNmdY))

**Discussion questions** (credit to Father Daniel Ray, LC for reflections):

**1. Behold the Heart That Loved Until Death:** The crucifixion of Christ is the event that “expresses with stunning clarity how Jesus is a symbol of contradiction. In fact, people line up on two sides: those who adore him and those who mock him.... It is the most sublime school of love: in sorrow, Jesus forgives those who have made him suffer, responding to evil with good” (Pope Saint John Paul II, March 12, 1989). Today we contemplate that heart which loves us infinitely — not only then but also now. In the words of St. Thomas: "Since this (the Eucharist) is the sacrament of Our Lord's Passion, it contains in itself the Jesus Christ who suffered for us. Thus, whatever is an effect of Our Lord's Passion is also an effect of this sacrament. For this sacrament is nothing other than the application of Our Lord's Passion to us."

- a) Through all the Sacraments, but especially the Eucharist, the merits of our Lord’s death are applied to us. In what ways can we grow in our participation at Mass?
- b) In the Mass, Christ is both victim and priest. Do we perceive the sacrificial nature of the Mass as a re-presentation of what Christ did on the cross? Furthermore, do we perceive that we are brought into the salvific event as participants in that one sacrifice? (CCC 1366-67)

**2. Look upon the Pierced One:** As Christ was dying, the soldiers and rulers of the people mocked him as they were disappointed in their expectations. The people, on the other hand, looked on. Of the criminals crucified with him, one mocked him while the other one entrusted himself totally to his love and mercy. Each of us who looks upon the Pierced One looks upon him in a different way, but there will always be a choice to make: love him or mock him. Lord, I love you; help me grow in love for you.

- a) It is our choice to love him or to mock him and we must choose (indifference is itself a cruel choice of mockery). How do we choose to love him or to mock him?
- b) “O Blood and Water which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus, as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in You.” As taught by our Lord, St. Faustina prayed these words to the Father imploring His mercy. Do we see our weaknesses as means of mercy, especially when you are ready to admit them?

**3. Christ Raises the Bar:** Just as Jesus surrenders himself to the Father’s will, so too, we must surrender ourselves if we want to show our gratitude. After contemplating Christ’s love, we cannot go on loving the same as before. Every day we need to grow in love and appreciation for what Christ has done for us. As St. Thomas Aquinas said: “The things we love

tell us who we are.” St. Thomas summed this up when Christ spoke from the Crucifix asking him: “You have spoken well of me Thomas, What is your reward to be?” and Thomas replied: “Nothing but Yourself, Lord.”

- a) Christ gave himself completely – literally his last drop of blood – for our salvation. And yet, we are still lukewarm, and take His Sacrifice for granted. How can I “up my game” at Mass to more fully participate?
- b) In Eucharistic Adoration we humbly and silently adore Christ in the Blessed Sacrament contemplating Christ’s love. Can our parish do more times and create more opportunity for Adoration?

**Men’s / Women’s parish team resolution for the month** (choose one or suggest your own):

- Commit to weekly Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration.
- Commit to going to Confession at least once this month.
- Make a spiritual communion with the Lord daily.

**Closing Prayer:** One decade of Scripture Rosary: the second Sorrowful Mystery, the Scourging at the Pillar.

Verses to be recited before each Hail Mary:

1. They bound Jesus and delivered Him to Pilate. And Pilate asked Him, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" (Mark 15:1-2)
2. Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. But thou sayest it; I am a king." (John 18:36-37)
3. "This is why I was born, and why I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37)
4. Then Pilate said, "I find no guilt in this man. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him." (Luke 23:4, 16)
5. Pilate then took Jesus and had Him scourged. (John 19:1)
6. Oppressed and condemned, He was taken away, a man of suffering. (Isa. 53:8, 3)
7. Though He was harshly treated, He submitted, like a lamb led to the slaughter. (Isa. 53:7)
8. He was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins. (Isa. 53:5)
9. It was our infirmities that He bore, our sufferings, that He endured. (Isa. 53:4)
10. Upon Him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by His stripes we are healed. (Isa. 53:5)

(Taken from [www.ourcatholicprayers.com](http://www.ourcatholicprayers.com))

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