

Daily Homily
St. Junipero Serra, Priest; Missionary
Optional Memorial
Week Thirteen in Ordinary Time, Thursday
1 July 2021
[USCCB Daily Reading](#)

Every time I read this account of Isaac and Abraham and God, something new always steps forward to capture my attention.

This time around it is the innocent Isaac asking such an innocent question, "...where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" Abraham has a heavy, all-knowing response, "God will provide."

Whenever we think of sheep or lambs, I often recall the hillside of any town in Ireland. Especially lambs, they are cute, almost like puppies. Sheep are the livelihood of the people in so many ways. They keep the grass low, they provide wool, and they provide food. However, for the Jewish people of Jesus' day, whenever a sheep or a lamb was around, it meant that a sacrifice was not too far away. They would not think cute but rather they would think of what they needed to offer back to God.

"Where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" Isaac so innocently asks. Abraham, his father, knows that Isaac is the sheep. Isaac is the lamb. Until the angel of the Lord stops the sacrifice.

It's a question that hovered over Jesus' life from the beginning. Jesus must have prayed that question on more than one occasion. He must have innocently asked the Father, "Where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" And while Abraham's sacrifice was stopped, no angel of the Lord came to prevent the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. We recall this at every Mass, after Jesus in the host has just been broken, and while He is lifted up, we say: "Behold the Lamb of God. Behold him, who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the altar of the Lamb." God provides.

From Baptism it is a question that hovers over us as well, "Where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" Because every day, in some way, we too make an offering of our life back to God... in the praise we offer, in our prayer that we raise up, in the sacrifices we make, in the way we say "Yes" to God and "No" to self. Each day we make an offering, a sacrifice to God through our lives. And while we may wonder from day to day, how will that sacrifice happen, what will be offered up, what can we possibly give ... not to worry, God provides.