

## Living Lent | Day 36

# *Living Sacrificially*

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*Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.*

**John 12:20-24 RSV**

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### **Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:**

Until now, in John's Gospel account Jesus makes clear that His hour has not yet arrived. Suddenly, when Greeks (Gentile "outsiders") request an audience with Jesus it prompts Him to announce that the time has indeed arrived. With this proclamation the shadow of the cross becomes increasingly clear; that Jesus' life spent in submission to the Father would necessarily lead to crucifixion, but that it would be through this act of brutal execution that the Savior of humanity would be glorified, His victory assured. While the very idea of the Messiah's victory being contained in death continued to confound His closest friends, Jesus was making it increasingly clear to them that to follow Him would be costly. In the case of the original disciples, all except John would be martyred for their faith.

Costly discipleship! What exactly does that mean for us? Above all else, being followers of Jesus demands that we live sacrificially as we serve others, especially the marginalized and vulnerable. Who are they? How do I reach them? What do I do once I find them? If we're not careful these questions will simply become an excuse for us not to engage. But the fact is that when we keep our focus on Jesus, inviting

Him daily to shape our character, we increasingly see others through His eyes. Through these lenses we will become more aware of society's marginalized; we will grow increasingly sensitive to the voiceless, vulnerable ones who desperately need to have their humanity dignified.

When we are willing to submit to the work of the Holy Spirit, not only will our vision be expanded to understand the needs of others, we shall also be equipped to take part in meaningful acts of justice and mercy. Engaging with God's kingdom work sacrificially likely won't be easy; it might be messy, even painful at times. It might even feel dark, just like a seed being planted in the ground! But as our Gospel text reminds us, Jesus neither models nor guarantees a life of ease! He promises something infinitely greater: a fruitful life characterized by sacrifice and His abiding presence.

This Lenten season I pray that each one of us will consider seriously what it means to live sacrificially, and to arrange our lives accordingly as we advance the boundless goodness of God's kingdom.

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### ***Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ***

In April of 1858, Saint Mark's Episcopal Church was born in Brunswick, Georgia and by 1860 the first Episcopal Bishop of Georgia, appointed a vicar and the mission of Saint Mark's began. Throughout its history, Saint Mark's has served Glynn County and Morningstar Children's Home as Christ's hands and feet. The people of the Golden Isles and especially the parish family of Saint Mark's has remained faithful stewards of the commission granted. The Reverend Gareth Allcott (Anglican) is the Assistant to the Rector for Christian and Leadership Formation, and often is found at Morningstar Children's Home directly ministering to the Children in a uniquely gifted way.

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*It takes a lot of everything to **create home and healing** for the foster children, our neighbors, served at Morningstar Children's Home.*

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