

Friday, February 19
 Readings: Psalm 91:1-2, 91: 9-16; Exodus 6:1-13;
 Acts 7:35-42

3

Sacrifice proportionately

as Christ sacrificed for us. For our sake Jesus gave up everything to make us rich through the cross and the resurrection. We are called to sacrifice so others may share in God's word and blessings.

"... gave according to their means, and even beyond their means."
 2 Corinthians 8:3

Prayer: *Blessed Savior, thank you for serving us. Help us to remember to serve others. We know that at times we look towards power and prestige; we ask you to help us redirect ourselves during those times. Bless those who serve others with their lives. Enable us to learn and live extraordinary lives of service. In your name we pray. Amen.*⁶

Focal Verse: "I have also heard the groaning of the Israelites whom the Egyptians are holding as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. Say therefore to the Israelites, 'I am the Lord, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment.'" Exodus 6:5-6

Reflection: For some people, the moments in the liturgy following the prayers of the church are awkward ones. The presiding minister offers these words: "The peace of Christ be with you always." The congregation responds "And also with you." The members of the congregation are then invited to "share the peace" with one another. What does that really mean?

Sharing God's peace is *not* simply offering a friendly hello to those sitting around you. Sharing God's peace is *not* a time for catching up on news with your neighbor or for reminding someone about an upcoming meeting. Sharing God's peace does *not* require each worshiper to offer a sign of God's peace to every other worshiper present.

Sharing God's peace with one another is an act of reconciliation. It is an opportunity for God's people to be reconciled with one another as they offer their gifts to God and before they receive the gift of Holy Communion.

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, as recorded in Matthew's Gospel, lays a foundation for the practice of sharing God's peace. "So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).⁷

What do you hear?

How does it make you feel?

Toward what are you being drawn?

What do you sense you should do?

⁶ Elca.org, <http://blogs.elca.org/faithlens/tag/sacrifice/page/2/>

⁷ <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Worship/Learning-Center/FAQs/Exchange-of-Peace.aspx>