



MOVIES FOR LENT



DIOCESE OF ALGOMA
The Anglican Church of Canada



THORNELOE
UNIVERSITY

PASSION / PALM SUNDAY, Film: *The Iron Giant* (1999), Theme: Sacrificial Love, Scripture: Matthew 27:11–54

Introduction: On Passion Sunday, the Church turns toward Jerusalem and the cross. The liturgy holds together triumph and suffering, praise and betrayal, power and self-giving love. At the heart of Holy Week is the revelation that true strength is not domination, but sacrifice.

The Iron Giant may seem an unlikely companion for Passion Sunday. Yet beneath its animated surface lies a profound meditation on fear, identity, and the transformative power of sacrificial love. Set during the Cold War, the film explores how fear breeds violence and suspicion. The Giant, capable of immense destruction, ultimately chooses a different path—one shaped by friendship, freedom, and self-offering love.

Lent culminates not in avoidance of suffering, but in the mystery that love is stronger than death. *The Iron Giant* invites us to ask what it means to choose who we are—and whether we will choose love, even at cost.

Discussion Questions

1. After viewing *The Iron Giant*, what thoughts and impressions lingered after the credits rolled? Why?
2. From a cinematic perspective, what did you enjoy about the film? What worked well? What did not?
3. In the movie, the Iron Giant has the capacity for violence and destruction but ultimately, through his friendship with Hogarth, chooses the way of self-sacrificial love. In a world grasping after power enforced by fear and violence, how does the film grapple with the relationship between love and fear and control versus free will?
4. How do the final scenes of the movie parallel and echo the Passion week of Jesus? How is sacrificial love at the heart of the Gospel and the very essence of God revealed in Christ? What does sacrificial love tangibly look like in your life and community?

How to Access This Film

The Iron Giant (1999) is available through the following legal streaming and rental options in Canada: Preferred Streaming Option, Crave, Subscription: \$11.99/month (no free trial). For Amazon Prime members: Available via Starz add-on (7-day free trial), Rent / Buy, Apple TV, Amazon Prime Video, Rent: \$4.99, Buy: \$12.99. Availability and pricing may vary by region and over time. For additional options or to check availability in other countries, www.justwatch.com/ca is a helpful tool for locating where films can be streamed, rented, or purchased legally.

About Movies for Lent

Movies for Lent is a Lenten film series curated by The Rev. Jason Tripp, President of Thorneloe University, in partnership with the Diocese of Algoma. Each film is paired with a central theological theme and Scripture from the lectionary, inviting viewers into reflection and conversation at the intersection of faith, culture, and lived experience.

Film Credit: *The Iron Giant* (1999), Directed by Brad Bird, Written by Tim McCanlies (based on the novel by Ted Hughes), © 1999 Warner Bros. Animation, Used for educational and discussion purposes only.