



Jerusalem Cross

Where does the Jerusalem Cross fit into our Faith?

The cross is one of the most recognizable symbols in the world. Throughout history there have been many variations of the cross, each holding historical or cultural significance. The Greek cross, Latin cross, Celtic cross, and the Jerusalem cross are just a few examples of the different types of crosses created throughout the history of our faith. Some crosses, such as the Latin cross, are simple in design, while others, including the Celtic and Jerusalem crosses are more elaborate.

Historical Origin of the Jerusalem Cross

The Jerusalem cross consists of a large center cross with four smaller Greek crosses (a cross with four equal arms, similar to a plus sign) in each quadrant. Also known as the Crusader cross, the Jerusalem cross dates back to the 11th and 12th century when the Crusaders captured Jerusalem in 1099, establishing Christianity in the area. (At that time, Muslim forces controlled

the area). One of the leaders of the Crusades, Godfrey de Bouillon, was the first to use the Jerusalem Cross as a distinct symbol of the new Crusader state, known as the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. De Bouillon believed that the cross symbolized Jesus Christ and the city of Jerusalem which is the root of Christianity.

Even after the overthrow of the Crusader state in 1291, the cross remained a symbol of Jerusalem for Christians and became the emblem of the esteemed Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. Today, the Jerusalem cross remains the emblem of the Order, and is still the symbol of all those who work to preserve Christianity in Jerusalem.

What Does the Jerusalem Cross Symbolize?

The Jerusalem cross is believed to represent several things. Historians note that the four crosses surrounding the large center cross represent the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The four crosses also are believed to represent the four corners of the earth, in which Jesus desired His word to be proclaimed by His disciples. The large cross symbolizes Christ. Other historians believe that the five crosses together symbolize [the five wounds Jesus suffered on the cross](#). The four small crosses represent the four wounds of Jesus' hands and feet, while the large cross signifies Jesus' pierced heart.

SUNDAY REFLECTION

Today's readings present ample material for reflection, especially when taken together with a central through of the opening prayer of the Mass, where we ask God to keep before us the wisdom and love He has revealed in His Son (or in the alternative form: 'Father, faith in your word is the way to wisdom, and to ponder your divine plan is to grow in the truth').

The gospel has a message for society in general, for its rulers, as well as for every individual. A saying attributed to Bismark, the Iron Chancellor, is 'One cannot rule a country from the Sermon on the Mount'. A remark attributed to Winston Churchill after the Second World War is quite different. To the question, 'Mr. Churchill, if you had to rebuild the world, where would you begin?' the reply came: 'With the Sermon on the Mount, of course'. Collective world thinking, international law and the approach to political and other tension resolution have learned a lot from the Sermon on the Mount, even when the divine origin of the teaching is not adverted to. The disastrous effects of neglecting the central teaching of today's Gospel can be seen in some of the current international and societal conflicts.

Christ's message was really revolutionary. While the Gospels and New testament writings can speak of Christ fulfilling the Scriptures, this can scarcely be said to hold for the central tenet of His message, that of forgiveness and pardon. Here we must more likely apply His own words: 'You have heard that it was said [to our ancestors]: "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". But I say to you: "Do not resist an evildoer"..." (Mr. 5:38-39). There is, of course, much about the compassion of God in the Old Testament, but quite a lot too about violence and the destruction of enemies. Christ has put compassion and forgiveness at the very center of His message and lived this His teaching to the very end: 'Father forgive them...'

Reflection on today's Gospel passage should, of course, remind us that the Gospels and the other New Testament writings have various presentations of Christ's message, a variety to be kept before our minds where applying Christ's word to our lives. Christ also told His followers to be as wise as serpents while being as gentle as doves. We live in a world in which there are

people who take advantage of anything and everything for their own good. This could include Christ's teaching in His famed Sermon.

Another point that can arise from reflection on today's readings is that, while we are asked not to judge, not to be judgmental, Christianity is not a value free religion. In fact Christ, the light of the world, brings judgment. This point is stressed in St. John's Gospel: 'The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son' (Jn. 5:22). The Epistle of St. James, too, warns Christians on the matter of rash judgments, but also tells them to so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty (Jas. 2:12). Central to Christ's proclamation of the kingdom was the invitation to repent and believe in the gospel, that is to turn away from sin to what the gospel of the kingdom stood for. St. Paul, the other apostles and the Church have continued the same proclamation. The sins to be turned away from are more than ones listed in the Pauline and other New Testament letters. In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed (Rom. 1:17), that is human sinfulness and God's remedy for this. St. Paul can boldly proclaim that (in the gospel) the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who suppress the truth (Rom. 1:18). Christ is the light of the world and so also (through His grace) is the Church by the Christian lives of her members.

We may reflect on such truths in our own day when in the discussion of issues on moral teaching, especially sexual morality, in our papers – in feature articles and letters to the editor – we read comments to the effect that we should not judge, we should show Christian love.. an element of the discourse, in fact, is that Christ did not speak of or condemn certain ways of behavior now being discussed. In this matter, the difference between the situation in Palestine and the non-Jewish and Greek worlds has to be born in mind. Unlike the Greek world, there was nothing in Palestinian Jewish behavior that would call for such comment from Christ. In sum, then, as reflection on today's readings we have Christ's new teaching, valid for all ages, in the Sermon in the Plain (or on the Mount),,,,, a teaching to inspire all ages, but at the same time to be read and applied in conjunction with other tenets of the gospel message as proclaimed by Christ and by the Church in fidelity to Him.

St. Paul in today's reading from 1 Corinthians speaks of the man of earth and the man of heaven. It is a wonderful contrast and most of us can identify both figures battling for supremacy within our own personalities and lives.

The man of earth is born of the earth, wants to belong to the earth, sees creation only and not the Creator, and sees death on earth as the end of life. In this framework life is focused on this life only, and so its values, instincts, pleasures – the quest for power, pleasure, success – are paramount. There is no room for failure, no denial of self, no saying 'no' to instinct and the paths along which it leads one.

The man of heaven, Christ, does not originate from 'the dust of the earth' – He comes from God and shares the eternal life of God. God's Son, He is not earth bound, He sees the Creator and the creation, His life was not ended after His earthly sojourn, but manifested itself in His glorified risen body. His life was focused on eternal life in God, and all His values reflect this eternal dimension. They are not 'earth bound' values, but are 'paradoxical', even contradictory, when seen only in the context of this life – offering life in death, success in failure, love in hate, forgiveness in wrongdoing, dying to self, losing life to find it, the first

coming last and the last first, and proclaiming that the most important person in the Kingdom is the child.

We are born of the earth like Adam, but through faith and Baptism we have become adopted children of God, sharing in the risen, eternal life of Christ. We share in the inheritance of the one who is not earth bound, but comes from and returns to the Father, bringing us with Him. This promise of eternal life changes our perspective on life in this world. It emphasizes the values which Jesus showed in His life, and which we imitate as we begin eternal life in the present, hopeful of its fullest expression when the earthly dwelling has been replaced by the mansion in the Father's house.

The Old Testament reading today shows how David was influenced by heavenly considerations of non-violence and respect for God's anointed – when the 'natural' response would appear to have dictated the destruction of his mortal enemy and the removal of such a threat to his own life. The Gospel reading emphasizes forgiveness, toleration, turning the other cheek – again when the 'natural' response seems to demand vengeance and self protection, the 'heavenly perspective of our Christian lives points to forgiveness and reconciliation – the outstanding marks of the life of the 'heavenly' man Jesus.

We are called to put on the mind of Christ. This means we must espouse values that the world regards as foolish, unhelpful and a waste of time and talent. We can take courage from St. Paul's statement that we must be fools for Christ's sake, and that the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

STEWARDSHIP: Today's Gospel has encouraging words for good stewards – "Give and it shall be given to you. For the measure you measure with will be measured back to you." what encouragement to give generously of the resources entrusted to our care!

READINGS FOR THE EIGHTH SUNDAY

27 FEB '22

Sir. 27:4-7: The wise person does not judge by the outside but tests the true quality of people by judging their words over time and noting what is good and abiding and what is not. This wise person is a model for the well-trained disciple.

1 Cor. 15:54-58: We are the people who believe in a new life that cannot be destroyed by death. This is why we are a people of hope and a people who challenge the ways of death and despair when we meet them.

Lk. 6:39-45: We are called to become fully trained disciples: then if we have a good heart with a store of goodness, we will produce goodness; but if not we may be hypocrites who lead others astray and produce wickedness.

CHAIR OF ST. PETER THE APOSTLE

22 FEBRUARY

A feast for a chair? Why"

To begin, the feast really is not about the chair.

The "chair" symbolizes the authority of St Peter and his successors who have served the Church of Jesus Christ as the Bishop of Rome (the Pope). As a matter of fact, in Rome's St. Peter's Basilica, there is a chair, enshrined in the sumptuous Altar of the Chair of St. Peter by the great architect Bernini, but it is a symbol representing the 2,000-year-old papacy and unity the Pope

continues to bring to Catholics around the world. Without such unity the Church would splinter into numerous sects and divisions.

Each year on Feb. 22, the Church celebrates the continuing role of the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, beginning with St Peter. The use of the term chair in the feast day comes from the Latin term *cathedra*, meaning the seat of government. But how did such a feast day ever get started? We need to go back to the time of Jesus for the answer.

According to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus asks the Twelve Apostles, "Who do you say that I am?" (16:15). The only response Jesus acknowledged was that of Peter, who said that Jesus was the Son of the living God. Jesus in turn said to Peter, "Blessed art you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father" (v. 17). Peter's answer is heavenly inspired, and from that point Peter is singled out among the apostles to be the rock of Christ's Church on earth. According to Jesus, the Church will be so rock solid that "the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it" (Later, following the Resurrection, Jesus confirms Peter's primacy over the other apostles as well as authority over His Church. He gives Peter the keys to the kingdom, telling him: to "Feed my lambs.... Feed my sheep" (see Jn 21:15-17). This authority, this responsibility given to Peter, is meant to be passed on to each of his successors. Jesus did not intend for the Church to end with Peter. v. 18).

St. Peter quietly begins to take on the role assigned by Christ beginning in the Upper Room. Pope Benedict XVI writes in his book "Holiness is Always in Season" (Ignatius Press, 2011): "So what was the 'Chair' of St Peter? Chosen by Christ as the 'rock' on which to build the Church (cf. Mt 16:18), he began his ministry in Jerusalem, after the Ascension of the Lord and Pentecost. The Church's first 'seat' was the Upper Room, and it is likely that a special place was reserved for Simon Peter in that room where Mary, Mother of Jesus, also prayed with the disciples" (p. 65).

Even before Pentecost, Peter orchestrated the selection of Matthias to replace Judas, which was the first apostolic succession (see Acts 1:15-26). Peter preached on that day of Pentecost and was so inspirational that 3,000 people were baptized after listening to him (Acts 2:41). He was the first apostle to be given the grace to perform a miracle; curing the lame man at "the Beautiful gate" (Acts 3:1-10). King Herod Agrippa had Peter arrested and shackled in prison between two guards, but an "angel of the Lord" saved him (Acts 12:1-10). Peter's decisive speech at the Council of Jerusalem in A.D. 50 resolved the debate there (Acts 15:6-12). That he was singled out for a special role among all the apostles is undisputable.

Around A.D. 34, Peter went to Antioch and established there a seat, or chair, of government. Antioch was a major metropolitan city of the ancient world with a diverse population and was the place where Christ's followers were first called Christians. Peter remained there for seven years, and the Church would acknowledge his work in Antioch by establishing the feast of St. Peter's Chair in Antioch, celebrated on Feb. 22 every year. That feast remained on the Catholic liturgical calendar until the 20th century.

Next, Peter went to Rome, the center of the civilized world. Peter's efforts there would identify him as the first Bishop of Rome. Gifted by God and respected by man, he would continue his role as leader of all the Church, and as a result was the first pope. In A.D. 68, he was crucified by Emperor Nero.

His feast day, originally called the feast of the Chair of St. Peter in Rome, began in the fourth century. It was held on Jan. 18, as that was believed to be the day when Peter gave his first

homily in Rome. At some point before the 16th-century Protestant revolt, the feast was combined with the feast of St. Peter's Chair in Antioch. When Martin Luther revolted from the Church, Protestant heretics made the absurd claim that Peter was never in Rome and thus he could not have been the Bishop of Rome.

Consequently, in their opinion, there could be no pope as claimed by Catholics.

In order to reject this false Protestant challenge, Pope Paul IV (r. 1555-1559) reinstated the feast of the Chair of Peter in Rome in 1558. As a result, for 400 years the Church celebrated two feast days regarding the Chair of Peter. One feast reflected on Peter's role in Antioch, the other on his role in Rome. In 1962, Pope John XXIII combined the two feasts into one, which is the feast of the Chair of St. Peter, held Feb. 22 each year.

On this feast day, the universal Church acknowledges that St. Peter was the first pope and that his mission continues through the Holy Father today. Simply stated, that mission is to care for the people of God; to carry on the customs, rituals, teachings and truths of Jesus; and to uphold the unity of His Church. Moreover, the Church proclaims that the authority given to St. Peter by Our Lord has been handed down to Peter's successors for the past 2,000 years.

This day is not just about apostolic succession in respect to the pope and the bishops. Among the laity, it symbolizes an unspoken confidence that the Church of Jesus does not change from age to age; that the truths of the Gospel still form the basis of our faith; that these eternal truths are reflected in every Catholic parish and in every Mass. It is a confidence that the leader of our Church adheres to and will never deny the precepts and principles of the Church of Jesus. We firmly believe that we are part of the mystical body of Christ, a holy people, a holy priesthood.

In the late fourth century, St. Jerome wrote to Pope Damasus I: "I follow no leader but Christ and join in communion with none but Your Blessedness, that is, with the chair of Peter. I know that this is the rock on which the Church has been built. Whoever eats the Lamb outside this house is profane. Anyone who is not in the Ark of Noah will perish when the flood prevails."

LENT Begins one week from this Wednesday

Three Categories for a Personal Program

There are three principal works for Lent, as taught to us by Christ: prayer, fasting and mortification, and almsgiving. More categories from Catholic tradition can be added, such as Good Works, Education, and Self-Denial. All are linked to each other. It is through prayer that we know Christ, understand His Will for us. Through our prayers we open ourselves to charity, generosity towards others and self-denial to ourselves.

1. Prayer

"Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God" (St. John Damascene). We communicate with God and work on our relationship with God. There are many forms of prayer that we can and should practice, both interior and exterior prayers.

- Adding extra **daily Masses** throughout Lent would be ideal. If this is not possible, the readings from the Mass should be read and meditated upon daily. This could be done as a family,



perhaps at the dinner meal. The Mass is the prayer of the Church, and the highest form of prayer. It also unites us with the whole Church in public prayer.

- A strong emphasis should be made in **frequent reception of the sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance**. We should learn how to daily **examine our consciences**.
- Another prayer of the Church is the Divine Office, or Liturgy of the Hours. Praying the Divine Office unites our prayers with the Liturgy of the universal Church.
- The Stations of the Cross are special during Lent, because they meditate on the Passion of Christ. Usually the Stations are offered at the parish church on Fridays in Lent. They can also be prayed together as a family.

Other Prayer Suggestions:

- The daily rosary, especially prayed together as a family
- Visits to the Blessed Sacrament
- Personal meditation, especially with Scripture
- Spontaneous short prayers or ejaculations, such as "Jesus, I trust in You."
- Praying the Angelus at the 12:00 and 6:00 hours
- Morning and Evening Prayer
- Prayers Before and After Meals
- Spiritual Communions
- Praying the Seven Penitential Psalms (especially appropriate during Lent)

Included in our Prayers category we add our **Education and Reading**. During Lent (and throughout the year) we need spiritual enlightenment. We can find this through spiritual reading, both individually and as a family. This is a prerequisite to a continued growth in the spiritual life. Maria Von Trapp suggests three categories in our Lenten reading program:

1. **Something for the mind.** We should do some research, study the papal encyclicals, read the Catechism of the Catholic Church, delve into Church history, study Catholic philosophy.
2. **Something for the soul.** This should be deeper spiritual reading that gives a program, guidance, and spiritual direction, including writings of the saints like St. Teresa of Avila, St. Thérèse of Lisieux or St. Francis de Sales.
3. **Something for the heart.** We need inspiration. The best way is to read biographies of Christ, Mary, saints or people who put their spiritual life into action. Bishop Fulton Sheen's *Life of Christ* is excellent Lenten reading.

Scripture is an excellent source for all these categories. The Church strongly encourages study and meditative reading of the Bible.

THE MASS Continued

The Liturgy of the Eucharist (An Overview)

In the Creed, we profess our unity of belief in one God, one Savior, one Church and one faith. That unity is fulfilled in the flesh and spirit as we receive Holy Communion.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist is the heart and summit of the Mass wherein the one and eternal holy sacrifice of Jesus Christ in the Paschal Mystery is made present to us. Following the ancient practice as described sometime around 155 AD by St. Justin Martyr in his *First Apology* (chapters 65-67), this entrance into the sacred mysteries begins with the offertory,

when we bring our gifts to the altar, including the bread and wine to be consecrated, and donations people offer to support the Church and its outreach.

Soon afterward comes the Eucharistic Prayer, which includes a prayer for the sending of the Holy Spirit. We receive and become Christ's Body and Blood by the power of the Spirit. The narrative account of the Last Supper which comes next links the events of our redemption – Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection – to the institution of the Eucharist. When Jesus said, "This is my body . . . do this in remembrance of me," He established the ceremonial setting for the remembrance of our salvation.

The Eucharist has the power to make present the event it memorializes not just as a memory, but as a reality. When the priest acting "*in persona Christi*" takes the host and consecrates it as Jesus did at the Last Supper, the substance of what outwardly appears to be bread truly becomes the Body of Christ. When the priest consecrates the chalice of wine, it now contains the Blood of Christ. As we proclaim "the mystery of faith" and the Great Amen, we affirm the historical truth of Jesus's Cross, death and rising, and also the present reality of the bread of life and cup of salvation.

Then we recite the prayer Jesus taught his disciples, which leads us to open our minds and hearts to God our Father, and we offer a sign of peace to others, recognizing them as our brothers and sisters in God's family. Next, we offer another ancient prayer: the *Agnus Dei*, when we repeat the words of John the Baptist upon seeing Christ – "Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us . . ."

ST. LUKE Continued

At the side of Mary

The relationship with Mary is the other striking characteristic of St Luke's Gospel. Thanks to him, and — we might piously believe — thanks to the account Mary gave to him, we know about the words of the Angel at the Annunciation; the visit of Mary to Elizabeth and the Magnificat; the details of the Presentation in the Temple; and the beautiful portrait of the anguish of Mary and Joseph when they could not find the 12-year-old Jesus. It is very probably to this narrative and descriptive sensitivity that we owe the tradition of St Luke as a painter — a tradition that is represented in traditional iconography. Details of St Luke's death are uncertain. Some sources speak of his martyrdom, while others say he lived to old age. The oldest traditions say he died in Boeotia at age 84, where he had settled to write his Gospel. The relics of his body are to be found in the Abbey of Santa Giustina, in Padua; a rib from his body was sent to his original tomb in Thebes; and his skull is preserved in Prague, in the Cathedral of St Vitus.

SEVENTH WEEK ORDINARY TIME

19 - 27 FEBRUARY 2022

Saturday 19 Feb Weekday 6

8:30 a.m. Mass BVM Gate of Heaven #46, Preface for the day, Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention: Lea Buchanan RIP)

1:30 – 4:30 p.m. Confessions

5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass Seventh Sunday Ordinary Time

Proper Collect, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday I, Eucharistic Prayer I

(Intention: Nancy Beasley RIP)

Sunday 20 Feb Seventh Sunday Ordinary Time

7:00 a.m. Mass Proper Collect, Gloria, Creed, Preface II, Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention Fusty Morris)

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper Collect, Gloria, Creed, Preface I, Eucharistic Prayer I

(Intention: Anthony Nicolosi RIP)

11:30 a.m. Mass Proper Collect, Gloria, Creed, Preface I, Eucharistic Prayer I

(Intention: Parish of St. Stephen, Martyr)

2:00 p.m. Mass Brig

Monday 21 Feb Presidents' Day Office Closed

Tuesday 22 Feb F Chair of St. Peter the Apostle

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper for Feast, Gloria, Preface of Apostles #1, Eucharistic Prayer II

11:00 a.m. Funeral Mass Fred Younkin

3:00 p.m. Meeting

Wednesday 23 Feb M St. Polycarp Bishop, Martyr

6:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Feast / Common of One Martyr, Preface Holy Martyrs I,
Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention: Vicki Myers)

7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Confessions

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper of Feast / Common of One Martyr, Preface Holy Martyrs I,
Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention: Kathleen Meyer)

Thursday 24 Feb Weekday 7

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper Preservation of Peace & Justice #36, Preface
Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention: Guy Distefano RIP)

5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Confessions

6:30 p.m. Mass Proper Preservation of Peace & Justice #36, Preface ,
Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention: Ramon & Mercedes Cruz RIP)

Friday 25 Feb Weekday 7

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper For the Family #12, Common Preface Weekdays III,
Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention: Katherine Gray)

12 Noon Mass Portsmouth Naval Hospital

5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Confessions & Adoration

Saturday 26 Feb Weekday 7

8:30 a.m. Mass BVM Pillar of Faith #35

Proper & Preface of the Day, Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention: Edward Godbout RIP)

1:30 – 4:30 p.m. Confessions

5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass 8th Sunday Ordinary Time

(Intention: Nancy Beesley RIP)

Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface VIII, Eucharistic Prayer I

Sunday 27 Feb Eighth Sunday Ordinary Time

7:00 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface VIII, Eucharistic Prayer I

(Intention: Elizabeth Cutts)

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface VIII, Eucharistic Prayer I

(Intention: Nancy Stetzer RIP)

11:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface VIII, Eucharistic Prayer I

(Intention: Parish of St. Stephen, Martyr)

2:00 p.m. Mass Brig

