

**PASTOR'S MEANDERINGS**  
**TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME (B)**

**11 – 12 SEPTEMBER 2021**



**SUNDAY REFLECTION**

Few situations in life are more guaranteed to focus people's attention on God and religion than the experience of suffering or loss. It's a place where people need explanations. The question 'Why does a loving God allow this to happen?' is starkly unavoidable. It may arise concerning personal tragedy, such as the loss of a spouse. Or it may relate to more public problems in the world – poverty, corruption, disease, ignorance, fanaticism, child abuse, child labor, ecological crisis, global warming, HIV/AIDS, communal hatred, trafficking are all examples. Our faith does not run away from suffering or try to deny it. In this way, the cross is central in the life of discipleship. Mark's version of the cross and self-denial is in sharp contrast to modern and post-modern descriptions of success in life.

Mark's first half, which has its own share of success and glory, is clearly followed by a section in which Peter and the other disciples demonstrate clearly the difficulties of grasping Jesus' teaching on self-denial and self-sacrifice, the true meaning of discipleship. Perhaps others grasped the negative aspects of Jesus' approach more rapidly. Early in Mark there are such negative evaluations concerning Jesus as 'He is beside Himself', 'he is possessed by Beelzebub'. Jesus does not hesitate to respond to Peter's words with the same command to silence which he gave to the demon's identification of Him as God's Son (3:11-12)

Jesus was put to death because he embodied a social and political approach which threatened all worldly regimes and systems based on the fear of death. Scholars have listed such other accusations against Jesus in the Gospels as law-breaker, demon-possessed, glutton and a drunkard, blasphemer, false prophet, King of the Jews, illegitimate son. Mark's gospel is a stern challenge to any culture where self-fulfillment and the avoidance of personal suffering are seen as the highest norms and achievements.

Mark's Gospel has a blunt message for us today: 'Precisely because you are the new movement of Jesus you are called to nothing less than to suffer for His mission.' Mark insists that his message will never be easy, as he writes to remind us of the cross and true meaning of Jesus' discipleship.

The Gospel also helps to remove barrenness and apparent futility – ‘And after three days rise again’, it says. Isaiah also offers a message of hope: ‘My vindicator is here at hand.’ Our faith acknowledges the reality of darkness while resolutely looking towards the light. ‘Darkness into light’ is a phrase used eloquently and effectively by some suicide-awareness and prevention body. It can also be a statement of the faith.

We are not talking of a passive acceptance of suffering, or a Pollyanna expectation of immediate relief. Our faith calls us to remove pain and, if this is not immediately possible, to give inspiration.

**STEWARDSHIP:** In the second reading today, St. James has harsh words for those who do not put their faith into action. May we be such good stewards of God’s gifts to us that we can never be accused of having “faith that does nothing in practice.”

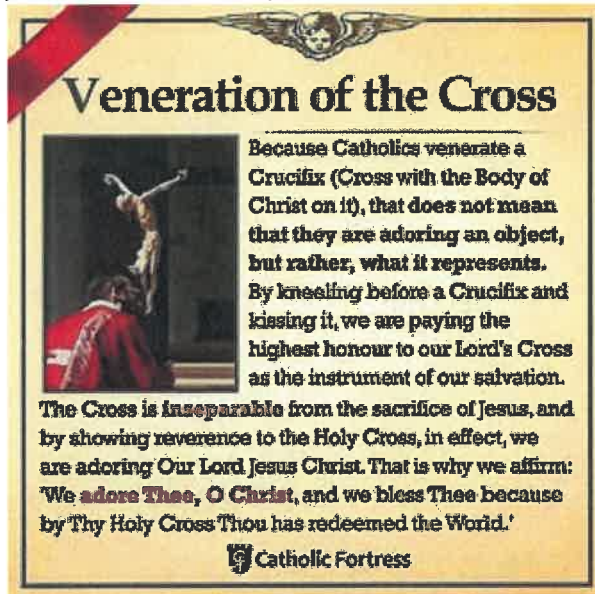
## READINGS TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY

19 SEP ‘21

**Is. 50:5-9:** The anonymous servant of the Lord faces terrible persecution on account of his preaching. He does not resist.

**Jas. 2:14-18:** James maintains that the real sign of faith is putting that faith into practice.


**Mk. 8:27-35:** Peter says, “You are the Christ,” but he fails to see that the Christ must suffer.



**Veneration of the Cross**

Because Catholics venerate a Crucifix (Cross with the Body of Christ on it), that does not mean that they are adoring an object, but rather, what it represents. By kneeling before a Crucifix and kissing it, we are paying the highest honour to our Lord's Cross as the instrument of our salvation.

The Cross is inseparable from the sacrifice of Jesus, and by showing reverence to the Holy Cross, in effect, we are adoring Our Lord Jesus Christ. That is why we affirm: 'We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee because by Thy Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.'

 Catholic Fortress

## EXALTATION of THE HOLY CROSS

This coming Wednesday, September 14, we celebrate the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Why?

The Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ is the central event of Christianity. Through our Lord's suffering and death on the holy Cross, he brought the old law to fulfillment and made the ultimate atonement for our sins. Through His glorious Resurrection, He gave us the hope of eternal life. The Cross is the instrument through which our salvation was won. For this reason, the Cross is the symbol of Christianity. Every altar has a crucifix on or behind it. One of the most basic signs of reverence is making the Sign of the Cross on ourselves. Whenever a priest gives a blessing, he does so with the Sign of the Cross. St. Paul wrote in Galatians 6:14, “But

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.”

### **History of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

After the death and resurrection of Christ, both the Jewish and Roman authorities in Jerusalem made efforts to obscure the Holy Sepulcher, Christ's tomb in the garden near the site of His crucifixion. The earth had been mounded up over the site, and pagan temples had been built on top of it. The Cross on which Christ had died had been hidden (tradition said) by the Jewish authorities somewhere in the vicinity.

### **Saint Helena and the Finding of the True Cross**

According to tradition, first mentioned by Saint Cyril of Jerusalem in 348, Saint Helena, nearing the end of her life, decided under divine inspiration to travel to Jerusalem in 326 to excavate the Holy Sepulcher and attempt to locate the True Cross. A Jew by the name of Judas, aware of the tradition concerning the hiding of the Cross, led those excavating the Holy Sepulcher to the spot in which it was hidden.

Three crosses were found on the spot. According to one tradition, the inscription *Jesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum* ("Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews") remained attached to the True Cross. According to a more common tradition, however, the inscription was missing, and Saint Helena and Saint Macarius, the bishop of Jerusalem, assuming that one was the True Cross and the other two belonged to the thieves crucified alongside Christ, devised an experiment to determine which was the True Cross.

In one version of the latter tradition, the three crosses were taken to a woman who was near death; when she touched the True Cross, she was healed. In another, the body of a dead man was brought to the place where the three crosses were found, and laid upon each cross. The True Cross restored the dead man to life.

### **The Dedication of the Churches on Mount Calvary and the Holy Sepulcher**

In celebration of the discovery of the Holy Cross, Constantine ordered the construction of churches at the site of the Holy Sepulcher and on Mount Calvary. Those churches were dedicated on September 13 and 14, 335, and shortly thereafter the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross began to be celebrated on the latter date. The feast slowly spread from Jerusalem to other churches, until, by the year 720, the celebration was universal.

### **The Restoration of the True Cross to Jerusalem**

In the early seventh century, the Persians conquered Jerusalem, and the Persian king Khosrau II captured the True Cross and took it back to Persia. After Khosrau's defeat by Emperor Heraclius II, Khosrau's own son had him assassinated in 628 and returned the True Cross to Heraclius. In 629, Heraclius, having initially taken the True Cross to Constantinople, decided to restore it to Jerusalem. Tradition says that he carried the Cross on his own back, but when he attempted to enter the church on Mount Calvary, a strange force stopped him. Patriarch Zacharias of Jerusalem, seeing the emperor struggling, advised him to take off his royal robes and crown and to dress in a penitential robe instead. As soon as Heraclius took Zacharias' advice, he was able to carry the True Cross into the church.

For some centuries, a second feast, the Invention of the Cross, was celebrated on May 3 in the Roman and Gallican churches, following a tradition that marked that date as the day on which Saint Helena discovered the True Cross. In Jerusalem, however, the finding of the Cross was celebrated from the beginning on September 14.

### **Why Do We Celebrate the Feast of the Holy Cross?**

It's easy to understand that the Cross is special because Christ used it as the instrument of our salvation. But after His Resurrection, why would Christians continue to look to the Cross? Christ Himself offered us the answer: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" ([Luke 9:23](#)). The point of taking up our own cross is not simply self-sacrifice; in doing so, we unite ourselves to the sacrifice of Christ on His Cross. When we participate in the [Mass](#), the Cross is there, too. The "unbloody sacrifice" offered on the altar is the re-presentation of Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross. When we receive the Sacrament of [Holy Communion](#), we do not simply unite ourselves to Christ; we nail ourselves to the Cross, dying with Christ so that we might rise with Him.

"For the Jews require signs, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness . . ." ([1 Corinthians 1:22-23](#)). Today, more than ever, non-Christians see the Cross as foolishness. What kind of Savior triumphs through death?

For Christians, however, the Cross is the crossroads of history and the Tree of Life. Christianity without the Cross is meaningless: Only by uniting ourselves to Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross can we enter into eternal life.

### **THE CROSS**

A cross is an extremely basic symbol—just two lines at a right angle—and so it has been used in some form since the beginning of recorded human history. In addition, since the beginning of history, the cross has always had some sort of religious significance, even for primitive pagan religions. One of the earliest forms of the cross is the swastika, a cross with each arm bent at a right angle. The swastika is used as a sacred symbol in India and by some Native American tribes as well as in some other places in the Orient, primarily by Hindus and Buddhists. It represents fire and the sun. In ancient Egypt, there was a form of the cross called the *ankh* or *crux ansata* ("cross with a handle"), which resembled a cross with the top arm replaced by a loop: ♁. This form of the cross was used as a hieroglyphic symbol for life and strength. It is still used by some Coptic Christians in Egypt. Meanwhile, in ancient Greece, a cross resembling the familiar Christian cross was used as a sacred symbol in burial rituals. Perhaps these ancient, pre-Christian uses of the cross were a foreshadowing by divine providence of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Finally, the cross was used by the ancient Romans as a means of execution. Crucifixion was the cruelest punishment imaginable, and it was reserved for the worst of the worst. It was originally a punishment for slaves. The ancient Roman orator Cicero called it "*servitutis extremum summumque supplicium*," meaning, "the final and most terrible punishment of slaves." If a slave murdered his master, then all of that master's slaves would be crucified. In at least one case, four hundred slaves were crucified at once, including women and children. Later, crucifixion was also administered to the lowest classes of free people who were

accused of serious crimes. It was never inflicted on a Roman citizen. Part of the point of crucifixion was to put the victim on display and deter others from committing similar crimes. Cicero called it "a most cruel and disgusting punishment" and said, "The very mention of the cross should be far removed not only from a Roman citizen's body, but from his mind, his eyes, his ears."

Crucifixion continued in the Roman Empire until it was abolished in AD 337 by Emperor Constantine the Great, who also legalized Christianity in the Roman Empire. However, in Islam, crucifixion is prescribed as a punishment in the Quran (5:33), so it remains a legal form of execution in some Islamic states, including Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Sudan.

## PRAYERS

O Jesus Master, most merciful Benefactor, may we be sanctified in body and soul; may we be enlightened and saved.

May we become Your dwelling place through our communion in the sacred mysteries, You dwelling in us with the Father and the Spirit.

May Your precious body and blood, O our Savior, be as fire and light to us, cleansing our hearts, shedding light on our minds, so that we may worship Your divinity.

(Byzantine Liturgy)

### In Honor of the Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary

*O most holy and afflicted Virgin! Queen of Martyrs! thou who didst stand motionless beneath the Cross, witnessing the agony of thy expiring Son--through the unceasing sufferings of thy life of sorrow, and the bliss which now more than amply repays thee for thy past trials, look down with a mother's tenderness and pity on me, who kneel before thee to venerate thy dolours, and place my requests, with filial confidence, in the sanctuary of thy wounded heart; present them, I beseech thee, on my behalf, to Jesus Christ, through the merits of His own most sacred death and passion, together with thy sufferings at the foot of the cross, and through the united efficacy of both obtain the grant of my present petition. To whom shall I resort in my wants and miseries if not to thee, O Mother of Mercy, who, having so deeply drunk of the chalice of thy Son, canst compassionate the woes of those who still sigh in the land of exile? Offer for me to my Savior one drop of the Blood which flowed from His sacred veins, one of the tears which trickled from His divine eyes, one of the sighs which rent His adorable Heart. O refuge of the universe and hope of the whole world, do not reject my humble prayer, but graciously obtain the grant of my petition.*

In this lengthy but beautiful prayer in honor of the sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we present our own sorrows and ask Mary to intercede for us with her Son, so that our request may be granted.

The word *dolours* come from the Latin, and simply means "sorrows"; and *filial* (also from the Latin) means "of a son or daughter." So we, as Christians, approach Our Lady of Sorrows with the confidence that we would approach our own mother.

## **Prayer for all who carry their cross**

© my God, I thank you for this cross you have allowed me to carry. Please give me the strength and faith to persevere so that I may bring glory to your name while withstanding the burden of its weight. Thank you for offering me a share in your suffering. I know that you have always been, are now, and ever will be, at my side every step of the way. Thank you also for every "Simon" that you have sent to help me bear this cross. I have prayed so often that this thorn in my flesh would be removed, but I trust that your grace is sufficient. Change my heart's troubled cry of - "How long, O Lord?", into words of trust: "However long, O Lord". May I seek only to do your will and to unite my sufferings with your passion. Help me to not get lost in my own self concerns, but may I find in these trials a way to greater virtue, a call to prayer and a path to trust in you alone. Permit me not to waste my pain, but to make of these struggles a sacrificial offering for others. Lord, when I am weary and I fall, exhausted under the weight of this cross, please give me the courage to press on as you did. Lord Jesus, I embrace with love my cross, as a share in your own. By your grace, may I carry it all the way to the vision of your glory. I abandon myself totally to your will. Christ Jesus, I trust in you. Amen.

©2020 www.CatholicPrayerCards.org 1-800-244-3711 email: orders@CatholicPrayerCards.org C-168100

## **SCHEDULE TWENTY-THIRD WEEK ORDINARY TIME**

**Saturday 11 Sep 23<sup>rd</sup> Week Ordinary Time 9/11**

**8:30 a.m. Mass For Those in Public Office #22**

**1:30-4:30 p.m. Confessions**

**5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time**

**Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday 4, Eucharistic Prayer III**

**(Intention: Misa Okamoto)**

**Sunday 12 Sep Twenty-fourth Sunday Ordinary Time**

**7:00 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday 4, Eucharistic Prayer II**

**(Intention: Tom Szarwark RIP)**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday 4, Eucharistic Prayer III**

**(Intention: Maggie Glackin RIP)**

**11:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface Sunday 4, Eucharistic Prayer III**

**(Intention: Parish of St. Stephen Martyr)**

**2:00 p.m. Mass Brig**

**Monday 13 Sep Day Off**

**6:00 p.m. Meeting**

**Tuesday 14 Sep F EXALTATION of THE HOLY CROSS**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Gloria, Proper Preface, Eucharistic Prayer III**

**(Intention: Robert C. Woods RIP)**

**10:30 a.m. Mass Georgian Manor**

**2:00-4:00 p.m. Doctor**

**6:30 p.m. Meeting**

**Wednesday 15 Sep M Our Lady of Sorrows**

**6:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Preface of BVM I, Eucharistic Prayer III**

**7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Confessions**

**8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Preface of BVM I, Eucharistic Prayer III**

(Intention: Regina Mueller RIP)

Thursday 16 Sep M Sts. Cornelius Pope, Cyprian Bishop Martyrs

8:30 a.m. Mass Proper, Preface Holy Martyrs, Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention: Meg Ceccolini)

5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Confessions

6:30 p.m. Mass Proper, Preface Holy Martyrs, Eucharistic Prayer III

(Intention Rosie Larosa RIP)

Friday 17 Sep St. Robert Bellarmine Bishop Doctor of the Church

8:30 a.m. Mass For the Ministry of the Church #8

Proper, Preface of the day, Eucharistic Prayer II

(Intention: Sanctity of All Priests)

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

Saturday 18 Sep

No Morning Mass

5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass for the 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time

Msgr. Elkton

(Intention: Linda Zegame RIP

Joseph Zegame )

Sunday 19 Sep Twenty-Fifth Sunday Ordinary Time

7:00 a.m. Mass Msgr. Elkton

Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface, Eucharistic Prayer

(Intention: Parish St. Stephen Martyr)

8:30 a.m. Mass Msgr. Elkton

Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface, Eucharistic Prayer

(Intention: Charles Ciamacco RIP)

11:30 a.m. Mass Msgr. Elkton

Proper, Gloria, Creed, Preface, Eucharistic Prayer

(Intention: Mary Rawson RIP)

2:00 p.m. Mass Brig



# HOLY COMMUNION



WHAT ATHEISTS SEE



WHAT PROTESTANTS SEE



WHAT CATHOLICS SEE



WHAT IT REALLY IS



# 20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY 9/11

In commemoration of this 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the events of 9/11 two flags have been suspended on either side of the Sanctuary. Referred to as Hero Flags or Flags of Honor they are inscribed with the names of those who lost their lives on that day. The flag on the left, the Blessed Virgin's side hold the names of First Responders. The flag on the right, St. Joseph's side bears the names of those who died as a result of the attack on the Twin Towers in New York, the Pentagon in D.C. of the crash of United Airlines' Flight 93 in Shanksville Pa.

## On The Twentieth Anniversary

We remember, God of history and remembrance, we remember. We remember when the towers fell and the lives were lost; we remember the dust and the smoke, the despair, and the grief. We remember that sense of vulnerability and shock. We remember the numbness that overwhelmed us as we watched our screens for hours and hours, waiting for an explanation and understanding that never came. We remember.

We remember, God of hope and presence, we remember. We remember the heroes, those who rushed to help, who guided the wounded down innumerable flights of stairs, who rose to overwhelm those who held death in their hands. We remember the hours and the days of binding wounds and healing hurts, giving comfort, drying tears. We remember words of support and compassion from nations far and wide. We remember.

We remember in part because we see the ripples of that tragic day continue to impact our world twenty years later. We grieve with allies today as our allies grieved with us twenty years ago. And together we wonder if there will ever be an end . . . to violence, to war, to hatred, to death. We remember and we grieve our world's inability to learn the things that lead to peace. We call to you now in our remembrance, God of justice and of peace. Give us a will to truly pray that your kin-dom may come on earth as it is in heaven. Amen and Amen.

On this day of solemn remembrance:

May we honor the lives that were lost in this tragic act.

May we give thanks for those who served and saved, rendered aid and assistance.

May we give comfort to those who live with loss.

May we seek justice and peace where it is within our ability,  
and rely on you when the ability escapes us.

On this day of solemn remembrance:

May we build what has been torn down.

May we mend what has been broken.

May live your love when hate seems to reign.

May we bear witness to the cause of peace.

By Derek Weber

### Pope Benedict XVI's Prayer

O God of love, compassion, and healing, look on us, people of many different faiths and traditions, who gather today at this site, the scene of incredible violence and pain.

---

We ask you in your goodness to give eternal light and peace to all who died here - the heroic first responders: our firefighters, police officers, emergency service workers, and Port Authority personnel, along with all the innocent men and women who were victims of this tragedy simply because their work or service brought them here on September 11, 2001.

We ask you, in your compassion to bring healing to those who, because of their presence here that day, suffer from injuries and illness.

Heal, too, the pain of still-grieving families and all who lost loved ones in this tragedy. Give them strength to continue their lives with courage and hope.

We are mindful as well of those who suffered death, injury, and loss on the same day at the Pentagon and in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Our hearts are one with theirs as our prayer embraces their pain and suffering.

God of peace, bring your peace to our violent world: peace in the hearts of all men and women and peace among the nations of the Earth.

Turn to your way of love those whose hearts and minds are consumed with hatred.

God of understanding, overwhelmed by the magnitude of this tragedy, we seek your light and guidance as we confront such terrible events.

Grant that those whose lives were spared may live so that the lives lost here may not have been lost in vain. Comfort and console us, strengthen us in hope, and give us the wisdom and courage to work tirelessly for a world where true peace and love reign among nations and in the hearts of all.

- *Pope Benedict XVI*

Found at: [Catholic World Report](#)

### We Place in Your Loving Arms

God of love we place in your loving arms the thousands of innocent lives that were lost on that unforgettable morning of September 11, 2001. We also remember the courage of the countless men and women who put their lives at risk in order to rescue, alleviate and bring solace to the afflicted. Help us to continue to work for a world free from every form of hatred, violence and ignorance. May terrorism -- in all its forms -- disappear from the face of the earth.

Amen.

*Fr. Alberto Cutie*