

From the PASTOR'S DESK



Death and Life

The Cross is the most widely recognized symbol of Christianity. On the 14th of September each year, we celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Previously, there were two feasts of the Holy Cross in the liturgical year: the Finding of the Cross on May 3rd and the Exaltation on September 14th. They commemorated respectively the discovery of the Cross in Jerusalem in the 4th century by St. Helena and the recovery of the Cross by Emperor Heraclius in 649AD, after it had been captured by the Persians. Now the liturgical calendar has combined them into one.

The Cross is central to Catholic faith. What does it mean for us? What moment in history does it bring before us? It was a moment (one of many) when the religious and secular powers – in this case Jewish and Roman – combined to condemn and execute an innocent man. As far as the powers were concerned, it was routine. Here was another religious and political fanatic who threatened the stability of society and must be dealt with. They had to do their job quickly because the Passover was imminent. They had no time to consider the case, even if they had wanted to.

The executioners could not possibly understand what they were doing. They did what they did from a mixture of motives which are typical of fallen human beings. In the minds of His judges and executioners, the crucifixion of Jesus was a moral muddle, with all the confusion, uncertainty, and twinges of conscience that we all experience.

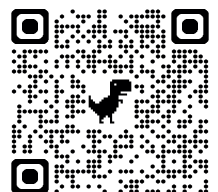
But what was the meaning of the Cross in Jesus' mind? It was the full and final expression of the love of God for His people and for His creation. He was born to be God with us, and He died as God with us. No matter how we treat Him, no matter what we do. The life and death of Jesus is one of total faithfulness. It is the sacrificial offering of a human life lived with perfect love and self-giving. The Cross is the conclusion of a life that is both fully human and totally divine.

In the crucifixion, we see the depths of sin and degradation and the heights of God's forgiveness, love, and power. Standing for both life and death, the crucifixion displays God's forgiving love, which can never be halted by our rebellion.

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaims!

Fr. Hernan Cely

Pastor



Find past articles here: <https://stvincentschurch.org/pastors-message>