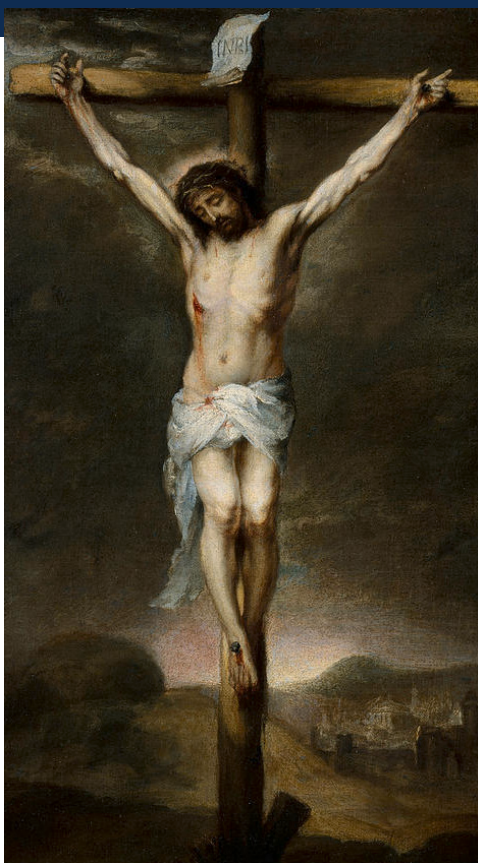




The Crucifixion, ca. 1675, by Bartolomé Estebán Murillo. On exhibit at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Prayer of St. Francis de Sales

The everlasting God has in his wisdom foreseen from eternity the cross that he now presents to you as a gift from his Inmost Heart.

This cross he now sends you he has considered with his all-knowing eyes, understood with his divine mind, tested with his wise justice, warmed with loving arms and weighed with his own hands to see that it be not one inch too large and not one ounce too heavy for you.

He has blessed it with his Holy Name, anointed it with his consolation, taken one last glance at you and your courage, and then sent it to you from heaven, a special greeting from God to you, an alms of the All-Merciful Love of God.

By his passion and death on the cross Christ has given a new meaning to suffering: it can henceforth configure us to him and unite us with his redemptive passion.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1505

Saints and the Cross

The cross is the school of love.

— St. Maximilian Kolbe

It is in loving the cross that we find true peace, not running from it.

— St. John Vianney

Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven.

— St. Rose of Lima

Let us bear our cross and leave it to God to determine the length and the weight.

— St. Rose Philippine Duchesne

There is no evil to be faced that Christ does not face with us. There is no enemy that Christ has not already conquered. There is no cross to bear that Christ has not already borne for us, and does not now bear with us. And on the far side of every cross we find the newness of life in the Holy Spirit, that new life which will reach its fulfillment in the resurrection. This is our faith. This is our witness before the world.

— St. John Paul II

How precious the gift of the cross, how splendid to contemplate! In the cross there is no mingling of good and evil, as in the tree of paradise: it is wholly beautiful to behold and good to taste. The fruit of this tree is not death but life, not darkness but light. This tree does not cast us out of paradise, but opens the way for our return.

— St. Theodore the Studite

If you seek patience, you will find no better example than the cross. Great patience occurs in two ways: either when one patiently suffers much, or when one suffers things which one is able to avoid and yet does not avoid. Christ endured much on the cross, and did so patiently, because when he suffered he did not threaten; he was led like a sheep to the slaughter and he did not open his mouth.

— St. Thomas Aquinas

The road is narrow. He who wishes to travel it more easily must cast off all things and use the cross as his cane. In other words, he must be truly resolved to suffer willingly for the love of God in all things.

— St. John of the Cross

Would that men might come at last to see that it is quite impossible to reach the thicket of the riches and wisdom of God except by first entering the thicket of much suffering, in such a way that the soul finds there its consolation and desire. The soul that longs for divine wisdom chooses first, and in truth, to enter the thicket of the cross.

— St. John of the Cross

If God gives you an abundant harvest of trials, it is a sign of great holiness which He desires you to attain. Do you want to become a great saint? Ask God to send you many sufferings. The flame of Divine Love never rises higher than when fed with the wood of the Cross, which the infinite charity of the Savior used to finish His sacrifice. All the pleasures of the world are nothing compared with the sweetness found in the gall and vinegar offered to Jesus Christ. That is, hard and painful things endured for Jesus Christ and with Jesus Christ.

— St. Ignatius of Loyola

Let us adore the Cross. It is the sign of the Christian, and the sign of Christian victories. Cross and Blood: what must that wood have looked like after the death of our Lord! The Cross was soaked in the Redeemer's Blood; and so when you see a Cross, think of the Blood of Christ, poured out for you, and don't deny him what he is asking you for. When we opened our first house, I had a cross put there without the Crucified Christ, as a shout, a cry, a loving act of atonement to our God, an invitation to each of us not to despise the sufferings we may meet in our lives.

— St. Josemaria Escrivá