

Crosses come in all shapes and sizes. And if you've ever been shopping for one online or in a religious goods store, you know that deciding which one is the "right" one is a difficult task.

What size? Wood, metal, or some other material? Traditional or modern? Simple or ornate? On a stand or for hanging on the wall? There are many choices when it comes to crosses.

Yet, for some Christians and many Catholics in particular, when we imagine a "cross," what we're really thinking of is a "crucifix".

The difference, of course, is that a crucifix has the crucified body of Jesus on it. Most Catholics have never purchased any type of cross other than a crucifix. An empty cross doesn't feel right.

However, for some, a crucifix is too painful to look at. Or maybe it's because we like imagining for ourselves what Jesus may have looked like? Maybe it's because, from a "style" or "artistic" point of view, we prefer simpler things, basic things, stark things.

But why do some of us insist on choosing a crucifix? Why do some of us want to see Jesus there?

We know that Jesus didn't stay on the cross. He didn't "want" to be on the cross. And most importantly, he "triumphed" over the cross. So why should we keep him there, keep him hanging there, suffering there, crying out in pain there, dying there?

Because that's where he is, Jesus and the cross go together, because that's where he is.

It means that we don't have to experience the crosses of life alone. We don't have to embrace the crosses of life alone. We don't have to endure the crosses of life alone. And we don't have to carry the crosses of life alone.

Rather, when those crosses come our way (and they WILL come), Jesus will be right there too, ready to share his victory with us, transforming us and the sometimes terrible situations we find ourselves in, through the power of his cross.

He destroyed not only HIS death but each of OUR individual deaths as well, all our sufferings and pain and disappointments and yes, even sin.

Soren Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher, penned these prophetic words in his book Fear and Trembling.

*We would rather be ruined than changed
We would rather die in our dread
Than climb the cross of the moment
And let our illusions die.*[\[1\]](#)

One sin that has greatly troubled our culture in this new century is how much people have stopped talking to each other, and as we know all too well, when that happens, really bad stuff starts.

Kimberly Strassel, writing in Friday's Wall Street Journal, opined, "When marriages stop talking, divorce happens. When civilizations stop talking, civil war ensues. When you stop having a human connection with someone you disagree with, it becomes easier to want to commit violence against them.

Which begs the question, do we live in a society where we would crucify Jesus again?

Just two years ago, in a report released by the U.S. Surgeon General, we learned "that we are living with technology that has profoundly changed how we interact with each other and how we talk to each other."

“Across all age groups, people are spending less time with each other in person than two decades ago, and this was most pronounced in young people aged 15-24, who had 70% less social interaction with their friends.”

Today’s feast reminds us that we never have to face our crosses alone, never need to see an empty cross. Our crosses are carried by the only One who can do anything about them, the One who loves us more than we can imagine.

Today, in our Eucharist, we are incredibly privileged to see the crucified and risen Jesus lifted up in the offering of His Body and Blood to the Father upon the altar of the cross.

We are wonderfully blessed to gaze upon God’s only Son, whom he sent not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.”

The same Jesus who is in the Sacred Host and His Most Precious Blood, gifting us today with the opportunity to unite the crosses of our own lives with His.

We are invited, unworthy as we are, to the Supper of the Lamb, to eat and drink of the same Jesus “who humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.”