



IMPACT

Impact this Month

Reflect on your life
and ask yourself:

What is the cost of discipleship for you?

Are you ready to live
as a follower of our
Lord?

Will you turn away
from selfishness and
make your daily
decisions in light of
Jesus' way of self-
giving love?

What does it cost to be a disciple of Jesus?

Christianity is not an organization that assesses dues once a year, like a fitness club that sends an email reminder when it is time to renew membership. And unlike joining a gym, making a commitment to live as a disciple is not about looking for the option that is the least expensive. The truth is, when we take the call of discipleship to heart, we realize that living as a follower of Jesus **costs** something. In fact, the more deeply we commit ourselves to our Lord, the greater the impact our faith will have. "It is costly because it requires a disciple for Jesus' sake to put aside the craving for domination, possession, and control, and grace because it confers true liberation and eternal life." (SDR, p. 15)

**"Whoever does not carry his own cross
and come after me cannot be my disciple."**

—Luke 14:27

What is the cost of discipleship? Each of us responds to the Lord personally and discerns how we will respond to Christ's call to love and serve. There are common aspects of this way of life:

Disciples put God first, choosing God's and God's ways above all others. Disciples pray; make a commitment to follow Jesus and to grow in relationship with him; consider and respond to the needs of others, especially the poor and those in need of great care. Disciples go out of their way for the sake of others. Disciples sacrifice, because Jesus sacrificed himself for our salvation. Disciples turn away from the temptation to be self-centered and selfish, and instead give of themselves and their resources in order to make Christ's love known.

"Refracted through the prisms of countless individual vocations, this way of life embodies and expresses the one mission of Christ: to do God's will, to proclaim the Good News of salvation, to heal the afflicted, to care for one's sisters and brothers, to give life—life to the full—as Jesus did." (Stewardship: A Disciple's Response, p. 14)

A prayer Rite for Entrance into the Catechumenate

Receive the cross of Christ:

- On your forehead. Christ himself strengthens you with the sign of his love. Learn to know him and follow him.
- On your ears, that you may hear the voice of the Lord.
- On your eyes, that you may see the glory of God.
- On your lips, that you may respond to the word of God.
- On your chest, that Christ may dwell in your heart by faith.
- On your shoulders, that you may bear the gentle yoke of Christ.
- On your hands, that Christ may be known in the work which you do.
- On your feet, that you may walk in the way of Christ.

AT A CROSSROADS

The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, celebrated on September 14, provides a reminder that throughout our lives, in every circumstance, **we are to turn to the cross, and the love of Christ which the cross signifies.**

On the cross, Jesus gave completely of himself. He held nothing back. And as a result, we have gained everything: salvation, mercy, forgiveness, love, and hope.

We are not to be passive recipients of these great gifts! The cross boldly

beckons us to take up the life of

the steward which Jesus so completely models. Having been given much, we must give greatly in return, by sharing our faith, time, resources, and talents. At times, such giving will make us uncomfortable; we may risk rejection and we will be called to sacrifice. Jesus' undying love on the cross calls each of us to give without counting the cost, to find life by holding nothing back.

Each of us bears a different cross, and bears our crosses differently. For some, the cross is the burden of loss or illness, unemployment, disappointment, or loneliness. For others, the cross is the realization of God's great love for humanity, and the recognition of how we are called to love greatly in return. At times, we take up our cross willingly, but often, our crosses are thrust upon us.

We may find ourselves at a crossroads, called to choose how we will respond to the circumstances of this particular moment in time. We must take up our cross with God's grace, understanding that Jesus freely bore his cross, and walks with us as we strive to bear ours.

The cross also reminds us that the resurrection awaits those who willingly enter into Christ's passion and death as disciples and stewards. In dying to self, we rise with Christ to new life. In giving as good stewards, we share the life and light of Christ with the world.

