

# SELF DENIAL



To many the saying, “Deny thyself, take up thy cross and follow Me,” seems hard, but it will be much harder to hear that final word: “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.” Those who hear the word of the cross and follow it willingly now, need not fear that they will hear of eternal damnation on the day of judgment. This sign of the cross will be in the heavens when the Lord comes to judge. Then all the servants of the cross, who during life made themselves one with the Crucified, will draw near with great trust to Christ, the judge.

Why, then, do you fear to take up the cross when through it you can win a kingdom? In the cross is salvation, in the cross is life, in the cross is protection from enemies, in the cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness, in the cross is strength of mind, in the cross is joy of spirit, in the cross is highest virtue, in the cross is perfect holiness. There is no salvation of soul nor hope of everlasting life but in the cross.

Take up your cross, therefore, and follow Jesus, and you shall enter eternal life. He Himself opened the way before you in carrying His cross, and upon it He died for you, that you, too, might take up your cross and long to die upon it. If you die with Him, you shall also live with Him, and if you share His suffering, you shall also share His glory.

Behold, in the cross is everything, and upon your dying on the cross everything depends. There is no other way to life and to true inward peace than the way of the holy cross and daily mortification. Go where you will, seek what you will, you will not find a higher way, nor a less exalted but safer way, than the way of the holy cross. Arrange and order everything to suit your will and judgment, and still you will find that some suffering must always be borne, willingly or unwillingly, and thus you will always find the cross.

## GO DEEPER BY:

Continue reading [The Royal Road of the Holy Cross](#) from the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis and/or watch this 11 minute video on [How to Pick Up Your Cross](#) by Fr. Mike Schmitz.

## PHASE 2 IS UNDERWAY

As we move into Lent this month, the implementation of Parish Evangelization Plans is well underway. Lent is a prime opportunity for leaning into the four holy habits that Go Make Disciples emphasizes: daily prayer, doing some form of penance every day (not just on Fridays in Lent), keeping Sundays holy, and frequenting the sacrament of confession. If it feels like your parish has gotten off to a slow start with Go Make Disciples, this is a great time to kick it into high gear.

## EQUIPPING FOR MISSION

If you want to know how to share the Gospel, it's important to have the love and courage to not just give answers and corrections, but to ask questions. It is in asking questions from the heart that you convey true interest in the person's soul, instead of just trying to convince the person you're right.

GO DEEPER by watching [this 7 minute video](#) by Fr. Mike Schmitz.

## SEEKING HOLINESS

### THE VIRTUE OF TEMPERANCE

**CCC 1809** Temperance is the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will's mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable. the temperate person directs the sensitive appetites toward what is good and maintains a healthy discretion: "Do not follow your inclination and strength, walking according to the desires of your heart" (Sir 5:2). Temperance is often praised in the Old Testament: "Do not follow your base desires, but restrain your appetites" (Sir 18:30). In the New Testament it is called "moderation" or "sobriety." We ought "to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world" (Titus 2:12).

### THE WAY OF THE CROSS

**CCC 2015** The way of perfection passes by way of the Cross. There is no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle (cf. 2 Tim 4). Spiritual progress entails the asceticism and mortification that gradually lead to living in the peace and joy of the Beatitudes.

## YEARLY FORMATION NEWSLETTER TOPICS

### MAY 2021

The Mission

### JUNE 2021

Missionary Discipleship

### JULY 2021

Evangelization

### AUGUST 2021

How to Evangelize

### SEPTEMBER 2021

Jesus + The Story | Faith

### OCTOBER 2021

Our Baptismal Call | Courage

### NOVEMBER 2021

Holy Mass | Charity

### DECEMBER 2021

Reclaiming Sunday | Justice

### JANUARY 2022

Daily Prayer | Hope

### FEBRUARY 2022

Praying with Scripture | Lectio

### MARCH 2022

Self-Denial | Moderation

### APRIL 2022

Monthly Confession | Humility

## NOT A COMMITTEE MEETING

A note for parish staff and evangelization teams: **Think outside the box. Meet in homes. Share meals or drinks together. Discuss your faith, your parish, and what God is saying to you in prayer.**