



Triumph of the Cross

In the 'Jesus story' the cross stands as a sign of contradiction and salvation. It was through a journey of pain, rejection and apparent failure that the resurrection was possible and God's glory revealed.

This page presents images and insights which remind us of the presence of the cross in daily life.

Facing up to the cross

I was fed up with God, church and all things religious. *What's the use of being a committed Catholic? My prayers didn't stop Julie from dying. Going to Mass doesn't solve my family problems. To hell with God! I'm going to be like everybody else... you know, all those people that happily live their lives without religion.*

So, for a whole month, out of my anger and pain, I tried being like 'everybody else'. I went through my days without praying. I went through Sundays without Mass. I went about my daily business without trying to be 'loving'. Who cared about a faith commitment - I was free!

But actually, I wasn't. That was my amazing discovery during that month. I realised I *wasn't* any happier. My problems didn't get any better. My depressed state didn't change. It was actually a bit dull being 'like everybody else'. I had to admit that, whilst being Christian isn't 'easy', life without Christ sure isn't any easier. Finally, I faced facts: In my heart of hearts, I knew that my rebellion was depriving myself of a life source. Life wasn't about trying to avoid the cross, but courageously entering into its mystery.

With renewed resolve, I returned to the practice of my faith. (Allan)

It's all about love

I was sitting in church one Sunday. It was just after communion and a hushed silence filled the church. Despite the reverent stillness, I felt distracted in my prayer. I was day dreaming about something... nothing... anything. Then a little voice from a pew behind me broke the silence: 'Mum, I love Jesus.' With a freshness and a smile, I focussed back on what was important. (Greg)



Gift of self

I *had* a special crucifix for many years - it was on a chain around my neck - a precious gift from my parents. But at my uncle's burial, when everyone was throwing flowers into the grave as the coffin was being lowered, I instinctively threw in my crucifix. At that moment I suppose I wanted to give something of myself. So I parted with my crucifix. (AP)



Reflection & sharing

Reflect on a crucifix and all it represents.

- * Do you have a favourite crucifix? Why is it special to you?
- * Hold or touch this crucifix regularly as a simple prayer.
- * Do you have a crucifix in your home? If not, buy or make one and place it in an obvious position as a way of witnessing to visitors who enter your home.
- * Share about a time when you were 'lifted up' on a cross.

Prayer in action

- Wear a cross around your neck and finger it during the day when you feel sad or helpless, as a sign of your conviction that Jesus heals and saves.
- Write a letter to someone who is walking the way of the cross.
- Ponder the injustice of poverty. Give generously to someone in need.
- Pray your way through the evening news, rather than just 'watch TV'.
- Ask a person who seems sad: 'Is there something troubling you?' Then listen if he/she wishes to talk.