

Homily Summary – Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Overview: The Cross, once seen as a symbol of defeat, is truly the greatest sign of victory and God's love for humanity. Through it, Jesus triumphed over sin and death, teaching us that resurrection always comes through the way of the Cross. Today, we are reminded to embrace our own crosses, uniting them with Christ, and to find strength in the Eucharist, the lasting fruit of His sacrifice.

Main Points

1. **The Cross is God's connection point.**
 - Like a "signal," the Cross connects heaven and earth. It is a sign that makes us stop, look, and listen to God's love.
2. **Victory comes through suffering.**
 - Jesus did not avoid the Cross but embraced it (Matthew 26:39). There is no Easter without Good Friday.
3. **Examples of the Cross in modern lives.**
 - In the context of Christ's universal love, despite whatever we may think and feel about Charlie Kirk, his tragic and unjust assassination reminds us we are called to cling to Christ's victory at the cross for our hope of eternal life.
 - St. Carlo Acutis, who embraced his suffering with faith and joy, shows how even young lives can be transformed by the Cross into holiness and triumph.
4. **The Eucharist: fruit of the Cross.**
 - St. Carlo called the Eucharist his "highway to heaven."
 - Eucharistic miracles and our parish's exhibit point to the reality of Jesus' true Presence—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.
 - Adoration allows us to unite our crosses with Christ's sacrifice and find rest in Him (Matthew 11:28).
5. **Our own crosses can become victories.**
 - Whatever struggles we carry—loss, betrayal, financial burdens, illness—Jesus transforms them through His Cross.
 - Mary, who stood at the Cross, accompanies us in our own trials with her maternal prayers.

Scripture References

- Matthew 26:39 – "Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me..."
- John 3:14 – The Son of Man lifted up like the serpent in the wilderness.
- Matthew 11:28 – "Come to me, all you who are weary..."
- 1 Corinthians 1:18 – "The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us... it is the power of God."

Catechism References

- **CCC 618** – The Cross is the unique sacrifice of Christ, but He calls us to take up our crosses and follow Him.
 - **CCC 1366–1367** – The Eucharist makes present the sacrifice of the Cross.
 - **CCC 1642** – Christ gives us strength to bear our burdens.
 - **CCC 963–970** – Mary shares uniquely in the sufferings of her Son and intercedes as Mother.
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Reflection Questions

1. When I look at the Cross, do I see defeat, or do I see the triumph of God's love?
2. What is the "cross" I am carrying right now, and how can I unite it with Christ's sacrifice?
3. How can I grow in devotion to the Eucharist as the living fruit of the Cross?
4. Do I invite Mary's prayers and presence into the sufferings of my life?
5. How might visiting Eucharistic adoration this week help me find strength in Christ's triumph?

Rhyme summary: The Cross seemed dark, yet love broke through, Christ's triumph came for me and you.
He prayed for strength, the cup to bear, our sins Christ carried, your pain He shared.
Saint Carlo shone, though young he died. The Eucharist, the cross, his greatest guides.
So bring your cross, and let hope in your heart be stored, for our victory's found in Christ the Lord.

Reasons to come to Mass each weekend

Exodus 20:8 - "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy."

Acts 2:42 - "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Hebrews 10:24-25 - "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Luke 22:19 - "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

John 6:53-54 - "So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.'"

Matthew 18:20 - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Psalms 122:1 - "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

Colossians 3:16 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

Additional resources to learn more about God and the Catholic faith

- Check out the resource list available on www.frmerkley.com
- Catholic Answers: <https://www.catholic.com/>
- Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
- Formed: <https://formed.org/>
- The Coming Home Network: <https://chnetwork.org/>
- Catholic Exchange: <https://catholicexchange.com/>
- Dynamic Catholic: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>
- The Augustine Institute: <https://augustineinstitute.org/>
- Ascension Press: <https://ascensionpress.com/>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- The Catholic Company: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/>
- Busted Halo: <https://bustedhalo.com/>
- CatholicCulture.org: <https://www.catholicculture.org/>
- The Thomistic Institute: <https://thomisticinstitute.org/>
- Ignatius Press: <https://www.ignatius.com/>
- Catholic Education Resource Center (CERC): <https://www.catholiceducation.org/>