

The Triumph of the Cross — a reflection (John P Murray osa)

A Catholic community in Minneapolis is presently grappling with a recent church shooting. The gunman had fired indiscriminately into the church, where the parish school had gathered for mass. A friend from the USA emailed me his heartfelt reflection on this tragedy. He shared: *What is our answer? It should be clear: our God hangs dead on the Cross, lies buried alongside the victims of Wednesday’s attack, and weeps with the families, too, as he did over the body of his friend Lazarus. But the Christ who died on the Cross rose from the dead; the man who wept for Lazarus raised him, too. Our God is among the families today, but he is with their children in heaven. Our God is alive and so are they; he is a God of the living, not the dead.*

- Then I read the painful reflections of others much closer to the scene.
- The gunman’s uncle, a former Kentucky lawmaker, broke into tears when told of the attack: *“I wish he had shot me instead of those children.”*
 - Archbishop Bernard Hebda, at a vigil that drew 2,000 mourners, admitted the Psalmist’s cry – *“Why, O God, have you forgotten me?”* – was on many lips.
 - For the Annunciation parish, statistics and politics are overshadowed by the raw grief of burying two children. On the steps of the church, parents lit candles under a crucifix, whispering prayers through tears. *“We will not let hatred have the last word,”* one mother said. *“Our faith must be stronger than his bullets.”*

As for my good friend in the USA, I sent him my heartfelt response to his reflection:

The Crucified Christ gives a powerful message, image and theology for life. The best teacher I know in this theology is Jurgen Moltmann, who wrote "The Crucified God". His imagery is poetic and powerful, speaking of the Cross involving the three Persons of the Trinity, not just Jesus. He speaks of the crucifixion being experienced and felt by and within God, wherein they knew pain and alienation, but it did not cause the death of God. Rather it was God's experience of death. It was a God experience through which God remained God, suffering with us and showing us the way to life.

Moltmann was of a Christian school of theology in Germany, arising out of the Holocaust. The German Church was trying to grapple with such a horror in its history. He recounted a powerful story from a Nazi concentration camp —
The German officer punished the prisoners for an escape attempt (as I remember). So he made the Jewish prisoners watch as he had chosen prisoners hanged before them, including a young boy.
As they watched, one Jewish inmate yelled – “Where is your God now?”
The answer came from among the Jewish inmates – “He is here, right in front of us.”



Bishop Erik Varden OCSO on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Historically speaking, today’s feast has a twofold reference. The Byzantine Church keeps it to recall how the Emperor Heraclius rescued the relic of the Cross from Persian invaders in the seventh century. 300 years earlier, a related feast commemorated the dedication of Jerusalem’s Sepulchre Church, in which the Cross was displayed for veneration.

Christianity’s fortunes changed with the conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine, in 312 CE. So the Church emerged from underground, beginning to leave its mark. The age of Constantine is the age of the first Christian basilicas. The faith is suddenly visible throughout the empire.

People were anxious to see and touch proofs of the Gospel. Constantine therefore gathered relics. He built churches to house them. The mortal remains of Apostles were wonderful and precious. But what of relics connected with Christ himself, defined by the Church as true Man and true God.

It is small wonder that Constantine set out to search for the greatest relic of all: the Cross on which Christ died. He entrusted the mission to a formidable agent, his mother Helena. Dispatched to Jerusalem, Helena searched high and low. The Cross had been in hiding. No one knew exactly where it was. Eventually a likely find was made. But there was a difficulty. Helena found not just one cross, but three. How could she know which was the true Cross, and which were crosses of mere criminals? While she weighed her options, a paralytic was brought. He was placed on the first cross. Nothing happened. He was placed on the second cross. Again, nothing. Attendants lifted him, then, onto the third. No sooner had his body touched this Cross than his lameness was healed.

God had set his seal on the saving wood. That Cross was raised up and adored. It became at once Christianity’s central relic, a concrete sign that the Gospel claim is real, that Christ did nail sin and death to the Cross, and that the Cross retains its saving power.

That is the chief message given us today. When we venerate the Cross today, we give thanks for what the Cross has done for us. We rejoice in being freed, raised up, redeemed; we rejoice that Christ’s power to save is undiminished.

That said, we, too, live in times that tend to put the Cross out of view—considering it variously an irrelevance, an outrage, an embarrassment. All the more reason then, for us, now, to raise the Cross as our personal standard, to glory in it, to prove by our lives that it still heals. In venerating the Cross, we worship God’s power, made perfect in weakness.

CALENDAR

MONDAY
September 15
Our Lady of Sorrows
1 Tm 2:1-8
Jn 19:25-27 or
Lk 2:33-35

TUESDAY
September 16
Sts. Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs
1 Tm 3:1-13
Lk 7:11-17

WEDNESDAY
September 17
Weekday
1 Tm 3:14-16
Lk 7:31-35

THURSDAY
September 18
Weekday
1 Tm 4:12-16
Lk 7:36-50

FRIDAY
September 19
Weekday
1 Tm 6:2c-12
Lk 8:1-3

SATURDAY
September 20
Sts. Andrew Kim Tae-gŏn, Priest, and Paul Chŏng Ha-sang, and Companions, Martyrs
1 Tm 6:13-16
Lk 8:4-15

SUNDAY
September 21
Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Am 8:4-7
1 Tm 2:1-8
Lk 16:1-13 or
16:10-13

PRAYER SEEKING THE INTERCESSION OF
THE EIGHT BLESSED MARTYRS OF THAILAND
AND THEIR CANONISATION

Almighty God, You called the eight Blessed Martyrs of Thailand to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, as priest, religious and lay people, laity leading as young disciples, and as a catechist. These eight Blessed Martyrs responded faithfully to Your call, dedicating themselves to Your redemptive mission for all. For the sake of this mission and their faith in You, they followed Your Son, Jesus Christ, in sacrificing their lives.

May the example of these eight Blessed Martyrs of Thailand inspire us to live our Christian faith today in the Catholic Church, ever giving witness to that faith in our daily life.

According to Your will, we pray that Your servants, the eight Blessed Martyrs of Thailand, may be canonised. We ask this as we seek to strengthen our own faith. So, if it is Your will, bless us with their canonisation, thus giving glory to Your Name.

Through the intercession of the eight Blessed Martyrs of Thailand, grant what we now humbly request in prayer (*take a silent moment*).
Amen.

Leader: The eight Blessed Martyrs of Thailand
Response: Pray for us

Our website:
www.assumptioncathedralbkk.org

ASSUMPTION CATHEDRAL

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PASTOR:
Rev. Ignatius Adisak Somsaengsuang

ASSISTANTS:
Rev. Peter Booncharat Suksawang
Rev. Francis Xavier Akranon Kitcharoen

MASS SCHEDULE:

Mon-Fri : Thai 06:00 hrs.
Sat : Thai 06:00; 17:00 novena followed by mass
Sun : Thai 07:00; 08:30 and 17:00 hrs.
English 10:00 hrs.

BAPTISM:

Thai : **First Sunday** during 8:30 am mass.
English : **Second Sunday** during 10:00 am mass.

CONFESSION:

Sundays : Before all masses (Thai).
English before 10:00 am mass.

CATHOLIC CENTER:

For religious articles, please visit the center opposite the entrance of the Cathedral.

Opening Hours:

Mon-Fri : 08:30 – 17:00 hrs.
Sat & Sun : 08:30 – noon
Public holidays : Closed

Dear Padre

September 14, 2025

A Protestant friend tells me that Jesus died to take the punishment for our sins. That doesn't seem accurate to me. What does the Church teach about the meaning of Jesus' death on the cross?

Jesus understood his mission to be sacrificing his own life "as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). His fidelity to that mission was even at the cost of death. However, saying Jesus' death was payment for our sins doesn't mean that a vengeful God was appeased by the slaughter of his own innocent son. Rather, we are redeemed because of the mutual love between Father and Son, as well as the love Christ had for us all when he offered his life. "It is love 'to the end' (see John 13:1) that confers on Christ's sacrifice its value as redemption and reparation, as atonement and satisfaction" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 616). It is in this sense that Jesus' death was a payment—not one to be exacted—but a unique sacrifice "that completes and surpasses all other sacrifices," when "the Father handed his Son over to sinners in order to reconcile us with himself," and the Son of God freely and lovingly offered his human life to his Father "in reparation for our disobedience" (CCC 614). Christ "bore our sins in his body upon the cross.... By his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Viewed in light of the resurrection, Christ's death has meaning in eternal life's triumph over sin. ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org

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THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

HOLY (No. 263) PLEASE KNEEL

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION (No. 264)

DOXOLOGY PLEASE STAND

Priest: Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever.

GREAT AMEN (No. 374)

COMMUNION RITE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (No. 387)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Priest: Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil; graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our saviour, Jesus Christ.

All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.

LAMB OF GOD (No. 391)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. (Repeat)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace. PLEASE KNEEL

Priest: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION: FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD (No. 580)

BEHOLD THE LAMB (No. 939)

FINAL HYMN: TO JESUS CHRIST, OUR SOVEREIGN KING (No. 573) PLEASE STAND



FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Sunday, 14 September 2025

ENTRANCE: LIFT HIGH THE CROSS (No. 881) PLEASE STAND

INTRODUCTORY RITE

Priest: I confess to almighty God,

All: and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do;

– and, striking their breast, they say –

Through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;

Therefore I ask blessed Mary, ever-virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Priest: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

KYRIE / LORD HAVE MERCY

Kýrie, eléison. Kýrie, eléison. Christe, eléison. Christe, eléison.

Kýrie, eléison. Kýrie, eléison.

GLORY TO GOD

Refrain: Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth, peace on earth, peace to people of good will.

- 1. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.**
- 2. Lord, Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us,
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand, the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.**
- 3. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. (R)**

FIRST READING: Nm 21:4b-9

A reading from the Book of Numbers:

With their patience worn out by the journey, the people complained against God and Moses, "Why have you brought us up from Egypt to die in this desert, where there is no food or water? We are disgusted with this wretched food!"

In punishment the LORD sent among the people saraph serpents, which bit the people so that many of them died. Then the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned in complaining against the LORD and you. Pray the LORD to take the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people, and the LORD said to Moses, "Make a saraph and mount it on a pole, and if any who have been bitten look at it, they will live." Moses accordingly made a bronze serpent and mounted it on a pole, and whenever anyone who had been bitten by a serpent looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

The word of the Lord. All: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 78: DO NOT FORGET THE WORKS OF THE LORD!



R. Do not for - get the works of the Lord!

- 1. Hearken, my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter mysteries from of old. (R)
- 2. While he slew them they sought him and inquired after God again, Remembering that God was their rock and the Most High God, their redeemer. (R)
- 3. But they flattered him with their mouths and lied to him with their tongues, Though their hearts were not steadfast toward him, nor were they faithful to his covenant. (R)
- 4. But he, being merciful, forgave their sin and destroyed them not; Often he turned back his anger and let none of his wrath be roused. (R)

SECOND READING: Phil 2:6-11

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians:

Brothers and sisters: Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord. All: Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA (No. 326) PLEASE STAND

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. (Repeat)

All: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because by your Cross you have redeemed the world.

GOSPEL: Jn 3:13-17

Priest: The Lord be with you. All: And with your spirit.
Priest: A reading from the Good News according to John All: Glory to you, Lord.

Jesus said to Nicodemus: "No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

Priest: The Good News of the Lord. All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

THE APOSTLES' CREED PLEASE STAND

Priest: I believe in God,
All: the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

RESPONSE TO THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL:
“Creator God, hear our prayer.”

PLEASE BE SEATED

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PROCESSION OF THE GIFTS

OFFERTORY: THE CROSS OF JESUS (No. 482)

PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS PLEASE STAND

Priest: Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.
All: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his holy Church.