



Hosting the Pilgrimage Cross RESOURCES

THE CHURCH NEEDS
YOU

Diocese of Bridgeport

Using the Pilgrimage Cross at Liturgy

One of the most popular ways to utilize the Pilgrimage Cross will surely be in the context of a liturgical celebration.

Consider these suggestions as you plan your liturgy.



- A few weeks before the cross is scheduled to arrive, use the “Pilgrimage Cross Bulletin Announcement” to appropriately communicate with your parish family the importance of the cross’ visit. If you are in a school, use the same announcement over the public address system to alert young people and teachers about the cross’ significance.
- Make an announcement before Mass using the “Introducing the Cross to your Parish” as a guide. Have one of the young people make this announcement to show how much your parish advocates for young people.
- A week or so before the liturgy, have young people write their prayers on small pieces of paper and invite them to place them in a basket or on pieces of paper that can be made into a chain. Be sure to give a quick glance to the prayers to make sure no young people in your community are crying out for help.
- Be sure to include your pastor in the preparation of the cross’ visit. Suggest that all clergy concelebrate the Mass where the cross will be used.
- The cross is meant to be on pilgrimage. It should be carried whenever appropriate. Therefore, have young people from your parish carry the cross in as part of the procession. Be sure to read the “Guidelines for Use” for more instructions on carrying the cross.
- During the Preparation of the Gifts, have one of the young people - or one of the regular Sunday ushers - place the basket of prayers (or the prayer chain, if you made one) before the cross.
- Add a petition in the Prayers of the Faithful, calling to mind the prayers and intentions of your parish or school’s young people.
- Invite the presider to make mention of the cross in his homily as a sure sign the parish is in touch with the needs of young people. It would be very distracting for the cross to be carried in to Mass and then never mentioned.
- Find out where the cross is going next. Invite young people from that parish or school to attend your liturgy. Then, at the end of liturgy, have your young people carry the cross half way down the aisle and hand it over to the young people of the next parish or school, who will carry the cross out of the building. See “Guidelines for Use” for more information on handing the cross off to another groups. [*Please note, if your group is receiving it from another group, have their young people hand off the cross to your youth at the beginning of liturgy.*]
- If the cross is not leaving your parish for a day or two, consider leaving the cross in place at the end of liturgy to allow others to come forward to pray before the cross.

Pilgrimage Cross Bulletin Announcement



To be used in the weeks leading up to the arrival of the cross in your parish.

The diocesan Pilgrimage Cross will be in our parish next weekend/on the weekend of N.

This cross, a replica of the World Youth Day Cross given to young people by Pope John Paul II in 1984, is traveling throughout the Diocese of Wilmington as a reminder to all, especially young people, of our dependence on the cross for our salvation. The cross was constructed and blessed by Bishop Caggiano on the Feast of the Exultation of the Cross, September 14, 2017. It is used during the annual TCNY Pilgrimage on each Palm Saturday.

The cross will continue to travel around the diocese until the next pilgrimage.

May this cross be carried throughout our diocese as a symbol of Christ's love for humanity and as a challenge to us all to stand firm in our conviction, steadfast in our faith, and rooted in the love of Jesus Christ.

If appropriate, you could also include:

At the end of liturgy, the young people from our parish will hand the cross over to the young people from N. parish (or they will receive it from...at the beginning of liturgy).

Or

This week when the young people gather (insert day, time, etc.), they will use the cross in their meeting.

Introducing the Cross to your Parish or School



*This could be read just prior to the start of the liturgical celebration
in which the cross is to be used, or at another appropriate time.*

On Easter Sunday, 1984, Pope John Paul II presented a simple wooden cross to the young people of the world.

On the cross was this inscription: “My dear young people; At the conclusion of the Holy Year, I entrust to you the very sign of this jubilee year: the “Cross of Christ!” Carry it throughout the world as a symbol of Christ’s love for humanity and announce to everyone that only in the death and resurrection of Christ can we find salvation and redemption.”

Since that day, thousands of young people around the world have heeded the challenge of John Paul and have carried the cross around the globe. What started in Rome in 1984 has spread to World Youth Day celebrations in Argentina in 1987, Spain in 1989, Poland in 1991, the United States in 1993, the Philippines in 1995, France in 1997, returning to Rome for the jubilee year in 2000, then on to Canada in 2002, Germany in 2005 and Australia in 2008. On Palm Sunday this year, the young people from Australia presented the cross to St. Peter’s Square in Rome to young people of Spain, host of the next World Youth Day in 2011.

The original cross has been carried by hundreds of thousands and has visited a myriad of locations, even making unscheduled stops along the way, once being carried through the streets of New York City to Ground Zero in February 2002.

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This week (weekend, today, etc.) this Pilgrimage Cross is in our parish (school).

Insert here any information about how the cross will be or has already been used in your community (i.e., “On Monday, the young people from our parish will gather in prayer before the cross” or “Last week, the young people of our parish received the cross from the young people of N. parish”)

You might also include if the cross will be handed off from/to another group at the beginning or at the end of liturgy.

The cross makes its way around the diocese in anticipation of the next youth pilgrimage, held each Palm Saturday.

May this cross be carried throughout our diocese as a symbol of Christ’s love for humanity and as a challenge to us all to stand firm in our conviction, steadfast in our faith, and rooted in the love of Jesus Christ.

About the Prayer of Petition Book



One of the items you receive when you receive the cross is a binder that includes the prayers of young people who have prayed before the cross.

Leaders are encouraged to have the Prayer of Petition Book located near the cross when the cross is used in your parish or school. You are also encouraged to insert a prayer of petition into the Prayers of the Faithful at Sunday liturgy if the cross is present at Mass.

Educate your young people about the four types of prayer (petition, adoration, contrition, and thanksgiving) and let them know that not only will their prayers be listed, but all those who will eventually pray before the cross will also be praying for their intentions.

Keep track of the binder, please, and notify TCNY as soon as the pages begin to be filled so more pages can be inserted. Please also notify TCNY if you read something that causes alarm.

Sample Prayer Service and Activities



If you have the cross in your parish or school for more than a liturgical celebration, consider having the young people gather for a prayer service and/or activity. Here are some suggested items you could use to piece together a prayer service on your own.

Suggested Songs

- Behold The Cross (Bob Hurd, Spirit and Song, OCP)
- Open My Eyes (Jesse Manibusen, Spirit and Song, OCP)
- Cry The Gospel (Tom Booth, Spirit and Song, OCP)
- One Spirit, One Church, (K. Keil, Spirit and Song, OCP)
- Lord, I Lift Your Name On High (R. Founds, Spirit and Song, OCP)
- You Are The Way (S. Angrisano, Spirit and Song, OCP)

Suggested Readings

- 1. Matthew 10:38**
And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.
- 2. Matthew 16:24**
Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.
- 3. Matthew 27:32**
As they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon, whom they pressed into service to bear His cross.
- 4. Matthew 27:42**
He saved others; He cannot save Himself He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him.
- 5. Mark 8:34**
And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.
- 6. Mark 15:32**
Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!" Those who were crucified with Him were also insulting Him.
- 7. Luke 14:27**
Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.
- 8. John 19:17**
They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha.
- 9. John 19:25**
Therefore the soldiers did these things. But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Sample Prayer Service and Activities



Suggested Readings continued

10. Acts 2:23

This Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

11. Acts 5:30

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross.

12. Acts 10:39

We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.

13. 1 Corinthians 1:17

For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void.

14. 1 Corinthians 1:18

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

15. Galatians 6:12

Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

16. Galatians 6:14

But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

17. Ephesians 2:16

And might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

18. Philippians 2:8

Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

19. Colossians 1:20

And through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

20. Colossians 2:14

Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

21. Hebrews 12:2

Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

22. 1 Peter 2:24

And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

Sample Prayer Service and Activities



Suggested Activity One

After a gathering song and one of the suggested readings, have a discussion about the cross and its significance for us as Christians.

Then give each young person a small piece of paper on which to write down their prayers or petition. If you feel it is appropriate, you could ask the young people if they would like to name any of their intentions out loud.

In addition, you could have the young people fill out a piece of paper for each of their intentions and as they name their prayer, they can walk up and place their paper in a basket at the foot of the cross.

Suggested Activity Two

To vary activity one, give each young person a strip of construction paper, cut to about two inches wide. Allow time for the young people to place their prayers or petition on the papers and then as they are brought forward allow them to make their paper another link in the chain. Then the chain can be draped on the cross (but not tied, nailed, or taped to it), so your parishioners can see that the youth of the parish have used the cross as a part of their prayer experience. Use colored paper that matches the liturgical season and educate young people on your choice of colors to include even more catechesis in your activity.

Suggested Activity Three

Instead of prayers or petition (above), have a prayer service focused on reconciliation. Talk about leaving concerns, complaints, burdens, etc. *at the cross* and then invite the young people to place their comments, written on paper, in the basket at the base of the cross. This activity can work really well if the young people have experienced some hardships or have struggled to get along with one another in recent weeks.

Prayer before the Cross



O Mother of Sorrows,
with strength from above
you stood by the cross
sharing the sufferings of Jesus,
and with tender care
you took him in your arms,
mourning and weeping.

We praise your faith,
for accepting the life God gave you.

We praise your hope,
for trusting God would do great things
through you.

We praise your love,
for bearing with Jesus
the sorrows of his passion.

Holy Mary,
may we follow your example
and stand by all your children
who need comfort and love.

Mother of God,
stand by us in our trials
and care for us in our many needs.

Pray for us now
and at the hour of our death.

Amen.

Prayer before the Cross



Lord Jesus,
Redeemer of all,
hear my prayer.

For the love you bear
to those who ask forgiveness,
look mercifully on me,
as once you looked on Mary Magdalene
and on Peter who denied you.

Look on me, Lord Jesus Christ,
as you looked on the thief on his cross
and on every sinner
whom you have ever forgiven.

Look on me, merciful Lord,
as you looked on your mother, Mary,
standing in sorrow beneath your cross.
Let me feel in my heart her compassion for you,
and let my eyes weep for the sorrows
my sins have caused.

Call me from darkness
to my Father's house,
give me a new heart
and a place at your side
at the banquet of your kingdom.

Amen.

Prayer before the Cross



Jesus, by this saving sign,
bless this listless soul of mine.
Jesus, by Thy feet nailed fast,
mend the missteps of my past.
Jesus, with Thy riven hands,
bend my will to love's demands.
Jesus, in Thy Heart laid bare,
warm my inner coldness there.
Jesus, by Thy thorn-crowned head,
still my pride till it is dead.
Jesus, by Thy muted tongue,
stay my words that hurt someone.
Jesus, by Thy tired eyes,
open mine to faith's surprise.
Jesus, by Thy fading breath,
keep me faithful until death.
Yes, Lord, by this saving sign,
save this wayward soul of mine.

Amen.

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