

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

First Reading: Numbers 21:4b-9
Resp. Psalm: Psalm 78:1bc-2, 34-35, 36-37, 38
Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11
Gospel: John 3:13-17

[Full readings can be found here!](#)

1. HEAR

Pick up your bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries you can find the Gospel reading by clicking [HERE](#). (Bishop O'Connell's Gospel Reflection page.)

As an alternative to reading the Gospel, you can watch a short video with the proclamation for adults by clicking [HERE](#). (YouTube, WOG channel, 0:41 min)

Children can also watch a video proclamation of the Gospel by clicking [HERE](#). (YouTube, Holy Heroes channel, 3:10 min)

2. PRAY

Gather with your family or invite a friend to join you for a special prayer on this Feast of our Liturgical Calendar. Prepare in advance a small prayer space with a candle, the Bible, a red cloth to cover the table or space, and a crucifix. Next, an adult member of the family reads the following reflection.



For many people, the cross is a symbol of suffering and pain because of the events that took place on Good Friday, when Jesus was crucified on the cross and then died. However, the teaching of our Church with regards to the cross indicates that what we commemorate today is not the cruelty of the crucifixion, but the Love that God manifested to humanity by Jesus' death on the Cross.

The second reading of today's celebration reminds us of Jesus, "who, though in the form of God, emptied himself, taking the form of a slave. This is the glory of the Cross of Jesus!" (Pope Francis)

Now, listen to the following song by catholic artists Bob Hurd & Ken Canedo by clicking [here](#). (Someone plays the video for everyone to listen to. Since the video has lyrics, using a TV or tablet would be appropriate for all to follow along the words of the song.) (We Should Glory, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AL9WOK3PblE>, YouTube, OCP Music channel, 4:03)

To close this moment, all may recite together the following prayer: **Lord Jesus Christ, you were fastened with nails to the wood of the cross and raised on high for all to see. By this mighty deed on our behalf, rescue us from our blindness and inspire us anew by your Holy Spirit, to practice a life of prayer and service worthy of your loving sacrifice. O Savior of the world, living and reigning with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.**

3. TALK

Gather with your family or friends in a room where all are comfortable. One adult member of the family can guide the conversation by reading the following:

In today's Gospel we hear how Jesus tells Nicodemus that the sacrifice of Jesus was necessary for the salvation of the world. Furthermore, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is the greatest sign of God's love for us and for the entire world. In our Catholic tradition, the cross is the great symbol that reminds us of the gift of salvation.

Now, listen to the following questions and take a moment to reflect on your answer:

1. Can you remember a time in your life when you have experienced the love of God for you? (Remember, the love of God is given to us in so many ways, and most of them are manifested in the simplicity of everyday life.)
2. How did it make you feel to know that God loves you as you are? (Pay attention to the emotions or physical manifestations you experienced at that moment.)

Invite volunteers to share with the group their answer to either question, while the rest of the group listens. Ask the rest of the group to listen carefully to what the other person is sharing, without judgement or expectations. (Optional: for small children, perhaps they can use art to express how they feel about God's love for them, such as music, movement, coloring, etc.)