

Carry your cross

Great crowds were travelling with Jesus, so He turned and told them that in order to follow Him, they need total dedication to be His disciples: Neither family nor possessions can stand in the way: “If any one comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple... In the same way, every one of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26, 33). Moreover, Jesus said, “Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.” (Lk 14:27) It is so interesting for Jesus to say this, because at that point in time, Jesus had not yet carried His Cross to Calvary. Could this statement be a revelation of what was yet to come? Disciples of Christ need to be ready to make sacrifices, give up a lot and take on suffering: The parables of the builders and the king marching into battle illustrate the need for anyone who wishes to be His disciple to assess the hardships and costs of being one. (Lk 14:28–32)

Why does Jesus require total dedication from a disciple? Matthew 6:24 gives us the answer: “No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other.” (Matthew 6:24) The first disciples gave up everything to follow Jesus; Peter said so himself, “We have given up everything and followed you. What will there be for us?” (Matthew 19:27) Peter had a wife, but he gave up his family life to follow Christ. Jesus said to His disciples, “Everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more, and will inherit eternal life.” (Matthew 19:29)

Saints follow Christ by putting Him above all, they demonstrate this by giving up everything when they were called. St. Anthony of Egypt sold his inheritance, gave almost all of it to the poor and became a hermit, devoting his life to prayer and mortification. St. Francis of Assisi gave up a life of rich comfort to live a life of poverty and service to God.

A rich young man asked Jesus, “Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?” (Matthew 19:16) The young man had observed all the commandments. Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to [the] poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” (Matthew 19:21) When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions. The rich young man couldn’t part from his possessions, and rather than selling all his possessions to acquire that piece of land that had the treasure in it, or selling all his pearls to acquire that one pearl of great value, he walked away. He would not take the chance that Jesus was offering to him to gain eternal life, he would rather remain where he was. If he had followed Jesus, he would never be rich again because he would be travelling with Jesus from town to town, leaving behind comfort and the means to make money.

For those of us in today’s world, what does this total dedication involve? It would be impractical if all of us would sell all our possessions and give it to the poor. The result would be that everyone would be poor; there would be no capital to invest in technology, innovation or the improvement of society. However, following Jesus involves more than just a verbal confession or

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attending church on Sundays; it requires a commitment to do the following: (1) BELIEVE in Him: who He is, what He said and what He did. (2) ALIGN your own will to do God's will. (3) PRACTICE His way of love, truthfulness and compassion. (4) SACRIFICE your own comfort and desires for the sake of Christ. (5) TRANSFORM your way of life to conform to the way of Christ.

We can certainly carry our crosses and follow Jesus in ordinary life. Each time we swallow our pride to acknowledge our faults and mistakes; each time we treat others with kindness and patience, rather than giving in to anger and resentment; each time we accept the consequences of telling the truth, rather than take the easy way out.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attention children and parents: We will not have Sunday School class on Sunday.

Fr. Bill will administer the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick in the Sanctuary after the 10:30am Mass on Sunday. Those who would like to receive the Anointing of the Sick, please come to the front of the Sanctuary right after Mass.

The OCIA class will meet on Sunday at 11:30am in the Conference Room.

We are planning to build a recreation space/ mini-park and children's playground at the back of the church. We invite you to take a look behind the youth room to see the area where this will be built. We are preparing a project plan and we will inform you of the details as we go along. In addition, we are also planning to finish the second floor of the Education Building to add much needed classrooms and meeting space.

Our parish pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche in St. Augustine, Florida, will be from November 24-26. This peaceful and beautiful site is where the first recorded Catholic Mass in the United States was celebrated in 1565. Participants will arrange by themselves to carpool to the shrine on Monday, November 24. We have negotiated a discounted group rate at Hampton Inn with hot breakfast for our 3-day/2-night stay. Parking fee is \$20 per day. Each room has two queen beds and costs \$155 plus tax per night. Participants will book the hotel rooms on their own. Please sign up with Long Che with your email, and we will send you an email with the booking link so that you can get the discounted rate. The last day to book your rooms at the discounted rate is September 24.

Prayer List: Xu Chunmei, Bian Meiyi, Chen Kun, Chen Shupeng, Ni Yufang, Lydia Chen, David Wang, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	Sundays 9:00-9:30 AM	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)	Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM	Mondays 6:00 PM (English)
	By Appointment	
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)		Eucharistic Adoration
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	Anointing of the Sick	Sundays 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Tuesdays 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		
First Saturday 10:00 AM (Chinese)		