

Take Up Your Cross

Jesus said to His disciples, “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24) “Take up your cross and follow me” is Christ’s call for those who truly want to become His disciples; it is not an easy call to fulfill – it demands giving up oneself, putting God’s will above personal convenience and comfort, and consistent acts of self-denial and sacrifice. To take up one’s cross and to follow Jesus is essentially a participation in Christ’s suffering and obedience to God the Father.

Luke’s version emphasizes that to take up one’s cross is a daily commitment, not a once-in-a-lifetime dramatic event: “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross **daily** and follow me (Luke 9:23).”

Taking up one’s cross is interpreted by many Christians as bearing life’s daily struggles; but in its scriptural context, to deny someone is to disown him (cf. Mt 10:33; 26:34–35), and to deny oneself is to disown oneself. To take up one’s cross and to follow Christ means to remove oneself as the center of one’s existence and instead put Christ as the center. Jesus continued on to say, “What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his life? For the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father’s glory, and then he will repay everyone according to his conduct.” (Matthew 16:26-27)

Jesus spoke these words to His disciples when He first predicted His Passion - that He must go to



Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised (cf. Matthew 16:21, Luke 9:22). In this context, taking up one’s cross to follow Christ means enduring real hardships for the sake of Christ. It means living out the Gospel with a disposition of love, self-sacrifice and obedience. It means aligning one’s daily life with the character and teachings of Jesus Christ, rather than conforming to standards imposed by the majority. It means suffering persecution for the sake of righteousness. In the world today, Christians who are persecuted for their faith literally carry their own crosses to follow Christ – they are subject to targeted killings and massacres, abductions, and destruction of church and personal property and livelihood. At the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told His disciples, “Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:10)

One very important note to make is that taking up one’s cross does not mean being resigned to one’s personal sins and tolerating one’s moral weaknesses. Taking up one’s cross means dying to sinful desires, not living in sin. It is not permission to sin, but rather the act of putting to death self-serving desires and actions, and to disown one’s old self in order to live a life transformed.

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PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attention children and parents: We will have Sunday School today!

We have reached our goal for this year's Archbishops Annual Appeal. Thank you for your support!

All are invited to participate in our special liturgies during Holy Week. Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper begins at 7:00pm on April 2, Stations of the Cross on Good Friday begins at 6:00pm on April 3, followed by the Passion of the Lord at 7:00pm, and the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night begins at 8:00pm on April 4, 2026.

Easter Sunday will be on April 5. The Easter Egg Hunt for our parish children begins right after the 10:30am Mass, followed by our community potluck. This will be our potluck for the month of April. Please bring your favorite dish to share. If you are celebrating your birthday in the month of April, we have ordered a birthday cake for you. We will also be drawing winners for our Easter potluck fundraising raffle. Please buy your tickets from Ticheng and Tian Shih.

Did you know that you can make donations to the church directly from your retirement account? Each time you make a distribution from your retirement account, it is counted as taxable income. However, if you make a donation (up to \$108,000), to qualified charities through QCD (Qualified Charitable Distributions), these donations, although not tax-deductible, are excluded from taxable income. Many older retired donors use this strategy to lower their taxable income, but it also satisfies Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) without increasing their adjusted gross income (AGI). Consult your financial advisor or contact your retirement account specialist.

Prayer List: Bian Meiyi, 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)	By Appointment	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)		
	Anointing of the Sick	Eucharistic Adoration
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Sundays 9:00 to 10:00 AM
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	First Fridays after 7:00 PM Mass	
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)		
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		