

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

There is a popular expression that begins with: *I'd do anything for.....*

Usually, it is not meant too seriously

If I say "I'd do anything for a meatball sub right now." Well, not *anything*

The expression, I'd do anything for you was far closer to reality when you held you babies. People will do anything for their children because they love them so much. That might mean working two jobs, sitting through a dance recital, and saving all you can for their college.

They way we feel about your children gives us a faint idea of how God feels about us. He'd do anything for us - And he did.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son so that all who believe in him might not perish but may have eternal life. John 3:16.

God gave his son to us as a Complete Gift. He was completely ours to treasure, to find the Father through, or, ignore and put to death. And we put Jesus to death in the most horrible way possible, execution through the torture that was crucifixion.

Today we celebrate the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The Son joined the Father's love in doing anything for us. The feast is the exaltation of the cross because it is a demand that we recognize that this sign of death and misery has become a sign of life and victory.

Jesus' death on the cross restored our capacity to have eternal life. The power of the Cross is that on the Cross Life Destroyed Death, and Love destroyed hate. This is totally counter cultural. Our culture says that physical might and financial strength are signs of power. But who were the most powerful people of the last century? Perhaps you might think Hitler, Stalin, FDR, or Churchill. I would disagree. Two of the most powerful people of the last century were Mohatma Ghandi and Mother Theresa. Both were poor. Both were lovers of all that is right and just. Ghandi shamed the mighty British Empire into giving India independence. Mother Theresa shamed us all into recognizing our responsibility towards the poorest of the poor.

The cross is more than a piece of jewelry. We should wear a cross as a sign that we are committed to Christ's way, the way of sacrificial love, sign that we choose love regardless of the personal cost. Love and love alone defeats hatred and, ultimately, death.

We should wear the cross as a sign of our commitment to a living faith and our hope that we will still share the eternal life of God. The cross is a statement to ourselves and to others that THIS is how God loved the world.