

## Before Thy Cross

**Matthew 16:24-Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.** (KJV)

The Cross is placed in the middle of the church on the Third Sunday of Great Lent. Believers bow down before The Cross and draw strength for the Lenten journey. Taking the journey to Pascha seriously requires effort, focus and commitment. Investing in the journey to Pascha is an investment in the Kingdom of God. Investing in the Kingdom of God is the most secure investment of earthly life...

**Mark 10:21-Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.** (KJV)

Jesus told the man the value of giving up his possessions and taking up the cross. Sacrifice is essential in taking up the crosses in daily life to follow Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ set the supreme example by responsibly facing The Cross in His Life. Each believer has life-giving opportunities to responsibly face personal crosses. Jesus Christ is always present to give each believer strength through His Cross.

**Luke 23:26-And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus** (KJV)

Believers draw strength by falling down in prayer before The Cross in church. Jesus' example of voluntarily going to The Cross strengthens observant believers. The hunger in the soul for strength and nourishment is addressed in Christ's Cross. Bowing in prayer before Jesus' Cross provides power to believers feeling weak. Power from Jesus' Cross enables believers to confidently face personal adversity.

**John 19:25-Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.** (KJV)

The Gospel provides names of specific witnesses to Jesus Christ's Crucifixion. Witnesses to the Crucifixion had their lives changed and transformed forever. Believers bowing down in prayer before the Cross have their strength renewed. The Cross is the Sign of Victory over death and the verification of Christ's power. Believers with eyes to see recognize the life-giving power of Christ's Cross.

**1 Corinthians 1:18-For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.** (KJV)

The Church in Her wisdom puts The Cross in the center on the Third Sunday. Believers participating in the journey to Pascha appreciate the power of The Cross. The Cross is central to fully understanding the Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection. Each journey to Pascha is beneficial to the soul and leads to God's Kingdom. Serious believers journey by The Cross's power to the life-giving joy of Pascha.

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The Fourth Week of Great Lent. Venerable Father Hilarion the New. Venerable Stephen the Wonderworker. March 28; April 10, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic