

I have love you with an everlasting love. . .  
God loves us so much – he holds nothing back from us – not even his own son: allowing him to be crucified for our sake. Scorned for our iniquities. All to gain our attention, to capture our hearts, to get us down on our knees to love and serve in the same way he loved and served.

So they say a picture is worth a thousand words – and if that is true – than a symbol has to be worth a good two thousand words!

A symbol is something that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention.

Every time we gather in this church – we sit, kneel and stand before the most powerful symbol of our Christian faith -- this cross of Jesus Christ. Now of course we know it is not THE cross of Jesus – but by resemblance, stands in our community as the symbol of the actual cross of Jesus.

So powerful is the symbol of the cross—that no matter how many times in the day or night we pray: we begin and end by marking ourselves with the sign of the cross.

So powerful is the symbol of the cross, that if we have any piece of religious art in our homes – or wear a piece of Christian jewelry – chances are, it is a cross.

So powerful is the symbol of the cross, that every time we enter or leave this place – we mark ourselves with the sign of the cross using Holy Water – reminding us of our Baptism which incorporates us into the Body of Christ.

So powerful is the symbol of the cross that during the Eucharistic prayer of the Mass – as the Holy Spirit is called down upon the gifts of bread and wine and asked to change them into the Body and Blood of Christ – the sign of the cross over the gifts seals the deal.

So powerful is the symbol of the cross that we are just going to spend some quiet time in reflection before the cross today. . . allowing it to speak to us it's 2,000 words. . . before we venerate a symbol of the cross.

Jesus once said in the Gospel of John: “No one has greater love than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

Take a few minutes to look at the cross and ask yourself who you would be willing to die for – to lay down your life for. And after you think of what might be just a handful of people – think of the great love Jesus had for you in laying down his life for you – because he is willing to get down on his knees and look up at you – because he considers you his friend. And allow Jesus to speak to you.

--Quiet--

And now think about how it is through the cross and resurrection that we are set free --- set free from sin. Set free from death.

What do you most need to be set free from at this point in your life? And then know that nothing is impossible with God. Know that God loves you so much –

God is going to help you through the cross of Christ to gain your freedom –if you entrust that concern to God. Speak to God, quietly in your heart – about these concerns.

--Quiet--

As you come in just a few minutes to venerate the cross today – with a kiss, a touch, a bow, or a genuflection ---- leave those concerns you just talked to God about --- at the cross --- so you can leave this place in peace. Knowing that God has set you free. . .

