

Homily
13th Sunday in Ordinary Time
June 28, 2026

Take Up Your Cross

A story is told about Jesus leading two disciples down a long, winding road. At a certain point, he gave each of them a heavy wooden cross, instructing them to carry it to the end of the road where he would be waiting. Then he disappeared from sight.

The first disciple eagerly picked up his cross and carried it steadily despite its weight. The second struggled to lift his, his steps laboured and slow. As the road stretched on, the first surged ahead while the second fell further and further behind.

After a day of arduous travel, the first disciple reached the end of the road. Weary but triumphant, he set down the cross at Jesus' feet.

"Well done, my son," the Lord said, patting him on the back.

The second disciple arrived on the evening of the second day. He collapsed next to the cross, unable to take another step.

"It's not fair!" he complained. "You gave me a much heavier cross than his — that's why it took me longer!"

The Lord looked at him with compassion. "My child, both crosses weigh the same."

"But how come I carried mine with such difficulty while he carried his with ease?"

"Do not blame the cross," the Lord said. "You were complaining the entire way. Every complaint added to its weight. The first disciple carried his cross with ease because every loving thought diminished it."

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells the crowds: *"Anyone who does not take up his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me"* (Mt 10:38).

Following the Lord means embracing the cross he has entrusted to each of us. Yet more often than not, we grumble about its weight, its length, its size.

Why is my marriage so hard? Can't we just separate and start over?

This job is crushing me. Can't God just open another door already?

Why do I have to keep caring for this sick family member year after year? Can someone else take over?

I'm overwhelmed by this community. Can I serve somewhere else?

I've given everything to this child and nothing seems to work. How much more patience do I have left, Lord?

We live in a comfort culture. We want everything fast, easy, and painless. We look for shortcuts at every turn—the quickest route, the easiest method, the path of least resistance. We have grown so accustomed to convenience that discomfort and difficulty feel like something has gone wrong—like a mistake to be fixed rather than a cross to be carried.

When we look at the cross, we don't see comfort—we see sacrifice, pain, and total trust in the Father.

When we look at the cross, we don't see ease—we see perseverance, patience, and dedication.

When we look at the cross, we don't see shortcuts—we see growth in faith, in love, and in obedience to God's will.

Brothers and sisters, let us carry our cross not as a burden we endure, but as a love we choose. Amen.