

# The Beauty of the Cross

Lenten 2026

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18)

I have always loved hymns. I have fond memories of singing them in church and still recall the words of the himnos we sang in the churches I grew up in. As you sing the hymns, you often hear key words and themes repeated. One of the most common themes you'll hear as you sing the hymns is “the cross”. Why is it important that we reflect on the cross during the Lenten season?

We reflect on the cross because what was created as a means of painful death is now a symbol of life. In our respective domains of life and ministry, we encounter death in many places. Not only do we suffer through hardships ourselves, but we also witness the pain that others go through. We witness the harsh reality that life is not fair, that justice is not always assured. We acknowledge that death is always present in a world marred by sin. But the cross gives us hope for life. Just as Christ's journey to Golgotha did not end there, our journeys in Christ do not end with death.

We reflect on the cross because what was an excruciating punishment is now a sign of the reward yet to come. As educators and ministers, we recognize that serving others is not easy. We have willfully and obediently taken on a burden that at times can be overwhelmingly painful. It can be difficult at times to find the strength and resolve to continue in the calling we have been given. But the cross gives us purpose. We know that what we do has spiritual implications and that if Christ's resurrection is a reality, then he will be sure to keep his promises.

We reflect on the cross because what had served as a means of humiliation is now a symbol of victory. Life is full of valleys and mountaintop experiences. Most of us have had our fair share of failures more often than we would like to admit- the outcomes of a course were not as expected, the ministry opportunity did not have the fruitful results we had hoped for, the grant we had spent time and effort on was not awarded. As humiliating as these losses are, we keep our sights on the one who has already won and has made us more than conquerors.

As we remain rooted at the cross, we embrace the hope that the resurrection has given us. This Lenten season, may we continue to see the beauty of the cross and sing along with the hymnist:

*So, I'll cherish the old rugged cross,  
till my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross,  
and exchange it someday for a crown*



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LENTEN 2026  
Theological Reflections

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