

## The Carrying of the Cross

In the movie *The Passion of the Christ*, Simon of Cyrene is forced into labor, forced to help this bloodied, battered man on His way to His death. However, on the hill of Golgotha, Simon refused to abandon Him and had to be dragged away from Jesus.

Family life can be very difficult. When the bills are piling up, the kids are out of control, and it seems like everything is falling apart, Satan steps in with temptations. He tempts us to drop our crosses.

Everyone in our family, from the youngest to the oldest will face a temptation to drop a cross and walk away.

May God give us the grace to be Simon to those in our immediate family, parish family, and community. May He give us the strength to walk with others all the way.

*“..we are not alone as we face these difficulties. Life in the Body of Christ is meant to be lived as interdependent members, who build one another up in love. The Church’s teaching, sacraments, and community all exist to help us on the journey.” LIOM #173*

## The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus on the Cross

We often say things to family members that we would never dream of saying to a stranger. In a way, it is a good thing that we feel comfortable and are able to share. However, many of those things said or done can hurt those we love most.

Our family should be a school of discernment, learning, growth, conversion, and charity. It should also be school of forgiveness. It should be a place where we learn to forgive and to ask for forgiveness.

Jesus was wounded by those He loved dearly. Not only was He scourged, mocked, and beaten, He was crucified by those He loved. Yet in the midst of His pain and suffering He teaches our family that forgiveness is essential. From His cross He forgives and prays for those who have injured Him. Let us do the same in our family.

*“...forgiveness is a lifelong project which builds upon habits of prayer, participation in the Sacraments, and familiarity with the story of God’s covenant. The Lord knows that no marriage (or family) displays all the virtues all the time, but in his mercy, he gives us Penance and Eucharist so that we might grow in our capacity to love as Jesus does.” LIOM #67*

# The Sorrowful Mysteries of the Family



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Meditations from the book—

Rosary Meditations for the Family

## The Agony in the Garden

Our family prayer life can take many different forms and praying together as a family can help keep us close to one another and close to the Lord.

Prayers before meals, at bedtime, and the family rosary are essential times of prayer. We can also pray for the needs of others, pray for guidance for our family, and pray in thanksgiving for all that God has given us.

Regardless of the time, place, or intention, our underlying theme in every prayer should be that found in this mystery—*“not as I will, but as you will.”*

Jesus gives our family an example of how we must always end our prayers. In all that we experience as a family, in all that we pray for together, let us end every prayer with those words, *“not as I will, but as you will”* or we could even say, *“not as our family wills, but as you will for our family.”*

*“Practicing and teaching discernment as a family imply patience and prayer, a constant desire to purify motives, to confess and do penance...to understand one’s inner life.”*  
LIOM #78

## The Scourging at the Pillar

We know that suffering will come to our family. Colds and flu, broken bones, and cuts and bruises, will be part of our family life. Financial troubles, cancer, and addictions may visit our family with its suffering.

Suffering is an unavoidable part of life on God’s beautiful earth. Jesus suffered. Mary suffered. Peter and Paul suffered. All of the saints in Heaven suffered.

Yet even in the midst of suffering, we are given hope. We are given an example by our Lord. He endured all of His suffering with patience and persistence. He used the suffering He endured for the salvation of the world. Our family can do this too.

With this mystery let us ask for the courage to offer even our most painful sufferings back to the Lord. Let us ask that this suffering that our family is enduring be used for the conversion and salvation of others.

*“Among the many things that he did on earth, Jesus suffered and yet persevered in love; Jesus was crucified by human hands and yet was raised victorious over death. Because God himself suffered these things, Christians believe that God is not remote from the human condition.”* LIOM #9

## The Crowning with Thorns

During Jesus’ brutal sufferings He was hit, mocked, spat upon, crowned with thorns, and ridiculed. Soldiers and bystanders alike judged Him and labeled Him. He was brought before government officials mockingly dressed as a king but treated like a court jester.

As our world grows increasingly violent toward the family, let us learn and lean upon Jesus’ example.

When our family is mocked, ridiculed, and persecuted because of our openness to life, fidelity, and faith, let us answer with love.

It was love in the midst of pain, suffering, and persecution that changed the world and it can do so again. Love is the answer. *Love is our mission.*

*“We can be confident that if we follow this love, even to the foot of the cross, our sufferings are actually making us more real, more authentically human...This love will give us the fortitude to live distinctively, as salt of the earth.”*  
LIOM 196