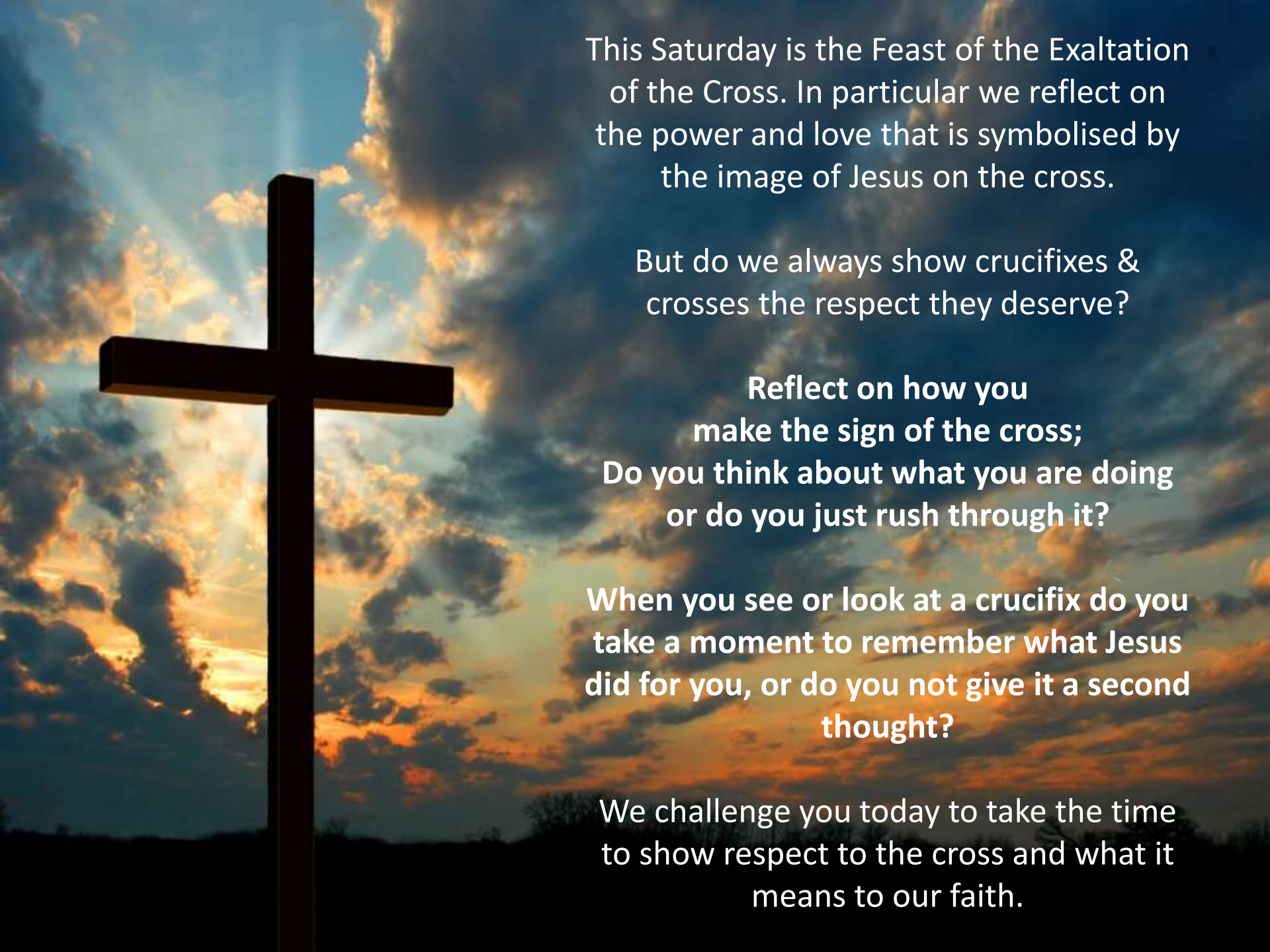


The week beginning 9<sup>th</sup> September (Monday)



# Exalt the Cross

Only in the Cross of Christ will we receive power when we are powerless – Michael Youssef



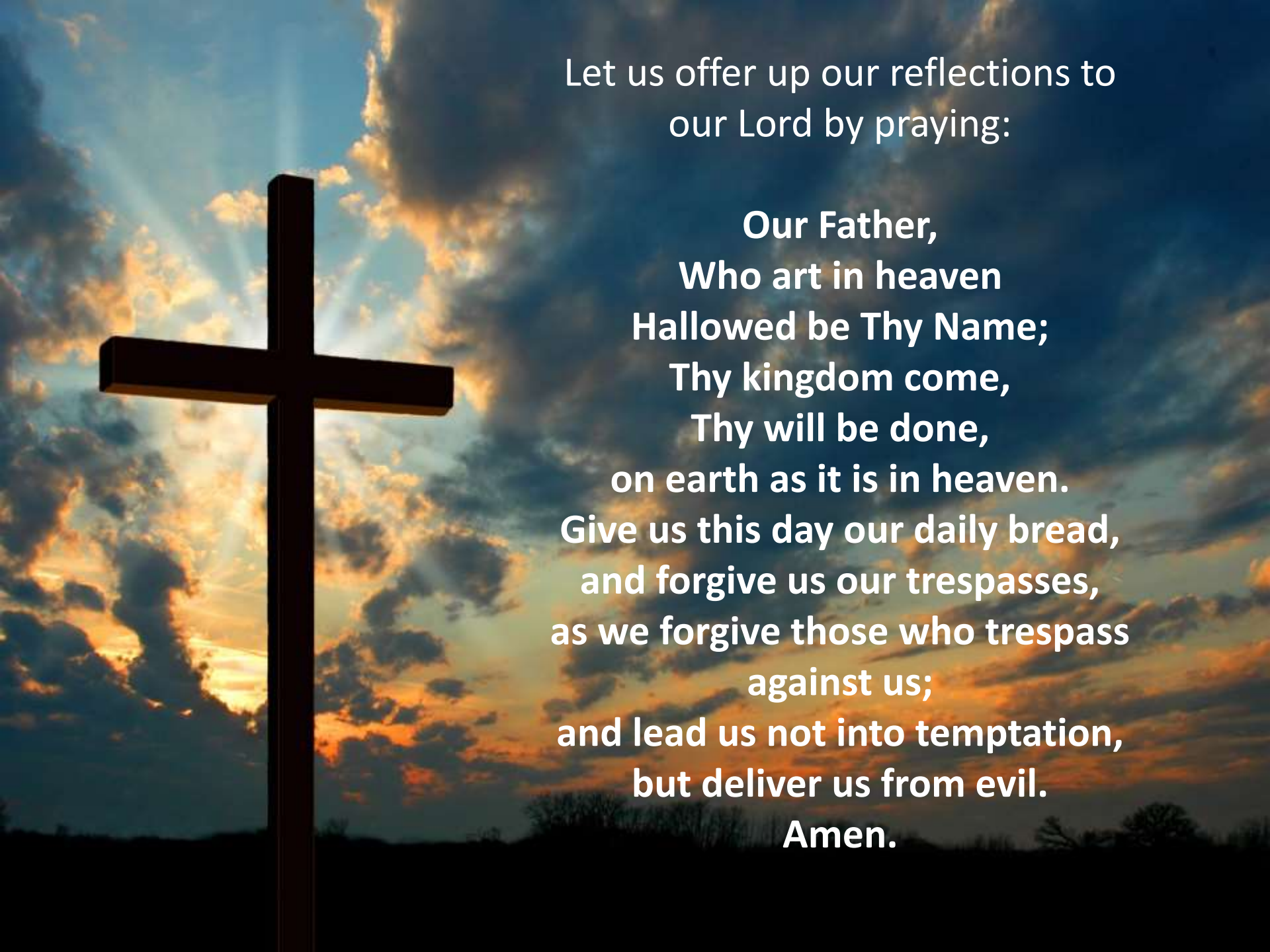
This Saturday is the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. In particular we reflect on the power and love that is symbolised by the image of Jesus on the cross.

But do we always show crucifixes & crosses the respect they deserve?

**Reflect on how you  
make the sign of the cross;  
Do you think about what you are doing  
or do you just rush through it?**

**When you see or look at a crucifix do you  
take a moment to remember what Jesus  
did for you, or do you not give it a second  
thought?**

We challenge you today to take the time to show respect to the cross and what it means to our faith.



Let us offer up our reflections to  
our Lord by praying:

**Our Father,  
Who art in heaven  
Hallowed be Thy Name;  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass  
against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
Amen.**



The week beginning 9<sup>th</sup> September (Tuesday)



# Exalt the Cross

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when we are powerless – Michael Youssef



**“How beautiful it is to stand before the Crucifix,  
simply to be under the Lord’s gaze, so full of love.”  
(Pope Francis)**

It’s a bit hard to see at first, but when you step back,  
and really look at it, the gift of the Cross is incredible.

On the Cross, God shows us that His love has no  
bounds. But, He doesn’t stop there, although He totally  
could, because WOAHH. God also shows us that our  
suffering has purpose. That no matter what happens,  
He has conquered it all. Death is not the end. Our  
suffering has merit for eternal life.

But, for some reason, the Cross – this incredible gift –  
makes so many of us uncomfortable. We want happy  
Jesus: smiling, hugging, carrying-an-adorable-lamb-to-  
safety Jesus. And, the moment we look pain in the  
eyes we run away for fear it will swallow us whole.

But, if you were to ask me, in which moments of my life  
I have felt Christ’s presence the most, I would  
confidently answer you: in the hardest and most  
painful. It’s in those times I’ve realised, I seriously  
cannot do this alone



Let us Pray;

**Dear Jesus,  
your love for your Father and for  
the whole world brought you to  
the cross. Gazing upon the cross  
helps us to remember your bitter  
Passion and we thank you for your  
great sacrifice.**

**May our devotion of the cross  
help us to be more loving, so that  
we may learn to love our brothers  
and sisters, and any hatred,  
mistrust or resentment will leave  
our hearts.**

**Amen.**



The week beginning 9<sup>th</sup> September (Wednesday)



# Exalt the Cross

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when we are powerless – Michael Youssef



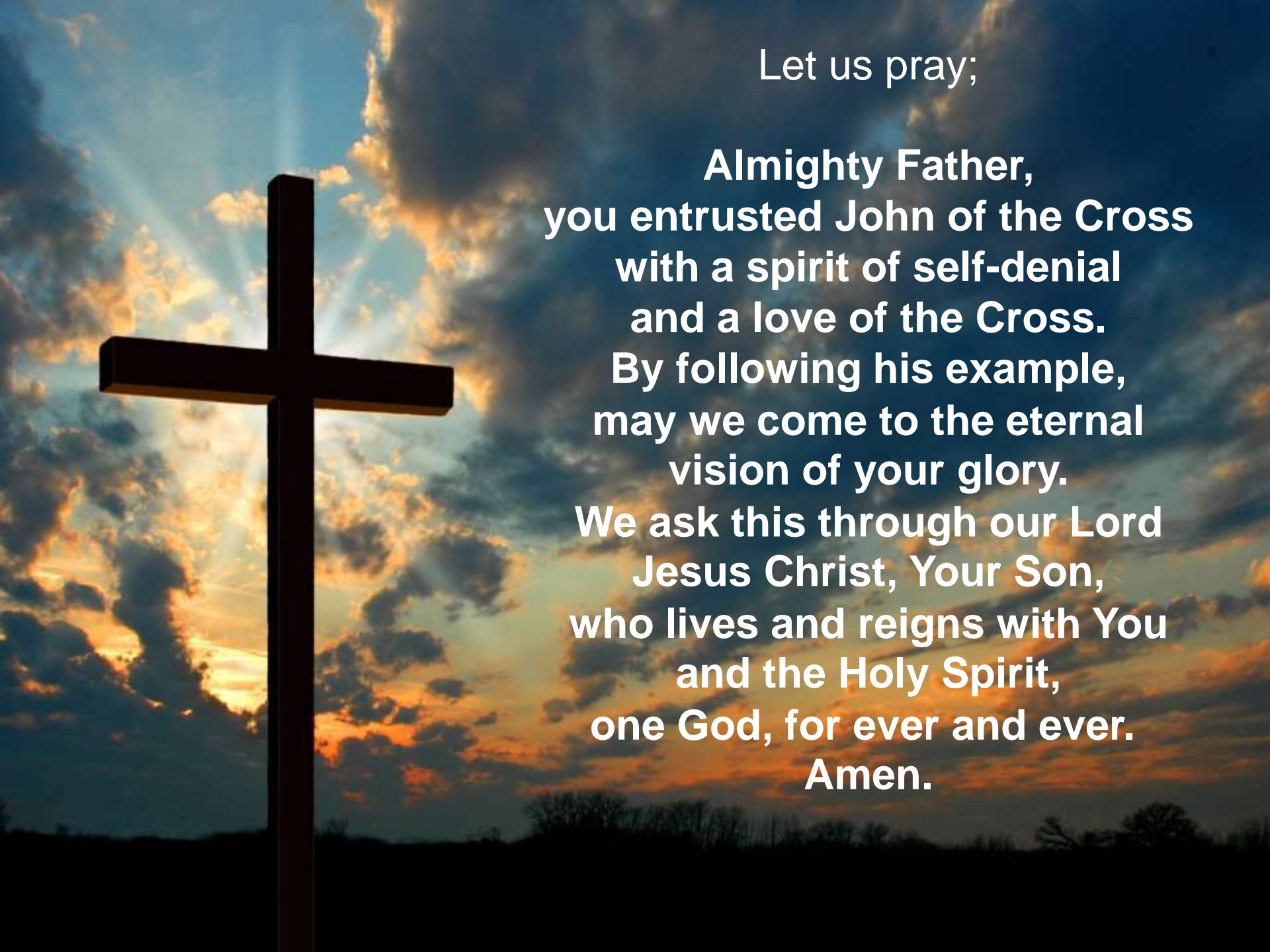
# John of the Cross

Ordained a Carmelite priest in 1567 at age 25, John met Teresa of Avila and like her, vowed himself to the primitive Rule of the Carmelites. As partner with Teresa and in his own right, John engaged in the work of reform, and came to experience the price of reform: increasing opposition, misunderstanding, persecution, imprisonment. He came to know the cross acutely—to experience the dying of Jesus—as he sat month after month in his dark, damp, narrow cell with only his God.

Yet, the paradox! In this dying of imprisonment John came to life, uttering poetry. In the darkness of the dungeon, John's spirit came into the Light. There are many mystics, many poets; John is unique as mystic-poet, expressing in his prison-cross the ecstasy of mystical union with God in the *Spiritual Canticle*.

He died at 49—a life short, but full.





Let us pray;

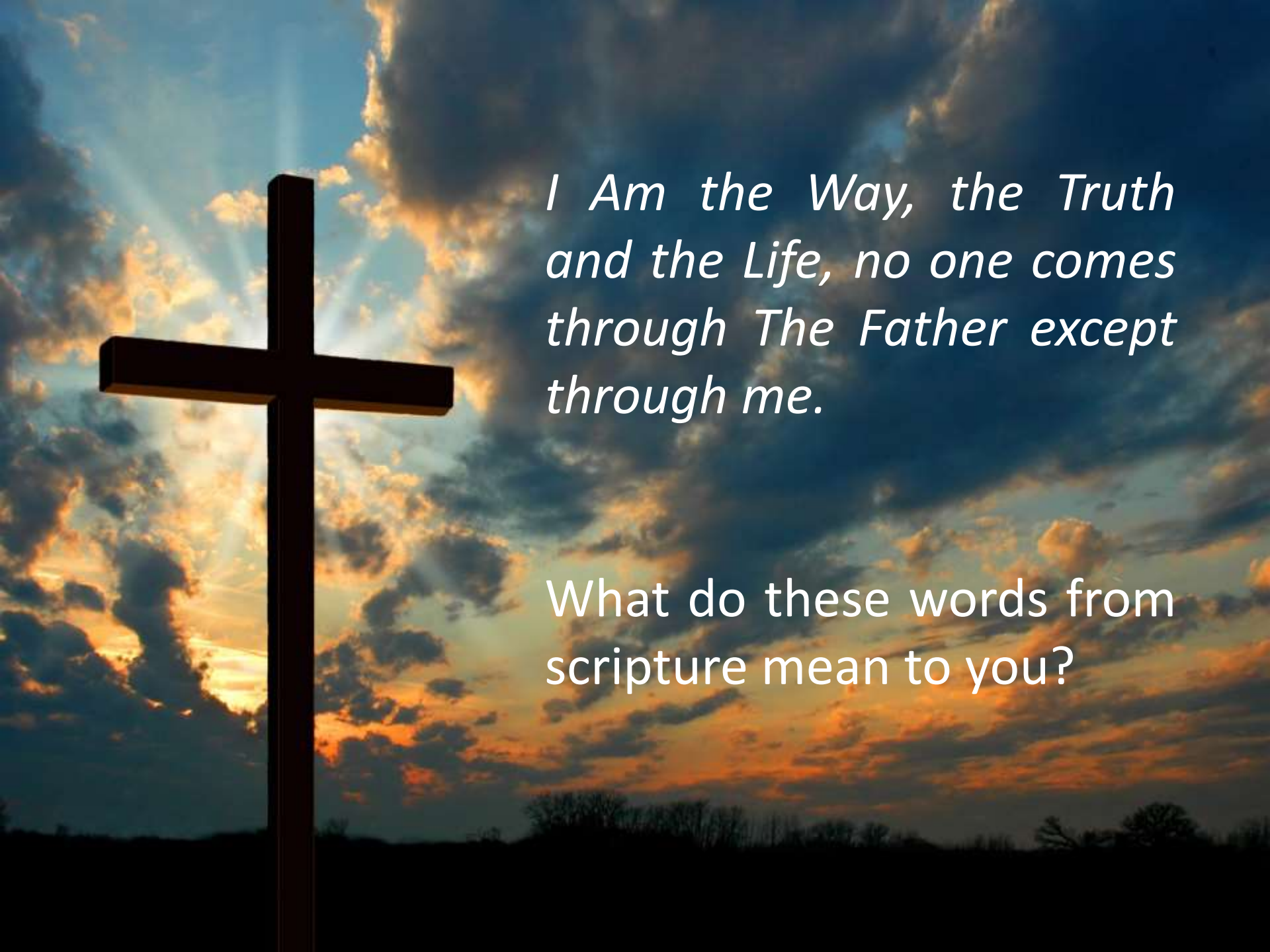
**Almighty Father,  
you entrusted John of the Cross  
with a spirit of self-denial  
and a love of the Cross.  
By following his example,  
may we come to the eternal  
vision of your glory.  
We ask this through our Lord  
Jesus Christ, Your Son,  
who lives and reigns with You  
and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

The week beginning 9<sup>th</sup> September (Thursday)



# Exalt the Cross

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when we are powerless – Michael Youssef



*I Am the Way, the Truth  
and the Life, no one comes  
through The Father except  
through me.*

What do these words from  
scripture mean to you?





Lord Jesus

You have asked us to take up our cross and carry it in order to be one of your disciples. Therefore we humbly pray that we recognise in ourselves your gifts of courage and strength to do your will, especially for the times when we feel that our cross is too much to bear.

Amen

The week beginning 9<sup>th</sup> September (Friday)



# Exalt the Cross

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**Tomorrow we celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.**

**The story goes that Saint Helena, mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine, went to Jerusalem in search of the holy places of Christ's life. She ruined the second-century Temple of Aphrodite, which tradition held was built over the Jesus' tomb, and her son built the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher on that spot. During the excavation, workers found three crosses. Legend has it that the one on which Jesus died was identified when its touch healed a dying woman.**

**The cross immediately became an object of veneration. At a Good Friday celebration in Jerusalem toward the end of the fourth century, according to an eyewitness, the wood was taken out of its silver container and placed on a table together with the inscription Pilate ordered placed above Jesus' head.**

**As we have been reflecting on the Cross this week, let us think about how we will show our respect to it from now on. Whether that is taking care when making the Sign of the Cross or showing reverence when we go past one.**





Let us pray;

**O God, who willed that Your Only  
Begotten Son  
should undergo the Cross to save  
the human race,  
grant, we pray,  
that we, who have known his  
mystery on earth,  
may merit the grace of his  
redemption in heaven.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.**