



# BUILDING THE DOMESTIC CHURCH

*Living the Faith at Home*

## SEPTEMBER'S THEME: THE HOLY CROSS

### Introducing “Building the Domestic Church”!

“Building the Domestic Church” is a weekly newsletter from your Faith Formation staff at Holy Rosary (Sr. Stella Abellon in Children's Ministry, Bridget Bicek in Youth Ministry, Robert King in Adult Evangelization, with help from Deyette Swegle and Sarah Goins). We'll provide resources to live out your Catholic faith at home, especially when many of us are spending more time than normal at home.

We hope this weekly newsletter will help you to encounter Christ in your own homes, receive his love in your own hearts, and share his love with your family.

In Christ,

Bridget, Robert, and Sr. Stella

### How Does it Work?

Last week, we talked about how to use the Reflections on the Readings. This week, we'd like to focus on the Monthly Theme Activities. Because we don't want to overwhelm you, we've made [a page on our website](#) where you can find different suggestions for living your faith as a household this month.

Different households may do different activities, but all of us in the parish can feel connected through participating in the theme!

### September's Theme: The Holy Cross

September's theme is the Holy Cross, centered on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on Monday, September 14. This feast celebrates both Christ's victory over sin and death that he accomplished through the cross, and also the recovery of relics of Jesus's cross by St. Helena.

Resources to help live out this month's theme, including individual and family activities, videos, and projects to enliven your home, are on our website here: <https://holyrosaryseattle.org/domestic-church>

This month's resources include:

- How to make a cross for your home
- Ways to "take up your cross" as individuals and as a family
- How to address the cross of loneliness, especially with teens

### Readings for September 20, the 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time:

- **Isaiah 55:6–9** — *The Lord's ways are higher than our ways*
- **Psalm 143** — *The Lord is near to all who call upon him*
- **Philippians 1:20c–24, 27a** — *Living here is fruitful labor, but departing is being with Christ; both glorify God*
- **Matthew 20:1–16a** — *The last and the first receive the same wage*

The full text of the readings can be found at <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/091320.cfm>

## Reflection on the Readings by Robert King

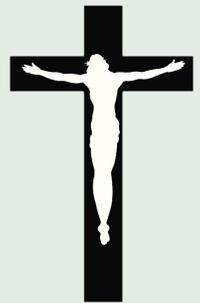
God is a terrible businessman. In this Sunday's Gospel, he pays the same wage to those who worked twelve hours as to those who worked only one. How many will show up tomorrow morning? Wouldn't they relax through the day, then work an hour to collect full wages? Or go work for someone else, then hop over to the vineyard around five o'clock to effectively double their pay? Economics calls this a "perverse incentive": it rewards behavior you want to discourage.

On the other hand, they might tell their friends, and bring a flood of people as evening falls, perhaps more than on the first day. Maybe that is what God is after: he wants us to show up, and receive what he gives to us. The parable says nothing about the harvest, about profit, about the work the laborers accomplish. It does not say they earn their wage, but rather that the landowner gives them his money. It's a real gift: to those who grumble, he says, "Take what is yours and go." If money is what they want, that's all they receive.

But God doesn't want—or need—our labor. He doesn't want to profit off of us. No, he wants us to share his life and his work. He wants us, ourselves. And he is willing to freely give all he has to entice us to come back to him. Bad for business, but good for happiness.

## September's Theme: The Holy Cross

Every month, we'll propose a theme that all the households of our parish can live out together. September's theme is the Holy Cross, centered on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on Monday, September 14. This feast celebrates both Christ's victory over sin and death that he accomplished through the cross, and also the recovery of relics of Jesus's cross by St. Helena.



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### Questions for Parents:

- How do you keep things fair among your children? How can you show generosity to them?
- Do your children sometimes feel they've gotten less than they deserve? How can you help them work through such situations? Can you help them see the difference between injustice (not giving someone what is due to them) and generosity (giving someone more than is due to them)?

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### Questions for Children:

- How do you feel when someone else gets more than you do? What does Jesus say about those who are always looking for what others get instead of appreciating what they were given?
- What will you do to show God's love and generosity to your friends, family members, neighborhood, and to the world today?

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### Questions for Adults:

- What are your reasons for following Christ? What kind of reward do you expect? What are you willing to do to get such a reward?
- Do you compare what you receive from God with what others have received? Do you think you deserve more or less? Are there times you have benefited from God's generosity?

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### Questions for Teens:

- Think about one of your closet friends. What attributes make them a good friend? (Loyal, honest, kind, funny, etc.) Tell your parents about why you enjoy their friendship.
- Now think about your relationship with God. How would you classify your relationship with God? (A friend, parent figure, mentor, coach?)
- Do you believe God wants the same closeness with you as you have with your friend? What does this Gospel passage teach you about the type of relationship God wants with you?