

“Take up your cross”

Those who don't make mistakes, never attempt. Those who never fail, never try. Those who are not prepared to suffer, cannot emerge from mediocrity. Those who do not take up the cross, are doomed to endure an existence without life.

The child cried. Living in a comfortable home. Never having endured hunger. Dressed in clean and smart clothes. Stimulated by all that parents could provide. Held within relationships of trust, and real love.

Problem.

How could this child have a problem?

A life it seemed without a cross to bear.

But this child was worried. This child was anxious

Concerned that the noise made upon the recorder, that was played

Would not reach the standard needed to pass the test

This child could have a problem

It was a personal problem

This child could experience the weight of the cross

A cross laid upon those small shoulders

Small

but real

and not to be denied

Thus respected

The child was encouraged to take up the cross

To learn

To take up the challenge

To grow in strength.

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Being a parent the experience of suffering, was something that was well practiced.

Concerned about the company they kept, she carried the weight of anxiety. Worried about something she could do nothing about.

Frightened by the daily bulletins concerning the economy she shouldered the weight of the fear of her children's employment.

Annoyed by remarks made, she spoke to people who were not there, and grew more frustrated by the answers she imagined they would make. Bearing the burden of all the family', the town, the world.

Carrying the crosses that were not hers.

Strangely this madness had a function.

It meant she could avoid dealing with her own cross

It meant she could hide from the challenge of dealing with what she could actually affect.

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You all have crosses

You all have the need to face the challenge

The fact that another's cross, is heavier than the one you bear does not mean yours does not exist

You all have crosses

They are yours, so pick up the real ones, and affect what you can influence, do not hide behind the excuse of problems that are not your own.

You all have crosses

You can blame the world. You can wallow in a mood of self-pity. You can avoid, deny, pretend, lie.

Or you can recognise the true reality.

Take responsibility

Take up your personal cross

And follow Christ.

