

# Cross has power to evangelize

By Linda Weaver

Twelve years ago, I was handling a contentious lawsuit against some extremely vexatious attorneys. I was exhausted and afraid, due to the "tactics" being used by attorneys who were much more experienced than I. One night, after depositions in Detroit, I passed a jeweler as I headed for my hotel. I saw crosses in his showcase. I realized what I needed at that moment in my life: a tangible reminder that Christ is with me always. I bought a beautiful cross with Jesus on it which I've worn night and day since, with few exceptions. Shortly thereafter, my client won. I attribute that to the strength drawn from the power of the Cross. That was only the beginning of the effect of the cross, however.

It is a simple gold cross. It has no diamonds, precious jewels or fancy filigree. When you look at this cross, you see Christ. I estimate that no fewer than 100 strangers have told me they love this cross. Probably more. When I distribute communion at mass, the eyes of those receiving are very often glued to it.

Unexpectedly, it has served as a catalyst to many discussions on faith. For example, I was eating in a restaurant one day by myself, when a lady sat at the table next to me. She commented on how beautiful my cross was. The cross built a bridge to a conversation where we shared our thoughts on raising children in our own faith traditions. She was Jewish.

I was standing in a mall in Columbus, Ohio, a few years ago. A good looking young man said, "I love your cross." We

started a conversation about faith. I had no idea I was talking to a World Finalist and U.S. Champion ballroom dancer. To me, he was just another Christian who loved the cross. We continued our conversation and then shared faith via e-mail after that. This cross has led me to many such conversations.

When a stranger says, "I love your cross," I have three different responses. If she looks troubled, I say, "Yes, I bought it during a particularly difficult time of my life." That invites her to talk about faith in the context of whatever might be troubling her. If someone appears to want to engage in a conversation about faith, I say, "Yes, the cross means a lot to me." That invites him to share what the cross means to him. If it appears they just like jewelry, I say, "Thanks!"

The cross has also had another effect on me. Every morning when I look in the mirror, it is a reminder of what my day should be about. Every night, it reminds me to take stock of my shortcomings.

I bought the cross for myself, but it reaches out to those nearby and draws them in—almost on its own. This cross is a constant reminder that Christ is meant to be shared, not only with those we love, but also with strangers. Do you have a cross you love? It might be a nice item for your Christmas wish list or as a gift for someone dear to you. Let the power of the cross deepen your faith and serve as an invitation to share Christ with others.

*Weaver is a member of Holy Name Cathedral parish and of the Evangelization Committee of the Archdiocese of Chicago.*

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