



TODAY, WE'VE ESSENTIALLY CREATED A ONE-DIMENSIONAL CROSS: ONE THAT LOOKS UP AND DOWN AT THE MORALITY IN EACH INDIVIDUAL HUMAN LIFE, WHICH OF COURSE IS IMPORTANT, BUT FAILS TO LOOK CONSISTENTLY ACROSS HUMAN LIVES AT OUR COLLECTIVE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY. — **KATHLEEN KENNEDY TOWNSEND**

In Kathleen Townsend's statement, we find a profound formula: the shape of the cross as the full expression of where our relationship with God and our relationship with the world meet. Indeed, Jesus' greatest command is two-part – first to love God with all heart, soul, and mind, and second to love the neighbor as thyself.

In this timely issue of *Reflections* there are a variety of opinions and beliefs, yet among all of them is the deep and profound understanding that our responsibilities to God are not disconnected from our responsibilities to each other. For this reason the study guide aims to study both strands, to look at our understanding of ourselves as both civic and spiritual beings, and to look at the application of that understanding.

I have prepared four sessions for your group to aid in these difficult and important discussions. Each session should last 45 minutes to an hour and is designed to work in a variety of adult education opportunities – adult Sunday school, small groups, or Bible study. Questions are designed to respond to material in the magazine, but with a broad enough frame that people who don't have time to read the articles in advance can engage with the group around these important issues. Each session links our conversation to a particular aspect of Jesus' passion on the cross, looking both to the vertical and horizontal aspects of Christ's life and death.

We live in an age where it is difficult to know how to make a difference. Despite all of our freedoms, we often feel powerless to create change in ourselves and in our worlds. What *Reflections* authors offer is keen insight into areas that we *can* work to change, if we work together. It is my hope that this guide will help us better understand our responsibilities as citizens of the world and as creatures of God's larger spiritual universe.

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