

# **STAN, THE NAUGHTY ALTAR BOY**

A story four youngsters and children

## **Our good or bad behavior may turn the Cross of Jesus heavier or lighter day by day.**

### **Carrying the Cross with Jesus.**

Stan was a lovely lad. Yet, like any other boy he was naughty. He loved Jesus and liked to be an altar boy. At home, sometimes he was good, other times not so good. With his friends, sometimes he was kind, other times, unkind. In school too, sometimes, he was hard working, other times, lazy and neglectful.

Stan loved to serve Mass in his Church. In that Church, there was a small darkish chapel with a big statue of Jesus carrying his cross. It was a large, beautiful statue. It looked so real, so true!

After serving his Mass, unnoticed by all, Stan used to stop before that big statue of Jesus carrying his cross. In the quiet and the semi darkness of that chapel, he kept staring at Jesus carrying his cross.

Often enough, while looking at Jesus carrying his cross, Stan was moved to tears. Then, he said one or two nice words to Jesus, wiped his tears and off he went home.

Some times, when he went to visit Jesus carrying the cross, he noticed that the Cross of Jesus looked smaller and lighter. Jesus was carrying it with ease. Some other times, the cross looked heavier and bigger. Jesus was bent down under the weight of the cross. Other days, Jesus looked happier, other times, sad. Some times Jesus looked at him tenderly, other times, sternly.

Stan was puzzled at these strange changes in Jesus' appearance. He asked himself. "I have to find out what's the secret of it all, what the hell is happening to Jesus day by day".

From that day onwards, Stan stayed longer and longer staring a Jesus and his cross. Yet he could not figure out the secret of why Jesus' Cross kept changing sizes and why his face kept looking differently every day.

One day, the Parish Priest, discovered Stan, all alone, in tears, staring at Jesus and his Cross. Lovingly, Father asked him: "Stan, dear, what's the matter with you? Why are you crying?" Then, Stan confided his secret to the Father.

After listening to him, Father said: "Stan, dear, do you want to know the secret why the Cross of Jesus and his face keep looking different to you from day to day? It's very clear to me. Listen, very attentively to what I am going to say to

you: My friend, to find out the meaning of these strange happenings, do not keep looking so much at the statue of Jesus and at his Cross, rather keep looking at your heart and at the way you behave every day. If you do this, I am sure you will easily find the secret”.

*(P. Ribes, s.j.)*