

Evangelist Arthur Blessitt, Who Carried the Cross Throughout the World, Dies at 84

Arthur Blessitt, a Christian evangelist known for his unfailing faith and record-breaking feat of carrying a 12-foot wooden cross across the globe, died Jan. 14 at age 84. Blessitt dedicated his life to spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ, traversing over 300 nations, island groups and territories, often through the most challenging terrains and circumstances. He was the third person to be featured on the cover of "Charisma" magazine, in the January/February 1976 issue:



Born on Oct. 27, 1940, in Greenville, Mississippi, Blessitt grew up in a humble Southern household. From an early age, he exhibited a passion for preaching and evangelism. After being ordained as a Baptist minister, he began his ministry by reaching out to marginalized communities in the United States, including drug addicts and gang members in Hollywood, California, during the 1960s. It was here, on the Sunset Strip, that Blessitt opened His Place, a Christian outreach center and coffee house, earning the nickname "Minister of Sunset Strip."

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In December 1969, he embarked on what would become his life's mission: carrying a large wooden cross around the world. Initially, the idea was a symbolic gesture designed to share Christ's message, but it quickly evolved into a decades-long

journey. Over the next five decades, he walked more than 43,000 miles through deserts, jungles, war zones and bustling cities, becoming a fixture in the Guinness World Records for the “World’s Longest Walk.” His journeys spanned every continent, including visits to countries in conflict such as Iraq, Afghanistan and North Korea.



Blessitt’s mission was rooted in simplicity and humility. “The message of the cross is love, peace and forgiveness,” he often said. “It’s not about the messenger, but about the one who sent me.” Whether walking through a remote village in Africa or a bustling city square in Europe, he always stopped to pray with individuals, hand out Bibles and share the story of Jesus.

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