



24 February 2023
WAY OF THE CROSS

Introduction:

Leader: The Way of the Cross is a meditative prayer where we are invited to reflect on the agonizing last earthly journey of Jesus up the Mount of Calvary. We try to understand why Jesus, the Son of God had to choose to undergo such suffering. We also remind ourselves that Jesus continues to suffer in the lives of so many of our innocent brothers and sisters who are victims of social injustice even today.

1st Station: Pilate Condemns Jesus to Die

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Leader: Pilate acknowledged the innocence of Jesus but ultimately gave way to the pressure and unjust demands of the Jews; for he was afraid of losing his power, influence and position. Do we and our leaders sometimes sacrifice truth and justice for popularity, power and public approval?

Prayer: Jesus our sole Truth, grant us and especially to our leaders wisdom and spirit of discernment in making right choices, decisions and the courage to execute what is right, truthful and beneficial for all. Amen

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

2nd Station: Jesus Takes Up His Cross

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: What really weighed down on Jesus was not the wood of the cross but the sin of humanity. Jesus carried it willingly even in spite of knowing well the ingratitude and unrepentant hearts of those He died to save. Our own cross comes in sickness; loss of job, death of loved ones, or divorces, may we draw strength from the Lord.

Prayer: Jesus Master, you showed us by your passion and death that there is no short cut to redemption except the Way of the cross. Help us embrace our own cross designed by the wisdom of God for our final glory with you. Amen.

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

3rd Station: Jesus Falls for the First Time

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: The all-powerful God stumbled and fell under the weight of the cross and to the feet of His very

own creation but rose to finish the battle He waged for our sins. How many times in our lives we have given way to sins and fall miserably? Have we ever benefited from someone else's loss by doing what is right for us but not for others? Have we caused anyone to fall or to sin?

Prayer: Jesus our redeemer, help us live our lives in profound gratitude for the price you paid and may mortal sin never keep us away from you. May your sacramental grace help us rise to our feet each time sin weighs us down. Amen (*An appropriate hymn could be sung*)

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord.

All: Have mercy on us.

4th Station: Jesus Meets His Mother

"We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."

Leader: The meeting of Jesus and His mother was sweet and painful, comforting and hurting at the same time. The sight of each other pierced through their soul yet with courage and strength of true love they pressed on, encouraging each other to drink the cup of sorrow for our eternal happiness.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, today we pray for many mothers and fathers who helplessly watch their children giving up their life to drugs, addictions and suicide. May we always be part of a support system that renews life. Amen

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord **All:** Have mercy on us.

5th Station: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry the Cross

"We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."

Leader: Although reluctant initially like any of us could have done, the help of Simon is told through out generations. Can we recall with gratitude, God-sent Simon of our lives in the form of friends, spouses, spiritual directors, or even stranger who meet us at the junction of our own way of the cross and offered us the much-needed relief in order to continue and complete our journey.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, grant us the strength and grace to embrace our own cross and to help others lighten their cross after the example of Simon. May we also learn from You the humility to accept help from others graciously. Amen

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

6th Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

"We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."

Leader: Standing alone on the opposing side can be quite risky even if we know we are on the right path. Veronica was one woman who didn't have the courage and strength to standstill and be part of the murder of an innocent man. She couldn't prevent the execution for sure, but she publicly displayed her disapproval and solidarity with Jesus. How many just and upright people have lost their lives in defence

of truth and because of our silent watch?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, grant us radical love that have the courage to speak up when necessary and to be silent and still like a buried seed, however painful and costing that can be, if that would bring forth newness and life. Amen

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

7th Station: Jesus Falls for the Second Time

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: Isn't Jesus who invited the weary and those carrying heavy laden to come to Him for rest? And here He is, falling repeatedly for lack of strength. He continues to fall when we go back to our sinful ways of living, falling into even more greater sins or keep committing the same sins over and over.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, each fall cuts the wound deeper and makes it more difficult for us to rise up or to be healed. Grant that our hearts may not be hardened so as to ignore or despise your call to reconciliation and friendship through the sacrament of confession. Amen

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

8th Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: Lent provides us opportune time for reflection and introspection on our lives in relation to God and others; reflecting on the ways we can strengthen and build our relationships and ways we can ruin it even as we move with the crowd and the daily happenings. Jesus had words of comfort for the women who weep even in the midst of His own agony.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help us to see beyond our own struggles of life and offer comfort to those in need as you did. Be close to all those who are forced to carry a cross beyond their strength due to war, natural or human made calamities that tear apart their families and displace them from their homeland. Amen.

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

9th Station: Jesus Falls for the Third Time

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: Through His third fall Jesus seems to be telling us that we too are bound to sin and fall and hurt ourselves one another often. What truly matters is not to give up and remain fallen but to rise and be reconciled. If God forgives and loves us unconditionally, we are calls to do the same.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, in our weakest and trying moments of life, lead us to the right path; to the company of right people, to moments of healing prayer, to the laughter of friends, to the love of family against the easy temptation to shut away. Make us also capable of compassionate and non-judgemental listening. Amen

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

10th Station: Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: Jesus was stripped to humiliate Him. Instead, His dignity stood out bare for all to see. In our world today, the booming pornography industry strips people for money, false fame and vulgar entertainment causing the lack of respect and reverence for human person. Shielding ourselves, our children and spouses against this prey needs a special attention.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Grant us deep reverence for our own bodies made so wonderfully and intricately and those of others and to have a tender care for all your creation with its diversity and richness. Amen

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

11th Station: Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: Those compassionate hands that extended to bless, to help, to heal, to embrace and to raise the death are been cruelly nailed to the cross but not forever; for soon no hand would ever prevent Him from liberating the world. Those who with active hearts and minds but with bodies trapped in the sickbeds only can try to fathom what it meant to be nailed.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we thank you for the precious gifts of our hands, feet and entire body. Teach us to how to value and care for them by having the needed rest, food, work and sleep without neglect. Help us use our hands to serve and bless lives and not to hurt them. Amen

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

12th Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

(Kneel and pause for a silent prayer)

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: Accepting death upon the cross, Jesus gained us life, reminding us that death is not the end, but rather the path to new life because death happens to the body and not the soul; the soul lives eternally. We have no doubt of this truth but this does not take away the momentary pain of separation of our loved ones. May we find new strength and peace in Christ.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we pray for all who died sudden deaths of heart attacks, accidents, violent clashes or natural calamities without prior sacramental preparation for the final journey; receive them with your divine mercy. We especially pray for the departed ones in our Parish community. Amen.

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

13th Station: The body of Jesus Is Taken Down from the Cross

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: Mother Mary embraces the lifeless body of her God Son for one last time with all the love her heart contains and with unspeakable pain. With the same resolute yes that she pronounced repeatedly throughout her life, she now, offers Him back to the Father. How Many mothers are asked of the offering of their children back to the Father at times pre-maturely to our calculations but always perfect in God’s own time.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank for the perfect and heroic example of discipleship that your mother displayed throughout but most inspiringly at the foot of the cross. Teach us to entrust ourselves to her sure guidance towards you. Amen

Leader: Have mercy on us O Lord

All: Have mercy on us.

14th Station: Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb

“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”

Leader: The silent and stillness of the tomb frightens quite many of us. However, the world of nature clearly demonstrates that almost all great things happen in silence and stillness. The dawn breaks forth in silence and the buried seed sprouts in silence bringing forth totally new life. May God grant us grace to endure our own entombing in peace.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, may our participation in every Eucharist, which is the re-enactment of the Last Supper, strengthen and sustain us in our pilgrim journey towards heaven; our eternal home. Amen.

Concluding prayer: Father God, having walked with your son Jesus, our Master, we deeply desire to obey Your will in order to fulfil the purpose You have for our life. Help us Father, to believe in Your Truth, follow the Way of Your Son, and to live and give Jesus to the whole world. We make this prayer through Christ our Master. Amen.

For the intentions of the Pope: Our Father..., Hail Mary..., Glory be...

Hymn: 211. Into your hands we commend our spirits, o Lord (*Joyful Celebration Hymnal*) or any other