



WAY OF THE CROSS WITH MARY

Introduction:

Mary Queen of the Apostles and mother of humanity was the first to walk the Way of the Cross alongside her Son Jesus Christ. She felt every pain and humiliation yet her eyes were fixed on Jesus' agony and her heart on the Father's will. Today, she walks beside so many of her children crushed under the weight of war and oppressions. May her walk alongside us, give us courage, unwavering faith and hopeful peace.

Hymn: 166. He was despised and rejected by all (*Joyful Celebration*) or any other.

FIRST STATION: Pilate Condemns Jesus to Die.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary speaks: My Son stood before Pilate as an innocent condemned. I stood speechless; as I heard overpowering voices shouting crucify him, all around me. I knew the prophesy of Simeon about the sword piercing my soul was been fulfilled. My fear and anguish over what would happen to him next was real: so too, the instinct of a mother in me to protect him even with my very own life, had I not known that He had a mission to accomplish.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, even today, you are been condemned in so many innocent victims who are tortured or executed unjustly and often without trial. The basic rights and future of countless victims of war are stripped of them. Help me do my bit, to create a just and peaceful world: beginning with my own family and in my neighbourhood. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

SECOND STATION: Jesus Takes Up His Cross.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary speaks: My Son was forced to carry the heavy cross on which he would be nailed. With deep awareness that he was God's Son as much as I want to claim him as mine, I surrendered Him to God: whom He calls 'Abba'. I only prayed for the strength and grace to accompany his last earthly journey to its completion.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, forgive us for the many times we have added more weight to other's cross by our harsh judgements in our behaviours and actions. The cross that's designed to crush your life became the symbol of life and fidelity. May we be your joyful witnesses in the midst of life's struggles. Amen

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

THIRD STATION: Jesus Falls for the First Time.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: My heart dropped when I saw my Son fall face -wards to the ground. Feeling sharply his pain, my whole body trembled but I knew walking this painful journey beside Him was the only way to love him at the moment. So I mustered all the strength left in me and walked on, amidst taunts and jeers.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, How often we see our fellow being fall under the burdens of life and we have publicized their faults or caused them further pain by our indifference? The world we live in, already have too many critiques and oppressors. Mary our mother, teach us to offer support and understanding to the fallen and grant us the courage to rise after each fall. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

FOURTH STATION: Jesus Meets His Mother.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: Despite my failing strength I wanted to have a glance of Jesus. Surrounded by hateful and jeering glances, I wanted my Son to behold one gaze so filled with love and tenderness. However, He could see through my eyes, a heart pierced by deep anguish. Our eyes met for a brief moment in silence but spoke volumes.

Prayer: Lord, the gaze between you and your mother was one of deep and enduring love; give us the courage to bring that healing love into the deepest recesses of our being, our homes, to every human institution, to those places of fracture and disharmony in our circle of relationships and especially to the victims of War and natural calamities. Amen

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

FIFTH STATION: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry the Cross.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: At some point, the executioners feared that my son would not make it to the Mount for crucifixion, which was their prime game. The guards pulled a protesting man from the crowd and forced him to help lighten my Son's load. The man rightly looked horrified at the pitiful sight of my Son, but their eyes met and soon Simon yielded like a meek lamb.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, your power upheld the whole Universe, yet in accepting Simon's help so graciously, you taught us the valuable lessons of interdependence and the cosmic impact of service. May we have the humility to seek help in times of need and like Simon of Cyrene to step forward and reach out to the needy. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

SIXTH STATION: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: I am often surprised by the strength and courage of women whom society refers as 'weaker' Veronica was one such; who pushed past the guards and wiped my Son's unrecognizable face soiled with dust and blood. Her countenance bore no wrath nor hate, or retaliation. It was a sheer response of a pure soul, unwilling to be a mere spectator. I wanted to reach out and bless this daughter of Jerusalem but the soldiers pulled us apart.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Veronica gave you the best she could at that moment and your heart, ever vigilant for the least sign of love, imprinted the image of your torn face on Veronica's veil and no doubt, deep into her heart. Today, your visible face: the Church, stands before all, still wounded by its own sins of abuses, scandals and betrayals. You still look around to us for solace. Give us the courage of Veronica. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

SEVENTH STATION: Jesus Falls for the Second Time.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: Overwhelmed by the weight of the cross and the loss of blood, my Son fell a second time beneath the cross. Bitter anguish swept over my entire being and my heart raced for strength. I realised my 'Yes' at the annunciation, has led me this far to this crucial moments of painful 'Yeses'.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, teach us to rise each time we fall and be compassionate towards people with disabilities and diseases that weaken and limits of their bodily movements and activity and with all who are aging. May we allow God's power to shine through our weakness. Amen.

EIGHT STATIONS: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: The group of women wailing for Jesus showed great courage, standing out against the crowd and openly displaying their sadness and disapproval of what they behold. We comforted each other through unspoken gestures.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you not only gave the women of Jerusalem your attention and presence but gently showed them whom to pity and grief for. It is always easier to point finger at the faults and sinfulness of others rather than to admit and repent for our own. Grant us true self knowledge and the ability to embrace both our strengths and our shadows. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

NINTH STATION: Jesus Falls for the Third Time.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: The final fall of my Son was unbearable to withstand. My heart raced and my body grew numb. For a moment, everyone around thought that it was His end, but He rose trembling still, and dragged himself to Golgotha, to the spot where he would die to destroy death forever.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, what comfort it is to know that you understand our suffering and helplessness through your own experience. Your love for us made you go through the depth of suffering. In our own walk to Calvary, may we find in you, our greatest and surest hope and victory. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

TENTH STATION: Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: To be exposed naked and handed over to the mockery of all, is a profound injury to dignity as anyone familiar with the face of exclusion knows too well. No humiliation was strange to Him who spent his life on earth, covering the shame, the wounds and giving back lost dignity. Today, I continue to see my Son's stripped body in countless innocent victims of human greed, and lust for power and pleasure.

Prayer: Lord, in our own way we too have stripped you by tarnishing the good name of others by our uncharitable talk, and have stripped people of human dignity by our prejudices, discrimination and exclusion. May we always see the dignity of others not on account of what they have or what they accomplish, but on account of 'who' they truly are: the image of God. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

ELEVENTH STATION: Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: It was hard to imagine that the one, whose birth was enthralled by the song of Angels, visits of Magi and the shepherds could end this way. As the nails went down to the precious hands that cured the sick, and raised the dead, the look of pain on his face, the spasm of His whole body cuts through my heart like a sword. Amidst deep anguish, I cried to God, “Your will be done along with my Son”.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you were sent by the Father to reconcile all things in love, hear the cry of your people who are struggling to reconcile with the mystery of suffering and pain especially when it strikes them for no fault of theirs. Mary, mother of sorrow and Queen of martyrs, be close to the women, children, the elderly and vulnerable who are defenceless before the horror of war and violence in our day. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

TWELFTH STATION: Jesus Dies on the Cross. (Pause..... for silent prayer)

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: My life has been so enjoined to my Son Jesus, that His mission was mine, His triumphs and losses were mine too. When He lowered his head and died, my inner world fell apart for a moment. The creation too revolted, the earth quake, the sky grew dark and a mysterious gloom enveloped everything. Hearing my Son promising Paradise to the one crucified on His right and giving up His own Spirit to the Father soothe my heart like nothing else would.

Prayer: Jesus our Saviour, revive our hope and faith that with Mary our Mother, we may become witnesses to a life stronger than death. May the sight of deaths and its ongoing threats not overwhelm our hope for life and newness. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

THIRTEENTH STATION: The body of Jesus is taken down from the Cross.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: By now, the onlookers were gone; the commotion had stopped, I stood still and exhausted with John by my side. Then two men took the body from the cross and placed it in my arms. I embraced my Son in the flesh one last time. A deep sorrow engulfed my being yet, I also felt deep peace.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Help us to accept the partings that must come our way. Help us to offer our loved ones back to you as Mary our mother did. Faced with the silence of death, let us not despair but find hope in the one who holds our final destiny. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

FOURTEENTH STATION: Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb.

Leader: *We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

All: *Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Mary Speaks: Finally, the broken body of my Son was laid to rest in a borrowed tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. I thought of a seed that would break forth and branch out in thousands, and in all directions. I wait silently in faith while I strengthen His bewildered apostles. I can't help pondering over the day when Jesus raised His friend Lazarus of Bethany after four days.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, We pray for all the diseased, especially those who died sudden death in accidents, war and violence. Often the death of the bread winner in the family can mean burying the dreams and hopes of the rest. We ask for the gift of faith, when faced with the darkness of our own tomb or those of our loved ones. May we have the eyes to see the promise of new life that the darkness cannot hold. Amen.

Leader: *Have mercy on us O Lord.*

All: *Have mercy on us.*

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Our Saviour Jesus Christ had opened the doors to a new and eternal life. Grant that we may live in gratitude, faithfulness and joy for the price He paid for the love of us. Grant us the grace to carry our own crosses that we may rise to a glorious life with your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit now and forever. Amen.

For the intentions of our holy father: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

Closing Hymn: (If needed)

-Commission For Liturgy
Archdiocese of Bombay.

