

WAY OF THE CROSS

Introduction

L1: The way of the Cross is our journey as individuals and as a community, to become a People of God. This is the only way for us to follow more intimately the life of Jesus. Jesus' journey began with His commitment to say "Yes" to His Father – *"Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?"* and ends with His surrendering His life – *"Father, into Your hands, I commend my spirit."* (Luke 23:46).

During this season of Lent, we want to walk on His last journey to Calvary, to recall His Life and to examine our lives, so that we too will be able to continue living the life of Jesus in the world today.

Opening Hymn: **HOSEA**

***Come back to me with all your heart
Don't let fear keep us apart
Trees do bend, 'though straight and tall
So must we to others' call.***

Refrain:

***Long have I waited for your coming
Home to me and living deeply our new life.***

THE FIRST STATION

Jesus Is Condemned To Die



L1: *"He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when He suffered He made no threats. Instead He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly ... Through His wounds we have been healed."* (1 Peter 2:23-24)

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: Jesus stands in the most human of places. He has already experienced profound solidarity with so many on this earth, by being beaten and tortured. Now he is wrongfully condemned to punishment by death. His commitment to entering our lives completely begins its final steps. He has said "Yes" to God and placed His Life in God's hands. We follow Him in this final surrender, and contemplate with reverence each place along the way, as He is broken and given for us.

C: How often I judge people unjustly. Jesus, forgive me for it. I see people only from the outside; You know them from the inside. Help me to leave all judgements to You. I will them the benefit of the doubt.

Antiphon (all sing)

By our sins we have condemned You.

Jesus, let us now befriend You.

Sorrowing and penitent.

THE SECOND STATION

Jesus Takes Up His Cross



L1: *“His state was divine, yet He did not cling to His equality with God, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a slave, and became as men are” (Phil 2:6-7)*

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: Jesus is made to carry the Cross on which He will die. It represents the weight of all our crosses. What He must have felt as He first took it upon His shoulders! With each step He enters more deeply into our human experience. He walks in the path of human misery and suffering, and experiences its crushing weight.

C: You showed a ready obedience in taking up Your Cross. I often forget that it takes strength to obey, not weakness. Forgive my disobedience. Since all lawful authority comes from God. I am really obeying You out of love.

Antiphon (all sing)

**Sinless Lord, the Cross that You bear
Is the burden we all should share,
Sinners, all deserving death.**

THE THIRD STATION

Jesus Falls For The First Time



L1: *"But Jesus said to them (James and John). Have you the strength to drink of the cup I am to drink of, to be baptized with the baptism I am to be baptized with? They said to him, 'We have.'"* (Mark 10:38-39)

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: The weight is unbearable. Jesus falls under it. How could He enter our lives completely without surrendering to the crushing weight of the life of so many on this earth! He lays on the ground and knows the experience of weakness beneath unfair burdens. He feels the powerlessness of wondering if He will ever be able to continue. He is pulled up and made to continue.

C: You fell, O Jesus, because Your human body was weak. I too am weak, so sometimes I fall. But I will always rise and keep trying to please You, because I love You.

Antiphon (all sing)

Jesus, we behold Your first fall.

Teach us that for us, if we fall.

We should never give up hope.

THE FOURTH STATION

Jesus Meets His Mother



L1: *"Love is as strong as death" (The Song of Songs 8:6)*

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: Jesus' path takes Him to a powerful source of His strength to continue. All His life, His Mother had taught Him the meaning of the words, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord." Now the look into each other's eyes. Her soul cries out in agony, yet no protest or complaint escapes her lips. How it pains Him to see her tears! Now, her grace-filled smile blesses His mission and stirs His heart to its depth. Love and trust in God bind them together.

C: Mary's mission was to give Christ to the world. By my Christ-like life, I show Christ to the world. Help me to do this, O Jesus.

Antiphon (all sing)

**When we see Your Son, our Brother,
Make us feel, O Mary Mother,
Deep compassion in our hearts.**

THE FIFTH STATION

Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross



L1: *"Carry each other's burden, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2)*

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: Jesus even experiences our struggle to receive help. He is made to experience the poverty of not being able to carry His burden alone. He enters into the experience of all who must depend upon others to survive. He is deprived of the satisfaction of carrying this burden on His own.

C: I'm too selfish, Jesus. I love myself too much. I don't love You enough. Particularly, I don't love my neighbor enough, especially if I don't like him. A cross is lighter when two carry it. Lord, give me a great love for my neighbor, so that I may help him carry his crosses. Help me reach out in love to those in pain and those who are suffering.

Antiphon (all sing)

Make us understand, O Jesus,

By Your pains, Your will to heed us.

Taking up Your Cross with You.

THE SIXTH STATION

Veronica Wipes The Face Of Jesus



L1: *"Your face, Lord, I seek. Do not hide Your face from me"* (Psalms 27:8-9)

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: Jesus' Journey is at times brutal. He has entered into the terrible experiences of rejection and injustice. He has been whipped and beaten. His face shows the signs of solidarity with all who have ever suffered injustice and vile, abusive treatment. He encounters a compassionate, loving disciple who wipes the vulgar spit and mocking blood from His face. On her veil, she discovers the image of His face – His gift to her. And, for us to contemplate forever.

C: Veronica had courage, Lord. She went fearlessly to Christ, in spite of the soldiers. I am a coward, afraid to do what I should because I fear what people will think or say, ridicule or criticize. Help me use the courage that the Holy Spirit gave my soul at Confirmation.

Antiphon (all sing)

For our neighbour show compassion;

For our Saviour, ease His Passion;

Draw His image in our hearts.

THE SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Falls The Second Time



L1: *"My palate is drier than a potsherd and my tongue is stuck to my jaw. I am lying in the dust of death."* (Psalms 22:16)

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: Even with help, Jesus stumbles and falls to the ground. In deep exhaustion He stares at the earth beneath Him. "Remember, you are dust and to dust you will return." He has seen death before. Now He can feel the profound weakness of disability and disease and dying itself, there on His knees, under the weight of His Cross.

C: I often fall, Jesus, because I take choices. I expose myself to dangerous occasions of sin. Because sin is un-love, I will not take chances on sinning, because I do want to love You.

Antiphon (all sing)

Jesus, as we see You falling

We can hear Your Spirit

Urging us to persevere.

THE EIGHTH STATION

Jesus Meets The Women Of Jerusalem



L1: *“Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me but for yourselves and for your children.” (Luke 23:28)*

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: The women of Jerusalem and their children come out to comfort and thank Him. They had seen His compassion and welcomed His Words of healing and freedom. He had broken all kinds of social and religious conventions to connect with them, Now they are here to support Him. He feels their grief. He suffers, knowing He can't remain to help them in this life. He knows the mystery of facing the separation of death.

C: How many times, Jesus, have I told You that I'm sorry for my sins? But how many times have I been sorry enough to change my ways? If I really love someone, I try my best not to hurt him/her. And if I hurt him/her, I am deeply sorry and firmly determined not to hurt him/her again. Is that the way I act with You, my God?

Antiphon (all sing)

**As the holy women weeping,
So our tears for Jesus keeping
For ourselves and all mankind.**

THE NINTH STATION

Jesus Falls For The Third Time



L1: *"In my own body I make up what is still to be undergone by Christ for the sake of His body, which is the Church." (Colossians 1:24)*

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: This last fall is devastating. Jesus can barely proceed to the end. Summoning all His remaining strength, supported by His inner trust in God, Jesus collapses under the weight of the Cross. His executioners look at Him as a broken man, pathetic yet paying a price He deserves. They help Him up so He can make it up the hill of crucifixion.

C: I get discouraged, Lord, when I fall again and again. But never let me lose hope, never let me despair. Your strength and Your love for me can do what I cannot do alone. I will get this divine strength and love regularly through prayer and the sacraments. You said, "My grace is enough for you". I trust in You, Lord.

Antiphon (all sing)

Now three times we see You stumble;

Let our human power crumble;

Make us put our trust in You.

THE TENTH STATION

Jesus Is Stripped Of His Garments



L1: *"There they are staring at me, gloating: they divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing."* (Psalms 22:17-18)

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: Part of the indignity is to be crucified naked. Jesus is completely stripped of all pride. The wounds on His back are torn open again. He experiences the ultimate vulnerability of the defenseless. No shield or security protects Him. As they stare at Him, His eyes turn to heaven.

C: How much do I value modesty and purity, Lord? My body was made by God and it is good. He gave me the power of giving life and giving love, two most precious gifts. My body is sacred. I will revere it and the bodies of others, especially since You come into my body in Holy Communion and God is in me!

Antiphon (all sing)

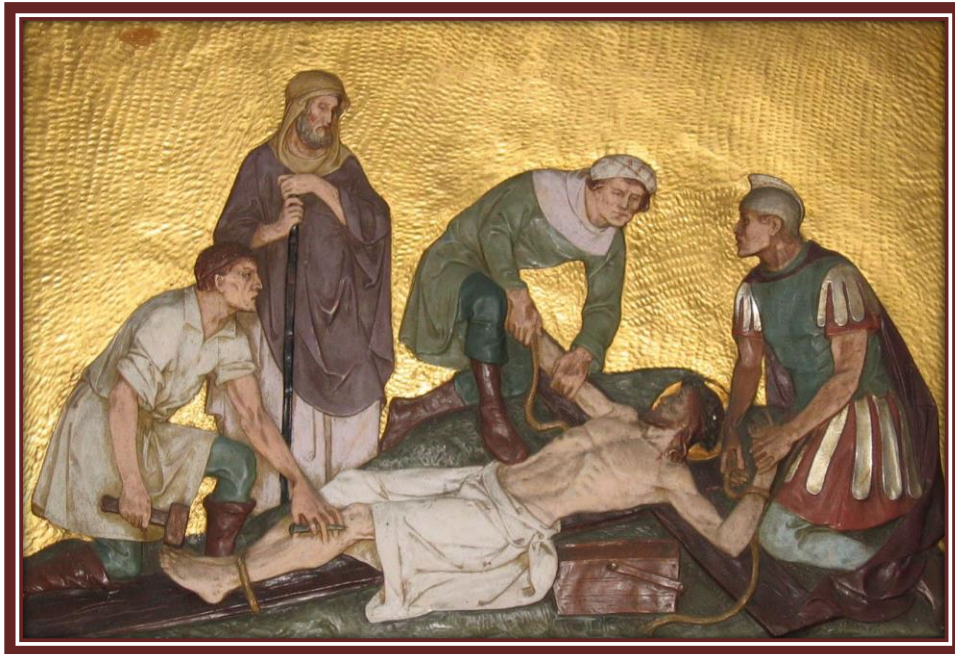
Lord, we strip our souls before You;

Sorry, humbled we adore You.

Take our sins and grant us peace.

THE ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus Is Nailed To The Cross



L1: *"Today you will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43)*

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: Huge nails are hammered through His Hands and Feet to fix Him on the Cross. He is bleeding more seriously now. As the Cross is lifted up, the weight of His Life hangs on those nails. Every time He struggles to pull Himself to breathe, His ability to cling to life slips away.

C: If I had nails driven through the palms of my hands and through my feet, I would probably faint from the excruciating pain. I hate suffering. But so did You, Lord. I know, however, that I must suffer sometimes in my life. I can either waste it by resenting it or I can accept it out of love for You and to make up for my sins. Then it has a saving value, as Your suffering did.

Antiphon (all sing)

**Victim of the nails and hammer,
We acknowledge on our altar,
Hid beneath the bread and wine.**

THE TWELFTH STATION

Jesus Dies On The Cross



L1: *"Father, into Your Hands, I commend my Spirit."* (Luke 23:46)

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: Between two criminals, a mocking title above His Head, with only Mary and John and Mary Magdalene to support Him, Jesus surrenders His last breath. "Into Your Hands I commend my Spirit."

C: You died, O Jesus. I will die too. I don't know when or where or how. My earthly life will end and my eternity will begin. You said we should always be ready. I will stay in Your love and grace always. Then I will always be ready.

Antiphon (all sing)

Dying Jesus, let us ponder

Your last seven words, and wonder

At the love of God made man.

THE THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus Is Taken Down From the Cross



L1: *"I am the Lord's servant, let it be done as You have said." (Luke 1:38)*

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: What tender mourning! Jesus' lifeless body lays in His Mother's arms. He has truly died. A profound sacrifice, complete.

C: Your sacred Body is laid in the arms of Your Mother. She receives You with love and reverence. I receive Your sacred Body in the Eucharist. Help me always to receive You with love and reverence, for You are my God!

Antiphon (all sing)

**Mary, from the Cross You take Him;
Cold and dead, His foes forsake Him;
Let us still keep faith with you.**

THE FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus Is Laid In The Tomb



L1: *"If we become united with Christ through a death like His, we will certainly be united with Him in His resurrection." (Roman 6:5)*

L1: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

C: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

L2: They take the body of Jesus to its resting place. The huge stone over the tomb is the final sign of the permanence of death. In this final act of surrender, who would have imagined this tomb would soon be empty or that Jesus would show Himself alive to His disciples, or that they would recognize Him in the breaking of bread? Oh, that our hearts might burn within us, as we realize how He had to suffer and die so as to enter into His glory, for us.

C: Your work is done. Your Resurrection to new life will climax it, You have redeemed the world. You have offered the greatest gift: Yourself. You have shown the greatest love. Your Life brought good to all people, even into eternity. Help me to live a life of love. Love for You, love for my fellowmen, too. Help me to give my greatest gift: myself, to You and to them, in love. Then my work will be done. I too will have brought much good to people, even into eternity.

Antiphon (all sing)

Buried in the tomb, then rising

We, too, Lord, by our baptizing.

Share Your hope of victory.

L1: Give us the strength to submit our wills and our lives to Our Father in Heaven in the Words that You have taught us:

Our Father ...

Let us join Mary, our Mother, to be our model in following Jesus. We will recite the Hail Mary (3 times).

Hail Mary ...

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Closing Hymn: **HOSEA**

*The wilderness will lead you
To your heart where I will speak
Integrity and justice
With tenderness you shall know.*

Refrain:

*Long have I waited for your coming
Home to me and living deeply our new life.*

