

# Good Friday Stations of the Cross

SERVICE HOSTED BY THE YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS OF THE CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION, BRYANSTON ON GOOD FRIDAY THE 2<sup>ND</sup> OF APRIL 2021



## INTRODUCTION

Today, we commemorate Good Friday. This Stations of the Cross takes us on a prayerful journey of transformation in solidarity in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and with all people living in poverty, sickness, pain and loss, and affliction around the world. As we walk through the Stations, we share their journey through a mixture of their stories, scripture and prayer.

When we are young, we want to see. We want to see the world around us; we want to see everything. The scene of Good Friday is powerful, even in its horror: seeing it can lead to revulsion or mercy. Every day we have a chance to encounter another person. To see and to encounter leads, finally, to prayer, because seeing and encountering gives rise to mercy, even in a world that seems pitiless and abandoned to senseless anger, meanness and the desire not to be bothered. Yet if we follow Jesus with all our heart, also on this mysterious journey to the cross, courage and trust can be reborn. After we have seen, and opened ourselves to encounter, we will experience the grace of praying, no longer alone and isolated physically, but united together spiritually.

“Today, Christ accompanies us on the path of human suffering. He identifies with His people who are bewildered, sad, insecure and isolated. A cross has been placed across our lives. Just over a year ago, our lives and the whole world was changed. All of humanity is now on the way of the Cross. Our leaders in the government, church, medical professions, priests, the sick, elderly, and vulnerable people are in great need of many resources. We each have something very valuable to offer them: the gifts of intercessory prayer and fasting, and almsgiving. Perhaps this pandemic will bring out the best in us. Times of trial and testing make or break the human spirit. We journey as brothers and sisters on our way to the mysterious place where this will lead us. Physical closeness is not possible but spiritual closeness is necessary. On the Way of the Cross, we walk in solidarity. Let us prayerfully reflect on the Stations of the Cross.” - *St. Maximilian Kolbe Church Liberty Township, Ohio*

## **FIRST STATION**

### **Jesus is condemned to death**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him. But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and handed Jesus over as they wished (Lk 23: 22-25).*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you Jesus standing before the crowd (look and pause briefly). They are asked three times and each time they decided against you. Today we too stand in the crowd hiding away from the reality of what is happening around us. We try to blend in with crowd as we do not want to be seen as being weird or as having a different opinion from the rest of crowd or the rest of the world. We continue to blame and condemn people unjustly.

In these days it is easy to blame the country where COVID-19 originated, its people and government because of their action and inaction. We also blame people because of the colour of their skin, their gender, their sexuality, their beliefs, because they are born with a disability, because they don't conform to our way of thinking, the list is endless. We forget who we truly are and whose image we are created in.

In that crowded square, it would have been enough for a single heart to hesitate, for a single voice to be raised against the thousand voices of evil. Whenever life sets before us a decision to be made, let us be reminded of that square and that mistake. Let us not allow our hearts to hesitate and command our voices to speak out.

#### **PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, we ask you to help us become more mindful of our surroundings. Forgive us Father for the times we have turned a blind eye while you were being condemned and nailed to the cross. May we be compassionate towards our friends, family and our communities.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **SECOND STATION**

### **Jesus receives his cross**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *Jesus called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the Gospel, will save it (Mk 8:34-35).*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, crowned with thorns as you receive your cross. You accept it, as you always accept everything and everyone. They burden you with its wood, yet you do not rebel, you do not reject that humiliating instrument of torture. You take it up and begin to walk. Through your suffering you reflect nothing but love for us.

How many times have I rejected my cross: feeling sorry for myself as I face being isolated from friends during the COVID-19 pandemic, losing my job, being in a financial crises, losing a loved one, failing an exam, disobeying my parents or feeling ashamed of the sins I have committed.

The cross which speaks to us of humiliation and pain is now revealed, thanks to your sacrifice, as a promise that from every death new life will arise, and in every dark place a light will shine. And so, we can cry out: "Hail, holy cross, our one hope!"

#### **PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, we ask you that we are able to receive our daily Cross just as you did Lord, knowing that it can only lead to victory. Give us the grace to look back on the story of our lives and to rediscover in them your love for us.

**ALL: AMEN.**

**THIRD STATION**  
**Jesus falls for the first time**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

**Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted (Is 53:4).*

**MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, making your way to Calvary bearing our sins. I see you fall on the ground in pain. The cross you carry is heavy; you need help to carry it. But when you fall on the ground, no one helps you. Instead, people make fun of you, they laugh at the sight of a God who falls. Sometimes we think that having faith in you means never falling in life. Together with you, I also fall.

Like the crowd, we often have only condemnation and rejection for those around us. We judge them without knowing about their trials. In these days are we aware of those we judge and condemn because of their actions in the COVID-19 crisis?

Jesus has asked us to see Him in the people we meet but we sometimes think we are better, we judge instead of giving a helping hand to someone who has fallen. By your courage, you teach us that our failures and falls must never prevent us from going on a journey with you Jesus, and that we always have a choice, to give up, or to get up in union with you.

**PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, you take upon yourself the burden of the cross and all that weighs us down. Give us the strength to walk onward, uncrushed by the weight this pandemic put on our shoulders. May we help others to endure in the trials and suffering of their lives, with joy undefeated. We pray for a swift end to this pandemic.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **FOURTH STATION**

### **Jesus meets his mother**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed, so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too" (Lk 2:34-35).*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, as you meet your mother. Mary is there, making her way through the crowded street, with many people all around her. She is walking along accompanying her son to Golgotha, the place of the skull. Mary is different from other mothers: she is accompanying her son to his death. To see your own child die is the worst, the most unnatural thing that anyone could imagine for a person. We see the pain in the mothers and fathers who watch their children suffering from COVID-19, or in those giving up their life to drugs, addictions and suicide. We see pain in the child coping with the breakdown of a parents' marriage, in the couple trying desperately to rebuild their relationship and family anew. We see pain in the children of those watching and hoping as their parents fade away before them.

I see you, Mary, as you look at your poor child. He bears on his back the marks of the pain and torture and he is forced to carry the weight of the cross; soon, no doubt, in his exhaustion he will fall beneath it. Yet you knew that, sooner or later, this would happen. It was prophesied to you, but now that it is taking place, everything is different. That is how things are: we are always unprepared before the harsh realities of life. Mary, now you are sorrowful, as any woman would be in your place, but you do not despair. Your eyes are undimmed; you are not forlorn and downcast. You are radiant even in your sorrow, because you have hope. You know that this journey of your son will not be a one-way trip. You know, you feel, as only mothers can feel, and that soon you will see him again.

#### **PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, all suffering is embraced by You when Jesus and his mother meet on the way of the cross. Jesus is every child lost prematurely; Mary is every parent grieving for his or her child.

Lord, be close to all who lose or become distant from people they love. During this pandemic draw families closer together, let barriers fall down and closer relationships form. We thank You for the example of Mary. May we choose her as our daily role model.

**ALL: AMEN.**

**FIFTH STATION**  
**Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the cross**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

**Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus (Lk 23:26).*

**MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, crushed beneath the weight of the cross. At your moment of greatest need, you remain alone, without those who called themselves your friends. Yet suddenly there is an unexpected encounter with someone unknown, a mere passer-by, who perhaps had only heard about you and not followed you. Yet now here he is, at your side, shoulder to shoulder, to share your yoke.

Across our world we see human suffering in the faces of strangers, particularly in the anguish of those dealing with COVID-19, in the faces of those struggling for democracy, in the faces of those dealing with the loss of life and destruction of property. People we know of, but do not know, must live with the aftermath of the ravages and destructive forces of nature – coping with floods and drought, with the devastating effects of climate change.

At times, Jesus, we feel like you, abandoned by those we thought were our friends, crushed by a heavy burden. We feel terribly lonely during times of COVID-19, social distancing and isolation. Yet we must not forget that there is a Simon of Cyrene ready to carry our cross. We must remember that we are not alone, and, in that realization, we will find the strength to take up the cross of those around us.

**PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, we ask you to give each of us the courage to be like Simone of Cyrene, who takes up your cross and follows in your steps. May we be unashamed to accept help when we need it, and may we be eager to offer it when others have needs.

May our mutual dependence be a source of joy and an occasion of grace, knitting us together in the community of Your love. We pray for our government leaders, medical personnel, priests, armed services, first responders, and all who need extraordinary grace at this moment.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **SIXTH STATION**

### **Veronica wipes the face of Jesus**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account (Is 53:2-3).*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, wretched and barely recognizable, treated like the least of men. You walk, faltering, to your death, your face bleeding and disfigured, yet, as always, meek and humble, looking up. A woman steps out of the crowd to see at close hand that face of yours. She sees its pain and wants to help. They do not let her pass, there are so many of them, all too many, and they are armed. But to her, none of that matters; she is determined to reach you and for a moment she manages to touch you, caressing you with her veil. Hers is the power of tenderness. Your eyes meet for a second, face meets face.

Today the visible face of Christ, the Church, stands before us, still wounded and disfigured; individuals suffering in so many ways, not least in the current pandemic, but also disfigured by its own sins of power, abuse of children, weighed down with the wounds of hurt and betrayal.

Veronica loved and followed Jesus. She suffered in His suffering. Jesus has asked us to see Him in others so many times. How many times do we have the opportunity to wipe the tears and sweat of a friend, a family member, a child, or the stranger we see looking distressed?

#### **PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, may I see with your compassion and smile with your radiance, so that your unfailing tenderness is made flesh and blood in me. May I always be alert to those who feel invisible and despised. grant me the strength to approach others, to approach the young or old, the poor or rich, friends or strangers, and to see your face in all those faces.

May I help them to recognize that they are your brothers and sisters sharing in your dignity. We implore special graces for families, children, elderly, sick. We ask you to provide for the employed and the unemployed, and for the economic needs of all people.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **SEVENTH STATION**

### **Jesus falls for the second time**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people... Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain (Is 53:8.10)*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, fall once more before my eyes. By falling again, you show me that you are a man, a true man. And I see you get up again, more determined than before. You do not get up with pride; there is no pride in your gaze, there is love. In continuing on your journey, getting up after each fall, you proclaim your resurrection. You show that you are ready, once again and always, to bear on your bleeding shoulders the burden of our human sin.

By falling again, you sent us a clear message of humility. You became like us, fully human, and now you show yourself close to us, with our troubles, our weaknesses, our anxieties and our pain. Now, on this Friday, you are overwhelmed by sorrow. But you have the strength to go forward, you are not afraid of the difficulties that lie ahead, and you know that at the end of your struggle, there is heaven. You get up precisely to get there, to, open before us the gates of your kingdom. In our own lives we fall but we need to keep going, we need to lift up the weight of the cross until we reach our victory.

#### **PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, grant that we may be ready to get up after falling, that we may learn from our failures. Remind us that, when it is our turn to make mistakes and fall, if we but stay with you, and hold fast to your hand, we can learn to get up again. Grant that we young people may bring to everyone your message of humility, that future generations may open their eyes to you and learn to understand your love. Teach us to help those who suffer and fall beside us, to wipe away their sweat, and to stretch out a hand to lift them up.

Lord Jesus, lift me to my feet when I feel that I can go no further. When I feel battered by the storms of life, with neither the energy nor strength to carry on, then may I know that you, the strong Son of God, will bear me onward until I arrive at home in God.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **EIGHTH STATION**

### **Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *A number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?" (Lk 23:27-31)*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you and I hear you, Jesus, as you speak to the women whom you meet on the way to your death. Each day you would meet any number of people; you would approach everyone and talk to all. Now you speak with the women of Jerusalem, who look at you and weep. I too am one of those women. But you, Jesus, speak words of warning that for me are striking: they are so concrete and direct.

Weep for those who have COVID-19. Weep for the doctors and nurses and those on the frontline who struggle. Weep for the children who are abused. Weep for the women who are victimised. Weep for the old who are forgotten. Weep for people who starve in the shadow of abundance. Weep for people who are homeless, in exile or seeking refuge.

The women of Jerusalem not only remind us of biblical women but also women we can relate to today. Saint Theresa of Calcutta who was strong and bold, and stood up for children and the poor who were seen as filthy and frowned upon. Like her, may we have new hearts of flesh so that we may rejoice with those who rejoice and share sorrow with those who are saddened.

#### **PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, grant that, together with the women and men of this world, I may become ever more charitable towards those in need, even as you were. Give all of us the strength to go against the grain and to enter into authentic contact with others, building bridges and not enclosing ourselves in the selfishness that leads us to the solitude of sin.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **NINTH STATION**

### **Jesus falls for the third time**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all (Is 53:5-6).*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, as you fall for the third time. Twice now you have fallen, and twice you have got up. By now, there are no limits to your struggle and your pain. Now, in this third and last fall, you seem completely overwhelmed. How many times, in everyday life, do we fall! We fall so often that we lose count. When a person falls that many times, ultimately all strength fails and all hope vanishes.

I imagine myself beside you, Jesus, as you make your way to your death. It is hard to think that you are the Son of God himself. Someone has already tried to help you, but now you are exhausted, at a standstill, paralyzed: it seems that you cannot possibly go any further. Unexpectedly, however, I see you get up, and begin to walk once more. Yes, you are walking to your death, but you want to do so to the very end. Perhaps this is love. For Jesus, the end is the crucifixion, the apparent absurdity of death, which nonetheless reveals a deeper meaning, a more sublime purpose, that of saving us all.

Jesus, we know that you are always there, even when we keep falling, and especially now when the world seems to be falling through each wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many in our world today feel that they are at that moment of final falling, that the burden of COVID-19 is too great to bear. Help us to remember, Jesus, that there is meaning and purpose in every challenge and hardship as we journey towards You.

#### **PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, after so many falls, let me not lose hope for happiness and holiness. If you are with me, then I am not doomed to be stuck in the endless repetition of my failures. May your grace arise in the wilderness of my heart. Grant a new beginning even today.

Help your people to arise beyond what is physical, to see the spiritual dynamic at work in our midst. May everyone confront the challenges of life with the strength and the fidelity which were yours in the final moments of your journey to death on the cross.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **TENTH STATION**

### **Jesus is stripped of his garments**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top (Jn 19:23).*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, naked, as I have never seen you before. They have stripped you of your garments, Jesus, and are casting dice for them. In the eyes of these men, you have lost the last shred of your remaining dignity, your one possession on this, your journey of suffering. Yet there is something we often forget about dignity. It is found beneath your skin; it is part of you, and it will always be with you.

Jesus, you continue to be stripped of Your dignity today, in those who have to endure treatment for COVID-19, some of whom are so ill, they don't know where they are. In teenagers who are bullied, friends who have less than those who they hang out and are frowned upon, the homeless who are condemned for being poor without knowing their story, those who use or take part in pornography. We continue to strip you of your dignity when we strip the earth of its resources, by continuing to exacerbate global warming and fail to take care of the earth. Now is our chance to strip hatred and sin from the world by following your example.

#### **PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, I fear to be seen as I am, with my foolish fears and hidden failures. I would be ashamed and wish to hide, like Adam and Eve. But for us, you have been stripped naked and borne the jeers of the world. Comfort those who feel despised. Clothe me with your love, please. Clothe humanity in your garment of love. I ask you, Lord, grant that all of us may acknowledge the dignity belonging to our nature, even when we find ourselves naked and alone before others.

Grant that we may always see the dignity of others, respect it and defend it. We ask you to grant us the courage needed to understand ourselves as more than the clothing we wear, and to accept our own nakedness. It reminds us of our poverty, with which you fell in love, even to giving your life for us.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **ELEVENTH STATION**

### **Jesus is nailed to the cross**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then, Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Lk 23:33-34).*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, stripped of everything. They wanted to punish you, an innocent person, by nailing you to the wood of the cross. What would I have done in your place? Would I have had the courage to acknowledge your truth, my truth? You had the strength to bear the weight of the cross, to meet with disbelief, to be condemned for your provocative words.

Today, in the world of Internet, we are so conditioned by everything that circulates on the web; there are times when I doubt even my own words. But your words are different; they are powerful in your weakness. I look all around and I see eyes glued to cell phone screens, people trolling social networks in order to nail others for their every mistake, with no possibility of forgiveness.

Jesus, you continue to be crucified in all those suffering in our world, in the effects of COVID-19, in the ten children who die every minute of hunger, in all who are maimed, damaged and displaced because of war, in all who are marginalised in our society because of their race, sexuality or gender, in those who are abused physically, sexually or emotionally, in those who are trafficked across the world and in the exploitation of the earth and its resources. I look at your wounds and I realize, now, that I would not have had your strength. But I am seated here at your feet. I get up in order to be closer to you.

#### **PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, I ask you that in the face of good I may be ready to recognize it, and that in the face of injustice I may find the courage to take my life in my hands and to act differently. Grant that I may be set free from all the fears that, like nails, immobilize me and keep me far from the life you have desired and prepared for us.

Lord Jesus, your life had seemed so full of promise, and yet it ended in the disgrace of the cross. And as you are close to us in these dark moments, so may we share with you in the radiance of your resurrection. As we journey our way of the cross now, help us to focus on the light at the end of the tunnel – the resurrection.

**ALL: AMEN.**

**TWELFTH STATION**  
**Jesus dies on the cross**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

**PLEASE REMAIN KNEELING FOR THE DURATION OF THIS STATION**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent" (Lk 23:44-47).*

**MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus, but this time I would rather not see. You are dying. You were beautiful to behold when you spoke to the crowds, but now all that has come to an end. I do not want to see that end; all too often I have averted my gaze, I have become almost accustomed to flee pain and death. I have become numb to them. I ignore the COVID-19 death statistics, instead of praying and uniting my heart with those who suffer. Instead, you remain there, on the cross; you await us with open arms. You open our eyes.

This is a great mystery, Jesus. You love us by dying, by suffering abandonment, by bestowing your spirit, by doing the Father's will. You do not try to explain the mystery of death. You do more: you cross over it completely in body and spirit. A great mystery! Jesus, you know what it's like to feel alone, lost and afraid, betrayed and abandoned. Walk with us, and show us how to walk with others, who live in fear and face death through hunger, thirst and conflict. Show us how to pray for sisters and brothers that we have never met, but who are always loved by you.

**PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, I ask that you open my eyes to see you also in suffering, in death, in the ending which is not the real ending. Upset my complacency by your cross: shake off my drowsiness.

Lord Jesus, be with us in the hour of our death. May those who feel abandoned by God know that he is closer than we can imagine. May those who feel that there is no God at all discover his intimate presence. Before our death, inspire us to offer reparation for our sins that we may be well prepared for our particular judgement.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **THIRTEENTH STATION**

### **Jesus is taken down from the cross**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews (Jn 19:38-40).*

#### **MEDITATION**

I see you, Jesus. Now you are no longer there, on the cross. You have gone back from where you came, upon the lap of your mother. The suffering is now past, vanished. Your lifeless body continues to speak of the strength with which you faced suffering; the meaning that you gave it is reflected in the eyes of those still there at your side and will always remain there in love, given and received.

Your new life is marked by the one thing that remains unbroken by death: love. You are here with us at every moment, at every step, in every uncertainty. While the shadow of the tomb lengthens on your body, held in the arms of your mother.

Mary's grief is our grief too. She stands with all parents who have held their children close to them in death. Those who have died in the pandemic sweeping the world. Those lost through accidents or acts of violence. Those who have died by suicide. Those who died suddenly or after illness. All those who grieve for loved ones.

I see you, Jesus, and I am afraid, yet I do not despair. I trust that the light, your light, will shine once again.

#### **PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, now you are lowered from the cross into the hands of those who loved you and who stayed by your side to the end. May we have the courage to remain faithful to you when it is costly.

Grant that we may continue, our hearts inflamed, to fix our gaze on eternal salvation, and thus find refreshment and peace on our journey strengthened by your unconditional love.

**ALL: AMEN.**

## **FOURTEENTH STATION**

### **Jesus is laid in the tomb**

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

#### **Genuflecting**

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: *Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden, there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there (Jn 19:41-42).*

#### **MEDITATION**

No longer do I see you, Jesus, now all is dark. Long shadows fall from the hills, and the Shabbat lamps light up Jerusalem, outside homes and within.

From afar, Joseph of Arimathea followed your steps, and now, with quiet steps, accompanies you in your sleep, withdraws you from the stares of the indignant and malicious. A sheet enfolds you in the chill of death and dries your blood, sweat and tears. Joseph carries you on his shoulders, but you are light: you no longer bear the burden of death, of hatred and anger. You sleep as you did on the warm straw when you were wrapped in swaddling clothes and another Joseph held you in his arms. Just as there was no room for you then, so now you have nowhere to lay your head. Yet on Calvary, on the stiff neck of the world, there grows a garden in which no one had yet been buried.

There are times when we are overcome by the darkness of the tomb, by the countless deaths that we experience each day, but the answer to all our grieving and despair lies in this place. The grain of wheat sown in darkness and in death has indeed yielded a rich harvest.

I would like to run far away, but you are there within me. I need not to go out to seek you, because you are knocking at my door.

#### **PRAYER**

Lord Jesus, who revealed yourself not in glory but in the quiet of a dark night, you who see not the surface, but in secret, entering into the depths. From the depths, hear our voice: grant that, in our weariness, we may find rest in you, seeing in you our nature, and in the love of your sleeping face, the beauty we have lost.

Lord Jesus, now you are laid to rest in the tomb. May we rest in your love, confident that even when the future is obscure, we nestle in your Father's care. Grant us patient endurance until we hear your final summons to the fullness of life. Graciously calm our fears, and increase faith, hope, and love.

**ALL: AMEN.**

Leader: As we have reflected on the final journey of Jesus, leading to his death on the cross, we have also contemplated the lives of our sisters and brothers around facing the Coronavirus Pandemic, those living in extreme poverty, the marginalised, the abused, those who have been shunned from society and are now outcasts, our environment and the way we mistreat it. Let us pray together for God to transform our lives and the lives of others.

## **PRAYER**

Loving God,

we hear your call  
to all who thirst  
for a brighter future:  
Come to the water.

Pour out your Spirit upon us  
and lead us to walk  
alongside one another.

Let a desire for change  
well up within us.  
May we overflow with  
compassion and love.

And as a stream  
wears away stone,  
may we reshape  
our world together  
to reflect your kingdom  
of hope for all.

**ALL:        AMEN.**

## REFERENCES

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