

POPE JOHN PAUL II' s STATIONS OF THE CROSS

WALKING WITH JESUS

Opening Hymn: Were You There
INTRODUCTION

PRIEST: Lord Jesus, We come to walk with you, confident that you will accompany us in our journey and lead us into the presence of God.

We choose you as the model for our life journey. Your journey to the cross dramatizes what your whole life has been: an offering of praise to God and loving service to humanity. This is what we want for our lives, too.

Your passion and death, like the rest of your life, were acts of praise; a response to God's infinite love for you. We too want to praise God as a grateful response for your infinite love for us.

In your loving face and wounded body, we have a powerful image of God's love.

Help us to walk with you to experience your great love for us.

"There is no greater love than this; to lay down one's life for one's friends.(Jn. 15:13)

song: Verse 1 of Stabat Mater in English and Latin

THE FIRST STATION

JESUS IS IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

LEADER: *We adore you, O Christ, and we praise You!*

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

LECTOR : **A reading from the Gospel according to Mark : 14: 32-42**

"Then they went to a place called Geth-sem'a ne; and he said to his disciples, sit here while I pray. He took with him Peter, James and John and began to be distressed and agitated. Then he said to them, I am deeply grieved even; remain here and keep awake. And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, Abba, Father, for you all things are possible, remove this cup from me; yet not what I want, but what you want." He

came and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour?”

Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial .The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” And again he went away and prayed. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy and they did not know what to say to him.

He returned a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough. The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us go. See my betrayer is at hand.”

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER: JESUS CONTINUES TO EXPERIENCE AGONY

Jesus’ way of life put him on collision course with the powerful and the mighty of his day. His crime was to take seriously the mission described in Isaiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to let the oppressed go free.”

Jesus calls both the rich and the poor to conversion of heart and build a world where all live as brothers and sisters in love and peace. For proclaiming a kingdom that challenges the order of the day, his opponents plotted to kill him. The impending suffering and death is before his eyes. He is troubled to visualize his own suffering as it torments his soul. However he is ready to follow God’s will, no matter what consequence he may have to face.

We too experience mental agony before taking some important decisions: choosing between two opposing values: values of the Gospel; values of the world; choosing between good and evil. When people accuse us falsely and give us all types of troubles, we experience the same agony, Jesus had in the garden of Gethsemane.

Heavenly Father, we pray for all those who experience agony both mental and physical and who are deprived of their dignity as children of God Help us to recognize Jesus face in them and come to their rescue by condemning injustices and working for the welfare of all irrespective of their color, race, language and nationality. Help us to stand with Jesus against these injustices and work for the happiness of all.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE FATHER

HYMN

THE SECOND STATION

JESUS IS BETRAYED BY JUDAS AND ARRESTED

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

ALL : *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world*

LECTOR: **A reading from the Gospel according Mark: 14: 43-50.**

Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived, and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs from the chief priests, the scribes and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, Rabbi," and he kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. One of those who stood near drew his sword, struck the slave of the high priest cutting off his ear.

Then Jesus said to them, "Have you come out as against a robber with swords and clubs to arrest me?

Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, you did not arrest me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled." All of them deserted him and fled.

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER: JESUS CONTINUES TO BE BETRAYED

The betrayal of Jesus by Judas began in the Upper Room where the Apostles gathered with Jesus for the Passover meal. John the Evangelist says when Judas received the bread from Jesus, Satan entered him and he left the room. He had already conspired with the Pharisees to hand over Jesus to them for the price of 30 silver pieces. It was a carefully laid out plan. He made sure that Jesus was in the garden and there were enough men to apprehend him. The Pharisees had instructed the men to have an eye on Judas, whom they thought, might run away without betraying Jesus.

Leaving the men at a distance Judas went forward and greeted

Jesus. Here Judas is addressing Jesus as “ Rabbi” not as Lord as other apostles call him. It was the sign for them to arrest Jesus and they bounced on him and arrested him.

Judas who had the confidence of Jesus and was the Bursar of the Apostles, became a slave to his own greed. He wanted to enjoy life not a life of persecution as Jesus was predicting and it contributed to his parting company with Jesus to embrace a life of comfort. Hence he bargained and got a price on Jesus: 30 silver pieces.

Heavenly Father, it was not only the betrayal by Judas that brought immeasurable sufferings to Jesus, Your Son, leading to his death on the cross, but also our daily betrayal of the innocents, Jesus’ values and our faith that continues to crucify him. When we fail as a nation to uphold the rights of the people, especially the less fortunate than ourselves, we continue to betray Jesus.

Help us to be faithful to You, faithful to our calling, faithful to our spouses, our parents and children. Make us to follow the Gospel values.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE-----

HYMN

THIRD STATION

JESUS IS CONDEMNED BY THE SANHEDRIN

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

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

LECTOR: **A reading from the Gospel according to Mark 14: 53-64**

They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests , the elders and the scribes were assembled. Peter had followed him at a distance right into the high priest’s courtyard and was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. Many gave false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him saying, “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands and in three days I will build another not made with hands.’ But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you ?” But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, “ Are

you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"

Jesus said, "I am; and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his garments and said, "Why do we still need witnesses ? You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?"

All of them condemned him as deserving death.

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER: Mark presents two trials one before Jewish leaders, the other before Pilate. He regarded the Jewish trial as the more decisive one, though from a legal perspective the Roman trial was more important. Throughout the trials, Jesus, the innocent sufferer, remained silent. Mark uses again the sandwich technique to place side by side the faithfulness of Jesus and the cowardice of Peter . The two charges raised during the trials were that Jesus threatened to destroy Jerusalem temple and that he committed blasphemy. Jesus was probably viewed as a Jewish political-religious rebel who threatened the power of both the Romans and the Jewish leaders. To safeguard their selfish ends, the Jewish Council, Sanhedrin, bring false charges against the innocent Jesus, and condemn him.

How many innocent people are condemned in this world ? In Sudan, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Syria, Afghanistan and other countries where civil war was or is, a daily fact of life; thousands of innocent men, women and children are being condemned or mindlessly slaughtered.

When we gossip, become judgmental, despise and speak ill of others, the innocents are being condemned and in them Jesus continues to be condemned.

Heavenly Father we pray for those unjustly condemned, murdered, who live in terror of the daily violence, who fear for their lives and the lives of their families.

Help us to stand with Jesus against these injustices and to work for the happiness of all people.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO-----
HYMN

THE FOURTH STATION

JESUS IS DENIED BY PETER

LEADER: *We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you !*

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

LECTOR : A reading from the Gospel according to Mark : 14: 66-72

“ While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, You too were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth. But he denied it saying , I do not know or understand what you are talking about.

So he went out into the fore court. Then the cock crowed. The servant-girl on seeing him and began again to say to the bystanders, “ this man is one of them. Once again he denied it.

Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean. But he began to curse and swear on oath: I do not know this man you are talking about.” At that moment a cock crowed for the second time.

Then Peter remembered the words that Jesus had said to him, Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times. And he broke down and wept.”

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER: JESUS CONTINUES TO BE DENIED

As Jesus had predicted all his disciples deserted him in the garden and left. Even Peter, as Jesus had predicted, denied him not once but three times. Peter remembered Jesus words, broke down and cried and it indicates his remorse for denying Jesus.

Peter’s denial and his subsequent remorse should remind us of our denial of Jesus and his values. When we fail to recognize others; uphold their rights as children of God, we continue to deny Jesus. With Peter we say” I do not know him.” Peter after denying three times experienced the mercy of a forgiving God and went on to become one of the greatest apostles. The tears of Peter offers a great deal of hope to all of us who lack the courage and trust. It is never too late for us to say with contrite hearts: Yes, I am with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Heavenly Father, give us the courage and trust to stand with You in times of trials and tribulations. We tend to desert You at the face of opposition; difficulties, pain and sufferings. Help us to come back to you as Peter did.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO---

HYMN

FIFTH STATION

JESUS IS JUDGED BY PILATE

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

ALL : *Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world !*

LECTOR: **A reading from the Gospel according to Mark 15:1-15**

“ As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes, and the whole council . They bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate questioned him, Are you the King of the Jews ? He said to him in reply, “ You say so.”. Then the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate questioned him again , “ Have you no answer ?” See how many charges they bring against you ”. But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder in a rebellion .So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Pilate answered , “ do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews ?” For he knew that it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead.

Pilate said to them again, “Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews ?” They shouted back. “ Crucify him!

Pilate said to them, why? What evil has he done?; but they shouted all the more, “ Crucify him.” So Pilate wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them and, after flagging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD..

LEADER: JESUS CONTINUES TO BE JUDGED

The chief priests, elders and the council were anxious to get the cooperation of the Roman official, Pilate, to put Jesus away. Pilate asked him if he were the King of the Jews ? Jesus accepts the title given to him by Pilate. It amounts to say: I am guilty to the charge of high treason. There is

no king in Roman territory but Caesar. Pilate was aware that Jesus was innocent and the charges were made out of jealousy and he was trying to release Jesus instead of Barabbas, a murder convict and insurrectionist. But the priests and others influence the crowd to shout for the release of Barabbas.

Pilate ends up satisfying the crowd which call for his crucifixion. Pilate plays out his cowardly role in the Gospel drama. Though convinced of Jesus innocence, he yields to pressure and hands him over to be scourged and crucified.

Pilate is not alone in yielding to pressure and condemning an innocent person. Political leaders, authorities both in the society and in the church often yield to pressure and side with the rich and the powerful and the poor and the vulnerable become victims. When we become concerned about our own safety and security forgetting others and their rights, we play Pilates in condemning the innocent to death.

Heavenly Father, Your Son, Jesus became the victim of the cowardly act of Pilate and in today's world we play Pilates in our dealings and attitude towards others. Help us to take the side of the truth no matter what the pressure is to do the opposite.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO-----
HYMN

THE SIXTH STATION

JESUS IS SCOURGED AND CROWNED WITH THORNS

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

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

LECTOR: **A reading from the Gospel according to Mark 15:16-20**

“ Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace, that is the Governor's headquarters, and assembled the whole cohort. They clothed him in a purple cloak and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him.. They began saluting him, Hail, King of the Jews!” They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him. They knelt down in in homage to him . After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him .”

The Gospel of the Lord.

LEADER: JESUS CONTINUES TO BE SCOURGED AND CROWNED WITH THORNS

The scourging like crucifixion, was a degrading form of punishment applied only to the slaves. The whip or flagellum, used to punish serious crimes was strengthened with small sharp pieces of metal at the end of the thongs, which had the effect of tearing the flesh and even fracturing bones. Scourging often caused severe bleeding and the condemned person was tied to a post to prevent him collapsing.

After Jesus is scourged, he is dressed in royal purple and crowned with thorns by the soldiers, who mockingly call him, King of the Jews.

Jesus remains silent through all the beating and spitting he receives. It is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy concerning Messiah: I gave my back to those who beat me.....My face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. (Isa. 50:6)

The image of the suffering Jesus, scourged and crowned with thorns with a reed in his hand and an old purple cloak around his shoulders, have become a vivid symbol of human suffering, under the title of "Ecce Homo" –" Behold the Man"-

Millions of innocent people are imprisoned, tortured and put to death all over the world. All those who speak for the poor and the marginalized people are treated as traitors and troublemakers.

Father, Your Son, Jesus worked and spoke for those outcasts of the society: sinners and marginalized people. Make us to follow your Son's lead and lend our support to those less privileged than ours.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE-----
HYMN

THE SEVENTH STATION

JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, we praise You !*

ALL : *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world !*

LECTOR: A reading from the Gospel according to John 19:16-17

“ So they took Jesus and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull which in Hebrew is called Golgotha”

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER: JESUS CONTINUES TO CARRY HIS CROSS

Having received the death sentence, Jesus must carry the cross through the streets of Jerusalem. Some future day, the Cross will become the symbol of glory. But on Good Friday afternoon, it is a symbol of infamy. But in loving fidelity to His Father's plan and out of love for humanity, Jesus accepts this cruel burden.

There are thousands of single mothers with children on Long Island. Many single mothers live in poverty and without help from the community and they are left to carry the cross alone.

Jesus, you were made to carry a heavy cross. You chose to pay the price of love. When I think of how I complain over little things that upset me, I feel very small. Teach me to love everyone and help me to carry my crosses with patience and dignity, the way, you and many others do.

Heavenly Father, help us to be in solidarity with those carry the crosses of poverty, sickness, neglect, effects of war and whose very existence seems to be forgotten by the community. May we share your compassion for the suffering people. Help us to reach out to those groups that serve them; help us to carry our own crosses in remembrance of you and those suffering millions. Amen.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE----
HYMN

THE EIGHTH STATION

JESUS IS HELPED BY SIMON TO CARRY HIS CROSS

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

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

LECTOR: A reading from the Gospel according to Mark 15: 21

"They compelled a passer-by who was coming in from the country to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus .

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER: JESUS NEEDS SIMONS TODAY

Jesus is exhausted. His footsteps became more and more unsteady and the soldiers are in a hurry to crucify him. So, as they were going out of the city

through the Judgment Gate, they take hold of a man coming in from a farm and forced him to carry the cross of Jesus.

Once again Jesus is encouraged by the helping hand of another person. This reminds us of Jesus' own words that care shown to others even to strangers, is care shown to Jesus.

When we feed or shelter others, we are doing the same for Christ. When we lift unjust burdens from the shoulders of others by defending them against exploitation and prejudice, we are lifting the same burdens from Christ's shoulders. When we struggle to change the unjust systems: racism, sexism, subhuman wages, unequal distribution of wealth, unfair trade relationships that exploit nations- we help alleviate the sufferings of millions of other Christ's.

Lord , grant us the strength that we may help bear the crosses of our neighbors and others in need. Grant us the will to volunteer our time, talent and treasure to support the programs meant to alleviate the suffering of the people.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE-----
HYMN

THE NINTH STATION

JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

All : *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world !*

LECTOR: **A reading from the Gospel according to Luke: 23:27-31**

“ A great number of the people followed Jesus, and among them were many women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, “ Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourself and for your children. For the days are surely coming when people will say, blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.” Then they begin to 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?”

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER : WOMEN STILL WEEP FOR JESUS AND HE CONTINUES TO COMFORT THEM

The weeping women who follow Jesus reminds us of the courageous role they played throughout Jesus' passion. It is a role many women have played throughout the centuries, in the society and in the Church that have not recognized their contributions. Jesus is less concerned about justifying his innocence than being sensitive to the plight of the weeping women.

In Chile, Iran and Israel, Palestine, Iraq, Syria, Sri Lanka and many other countries, women of all ages are mourning. They grieve for the innocent ones who are unjustly imprisoned or killed. Husbands, Fathers, Younger brothers have been either taken away or killed. While these women mourn, they march to demand freedom for their loved ones. Their faces are masked in pain and the signs express their cry for justice.

Jesus, your strength shines forth in these sorrowing women. When we are called to speak out and stand up for others, we sometimes hold back. We are afraid of what others may think. Give us the courage, in situation that call for taking a risk or stand. Help us to remember, that every human person, no matter what his or her color, race, religion or nationality, deserves to be loved and cared for. It is the plight of these mothers and the children, that cuts into our hearts. Make us to understand that You are always with us comforting us in times of trials and tribulations. Amen.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE-----
HYMN

THE TENTH STATION

JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

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

LECTOR: **A reading from the Gospel according to Mark 15:22-26**

“Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha(which means the place of a Skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, The King of the Jews.

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER: JESUS IS BEING CRUCIFIED DAILY

Jesus was held to the cross with large nails through his hands and feet. The soldiers raised the cross and Jesus was left hanging in the hot sun for three hours.

To have an incurable disease is to have death sentence and it is to be nailed to the cross of pain, despair, fear and loneliness.

Jesus was nailed to the cross of our sins

Because of Jesus forgiving heart, he lets the very nails, we drive into his hands and feet, to drive away our guilt, Jesus really lived his teaching on forgiveness: Love your enemies, pray for your persecutors; do good to those who hate you, bless those curse you. Jesus' love is so pure that he seeks only to help others, no matter what they do to him.

He was proclaimed" King of the Jews" but his compassion for us surely makes Him King of our hearts. He comforts the sick and the dying through the hands and hearts of many people of good will" by his stripes, we are healed."

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, compassion is surely one of your most beautiful gifts to us. We pray for those who suffer and bear their burdens. Give us the will to relieve the sufferings of our working poor on Long Island and else where through our acts of charity and justice. Amen.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE-----
HYMN

THE ELEVENTH STATION

JESUS PROMISES HIS KINGDOM TO THE GOOD THIEF

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and We praise You !*

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

LECTOR: A reading from the Gospel according to Luke 23: 33-44

When they came to the place 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. And they cast lots to divide his clothing. The people stood by

watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one. The soldiers also mocked him coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, if you are the King of the Jews save yourself. There was also an inscription over him, This is the King of the Jews.”

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding Jesus saying, Are you not the Messiah? save yourself and us. But the other, however, rebuked him, saying, Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong. Then he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. He replied to him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” **THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD**

LEADER: JESUS CONTINUES TO BE THE SYMBOL OF LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

The two criminals crucified with Jesus are hanging before us like a microcosm of Judgment Day. Enthroned on his cross between them is the judge, with the sheep at His right hand and the goat at His left- one on his way to eternal reward, the other to everlasting punishment.

We know very little about these two men and the tradition has given the names Dismas to the good thief and Gestas to the other. Both suffered terribly and the one on the left never ceased cursing and swearing. At the height of his suffering Gestas was mocking Jesus, whereas Dismas was deeply moved at the prayer of Jesus to forgive His enemies. Dismas acknowledges Jesus and says “ He is truly a prophet- He is our King- He is the Son of God.

Jews were outraged at his remarks and they wanted to stone him to death. But the centurion prevented it.

Dismas prays to the Lord and the Lord promises salvation. His example gives, even to the worst of us, a reason for hope. Whatever may be our situation; whatever may be our condition and sinfulness, the Lord gives us hope and wipes out our guilt when we express sorrow for our sins. Prophet Isaiah says: Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. Is.18. St. Augustine says: Do not despair; one of the thieves was saved; do not presume; one of the thieves was damned”.

Heavenly Father, We come to you with repentant hearts and give us the hope. Whenever we are down with our problems, extend your hands to lift

us up. Poverty, sickness and injustice have taken the toll of many lives and people are in despair and they wonder if God exists. Turn to them as your Son turned to Dismas offering him hope and make their hopes a reality Amen

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE-----

HYMN

THE TWELFTH STATION

JESUS ENTRUST MARY AND JOHN TO EACH OTHER

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

ALL: *Because of Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world !*

LECTOR: A reading from the Gospel according to John 19 :25-27

“ Meanwhile standing near the cross of Jesus was his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary, wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple, whom he loved, standing beside her, he said to his mother, Women, here is your son. Then he said to the disciple, here is your Mother. And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.”

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER: MARY IS OUR MOTHER AND THE MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

The standing of Mary and John at the foot of the cross has more than filial significance: care of his mother at the hour of his death, Mary represents also the Church. The woman in the book of Genesis brought destruction and the woman here at the foot of the Cross becomes part of salvation. John presents Mary beneath the cross in a double role: the feminine symbol of a mother and the Church, caring for and placed in the care of his disciples, who become her children and consequently Jesus’ brothers and sisters and woman of victory emphasizing her contribution to salvation

Jesus entrusts his mother to the care of his beloved disciple reminding ourselves of our responsibility to our parents and the elderly.

Heavenly Father, Your son’s love for his mother and the Church continued until he breathed his last. His supreme sacrifice on the cross is itself the proof of his love. Help to us to examine our relationship so that we may remain ever grateful to our parents and those who had helped us. Make us to take care of them in their time of need and be a source of strength to

them. Amen.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE-----
HYMN

THE THIRTEENTH STATION

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

LEADER : *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

ALL : *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world!*

LECTOR: A Reading from the Gospel according to Mark : 15:33-39

“ When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o’ clock, Jesus cried out with a loud voice” Eloi, Eloi, lema Sabachthani ? Which means, My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? When some of the bystanders heard it they said, Listen, he is calling for Elijah. And some one ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick and gave it to him to drink saying, Wait let us see weather Elijah will come to take him down. Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the Centurion, who stood facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, Truly this man was God’s Son.”

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

LEADER: JESUS DIES DAILY ON THE CROSS

As he hangs dying on the cross, Jesus shares the desolation of the thousands who see their efforts and dreams collapse. He even doubted God’s presence in his struggle. But in the end he dies the way, he has lived: with total trust in His Father’s love.

My God, My God, why have you forsaken me ? We hear this cry everywhere from the poor and the suffering. Do we think God has abandoned them? Do they think God has turned His back on them as they watch the weak grow weaker, the poor become poorer? When we are burdened with problems, suffer the loss of a loved one, we too cry, My God, My God, why have you forsaken us ?

If Christ uttered these words, so should they in times of darkness. It is this time that they need our prayers and support, and to know that the

body of Christ, the Church, stand firmly behind them.

Out of the darkness of defeat comes world's redemption. We can already proclaim the good news. "through your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. You are Savior of the world."

Heavenly Father, give hope, encouragement and peace to all the suffering people. Give us the strength to be faithful and help us to be consistent in our love for others, so that we could stand by them in good times and bad, in joys and sorrows and in their struggle for justice. Hold them in your merciful hands and give them the constant assurance of Your Love. Amen.

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE-----
HYMN

THE FOURTEENTH STATION

JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

LEADER: *We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You !*

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

LECTOR: **A reading from the Gospel According to Mark 15: 42-47**

"When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is the day before Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for sometime. When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. Then Joseph bought a linen cloth and taking down the body wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Magdalene and Mary mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid." **THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD**

LEADER: **JESUS IS STILL BEING LAID IN THE TOMB.**

When Jesus was laid in the tomb, his disciples lost all hope. They did not know that the true ministry of Jesus was just beginning. They could not see beyond the grave; they didn't understand Jesus' words that he would rise again.

To be buried as a pauper in an unmarked grave represents total abandonment in life. Yet so many people in the world are buried without recognition, with no proper burial place. Massive deaths occur from famine, disease, wars and natural calamities. Entire population is wiped out by volcanic eruptions and Tsunami waves. Homeless people die without family or friends.

Lord, You had no burial place of your own. Yet when your body was taken down from the cross, your friends reverently placed it in a borrowed tomb. Help us always to remember that each person is a sacred object to be treated with reverence both in life and in death. When we respect ourselves and others, we are recognizing and praising the beauty of your creation.

Heavenly Father, as we near the end of our journey, this evening, we thank you for all the people who understand the power of the resurrection and are proclaiming it. Help us to continue to walk with you on the path of Justice, Peace, Love and Truth.

You are the Life, the Truth and the Resurrection. You have come that we may have life and have it to the full.

Lord, Lead us from Unreal to Real- Truth; from Darkness to Light and from Mortality to Immortality. Amen

OUR FATHER, HAIL MARY, GLORY BE TO THE-----
HYMN