Good Friday — 7:30 pm — The Way of the Cross, A Journey of Hope — 2026

Introduction: **ANTOINETTE**

The Way of the Cross began in the earliest days of the Church as pilgrims to Jerusalem retraced Jesus' steps in his final journey to Calvary. Beginning in the 1500s, when it was not feasible for everyone to visit these holy sites in person, replica shrines were erected around Europe. Eventually, the practice developed into the set of fourteen stations that we know today, found in almost every church. The Stations of the Cross tend to take the form of paintings or reliefs on church walls. They are often prayed during Lent as a mini pilgrimage between stations in a church. The visual representation of these scenes helps people imagine the events of Jesus' suffering and crucifixion. Often, as in our service tonight, a reflection accompanies the image, offering a new context or perspective.

Each station tonight includes a reflection written by a Jesuit or lay person from the ministries of the Midwestern Province of the Jesuits in the United States, inviting diverse perspectives of Jesus' experience on the day he died.

A printed copy of the reflection questions for each station is provided on the back of your program so that you might continue to pray about these questions after you leave tonight.

Our service will end with a candle ritual based on the Beatitudes and a Universal Prayer.

As Christians, we know that Jesus' death is not the end of the story. We walk with Christ in his pain and death on the Cross, but then we wait in joyful hope for what we know comes next. On Easter, we celebrate his resurrection and his triumph over death. May we who are united with Jesus in his suffering be united with him in the promise of everlasting life.

Song: Were You There

ANTOINETTE
After each petition---
Leader: *"We place our prayers..." Response by all: "Into Your Light, O Lord."*

Let us pray: O God of all Life, Light, and Love, on this Good Friday we gather in sacred community to be comforted by faith and to tend the promise of new hope. Yet we are disturbed by the long shadows around us. We ask Your blessing upon all gathered here tonight, in body and soul, be with us this night. We place our prayers..."Into Your Light, O Lord."

Holy God, you know so well that we are equally capable of noble acts and terrible sins, so on this night, remembering Jesus' betrayals and suffering, we pray for the innocent ones who have experienced pain. May they be granted deep healing. We place our prayers..."Into Your Light, O Lord."

As we recall Jesus' deep compassion and his infallible integrity, during caustic times of betrayal and corruption, we ask a blessing upon those who have done likewise -- who have risen in character at times of great challenge. We place our prayers..."Into Your Light, O Lord."

We gather as a people who are hurting. You know the exact burdens we each carry, as well as which sorrows are our heaviest. Grateful for Your eternal care and companionship, we place our prayers..."Into Your Light, O Lord."

This night, near the tomb where the Beloved lays, we are awakened to the reality of human mortality, and of physical illnesses and challenges which harm our bodies. We ask for healing and ask well-being for all who are sick. We place our prayers..."Into Your Light, O Lord."

And now, we offer to You, Holy One, our private, silent prayers, already grateful for Your tender attention. (silent prayer) We place our prayers..."Into Your Light, O Lord." Amen.

Our service is ended. We invite you to stay and pray a while and then venerate the cross before you leave. Good evening. Good Friday.

Songs and reflective instrumentals by Music Ministry