Eleventh Station **Elina**

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.

As iron pierces flesh, the son of God is vulnerable and alone. A man who lived life with open arms is readied for death, his welcoming and saving arms spread out onto the cross. Though his family and friends had walked with Jesus in life, they cannot join him on the cross. Those gathered at Calvary could be forgiven for losing hope as they witnessed soldiers driving nails through Jesus. This is the worst possible outcome that they could imagine for their beloved son, friend, teacher, and savior. Perhaps they think, "Where is God?"

This question echoes in our modern lives. When we experience tragedy and loss, doubt can shake our faith. But God is always found in the same place: on the cross. Jesus suffered for us and remains with us in our own suffering. When we find ourselves in ruin, we should know that we are not there alone.

Reflection Questions: In times of suffering or loss, what has happened to your faith? How have you experienced Jesus there with you?

Leader: We pray…
All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

Sing: Adoramus te Christe…

Thirteen Station **Elina**

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.

We turn our focus to the physical form of Jesus' body, slumped now, devoid of life, is taken down from the cross by those who must have been his followers. They had hoped in him, imagined him as their future king. We experience the taste of defeat and despair which they surely must have felt.

In that lifeless body which bears the marks of every indignity and shame, we can also see other bodies as well—the murdered victims of racial injustice, the bodies of refugees washed ashore in the Mediterranean, the victims of poverty and homelessness.

Below the cross, we contemplate Mary his mother as she receives the body of her son in her lap and see every mother who mourns the loss of a child, whether to crime, addiction, abuse, or violence.

Reflection Questions: How can you ensure that you do not turn your eyes away from suffering in your midst? How do you keep our hearts open to feel compassion for all the victims of our human cruelty and neglect?

Leader: We pray…
All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

Sing: Adoramus te Christe…