Second Station **Joanne**

Jesus Carries His Cross

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Two thousand years of Christian faith train us to see the cross as a symbol of salvation or perhaps self-sacrificial love. But in Jesus' day, the cross signified a singular shame. It was the most humiliating and brutal way the Romans could execute someone they perceived as a threat to their empire. It was a punishment so inhumane that no Roman citizen could be crucified, no matter how grotesque or grave the offense.

Jesus' teaching and healing ministry—marked by inclusive, merciful love—is met with barbarism and revulsion. When Jesus takes up his cross, he exposes the cruelty that results from the human impulse toward fear, hatred, and violence. Jesus takes up his cross in fidelity to the God he called father. We also see Jesus' solidarity with us in the mystery of suffering and death. Where there is failure, a wound, or any kind of suffering, there he is.

Imagine the scene as Jesus embraces this tool used for his own degradation and execution. What thoughts and feelings arise in you? Looking into his eyes, what does Jesus say to you? What do you say to Jesus?

Reflection Questions: What cross seems heavy in your own life? What does it mean to imagine Jesus taking up his cross for you?

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

Sing: Adoramus te Christe…

Fourth Station **Joanne**

Jesus Meets His Mother

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Mary gazes on her son, covered in blood and sweat. Her heart breaks as she shares his pain. As a mother, she bears the sorrow with him.

A Black mother keens upon hearing her only son is riddled with bullets. A South American mother marches with the *Mothers of the Disappeared*. A Jewish mother lights Sabbath candles while weeping over the death of her daughter, a rabbi killed in a hate crime at the synagogue. A mother wails as she gets the news her son is pistol whipped and beaten for being gay. Mothers across the world mourn for their children lost to violence or disease.

Each mother bears the pain of her sons and daughters. Like Mary, she stands in solidarity with her children. She holds them in her heart as only a mother can.

Reflection Questions: Whom are you invited to care for? How do you help bear their pain?

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

Sing: Adoramus te Christe…