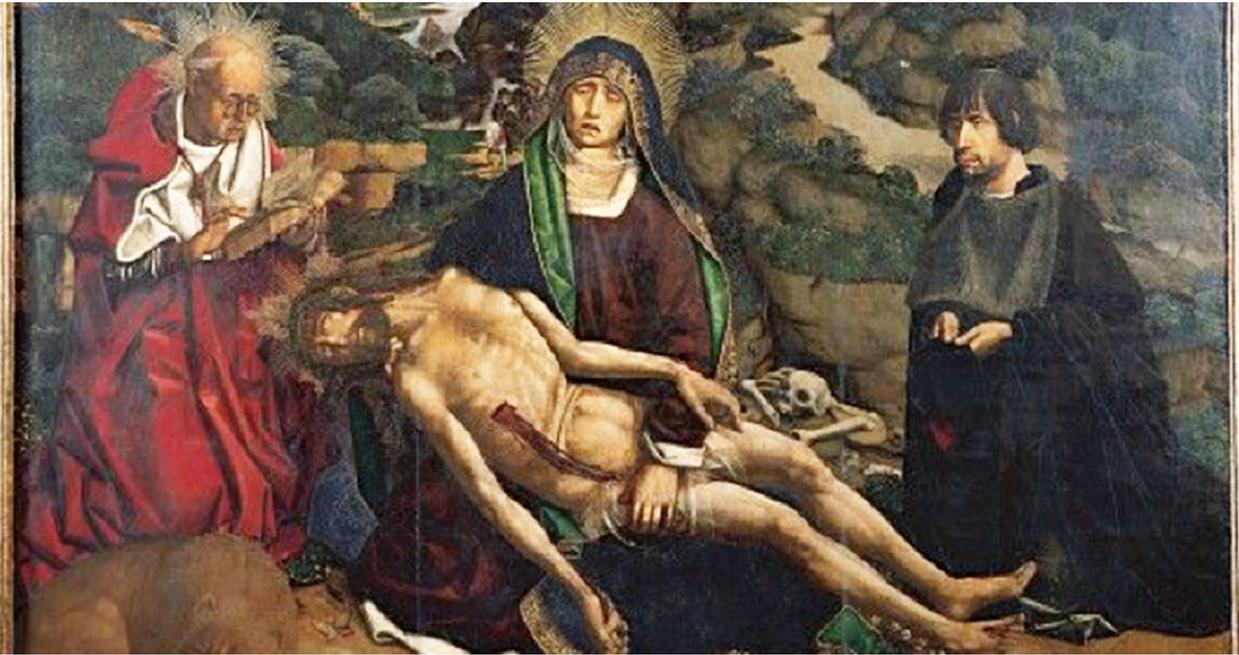


Via Crucis

A Marian Set of Meditations



1 Bartolome Bermejo, *Pieta*, Cathedral of Barcelona, Spain

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Introduction:

Priest (P): In the Name of the ✠ Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

There can be no doubt that, after the Ascension of Her Son, that the Blessed Virgin Mary did not walk the streets of Jerusalem, seeing the sights where only a short time ago she was so impacted by His Passion, and not reflect upon those moments in her heart. These reflections in the heart of Mary were certainly the first praying of the Way of the Cross.

As we journey the way of sorrow that bore witness to the destructive power of sin, we pray that Mary will be our guide and reveal to us the pains she experienced in Her Immaculate Heart as She bore witness to the violent crowds attacking Her Son.

Let us Pray.

All (A): Most Holy Mother of God be our guide throughout the way of sorrow. At each station, unite our hearts with thine. Open our minds to the suffering of a mother for her son. Develop within us a deep hatred of sin, which continues to offend thee and reject the sacrificial love that thy son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, poured-out for us in His scourged flesh, head pierced by a scornful crown of thorns, bones bruised and beaten by reeds, and heart torn by the jeers and

mockeries of the crowds – all before he was condemned to death before Pilate. Lead us, Mother Mary that experiencing thy sorrow we may unite ourselves with thy Son's suffering, Christ's Passion, and then strive to never offer offense to thee again. Amen.

First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death by Pilate

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Luke: "In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, 'Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.' But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' But Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?' And the angel said to her in reply, 'The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.' Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.'"

Meditation:

A: Seeing you condemned by a man of great power, and yet all I can think about is when You first came to me and how that announcement was not of condemnation but of a miracle proclaimed by the Archangel Gabriel. On that day, I saw God's power. Today, I see what power is in the hands of self-important men.

Prayer:

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

*At the cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.*

Second Station: Jesus Bears His Cross

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Luke: "Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of

many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted. And you yourself a sword will pierce so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.'" Venerable Mary of Agreda, who was given mystical insight to see the events of the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary tells us: ". . . She [Mary] presently began to feel the sorrow predicted by Simeon and thus in advance was She wounded by the sword, of which She had thus been warned. As in a mirror her spirit was made to see all the mysteries included in this prophecy; how her most holy Son was to be the stone of stumbling, the perdition of the unbelievers, and the salvation of the faithful; the fall of the synagogue and the establishment of the Church among the heathens; She foresaw the triumph to be gained over the devils and over death, but also that a great price was to be paid for it, namely the frightful agony and death of the Cross. (Col. 2, 15)"

Meditation:

A: Today, my Son, you take up your Cross which I saw so many years ago when the first sword pierced my heart as I brought you to be consecrated to God in His holy temple. But how often did I see the Cross foreshadowed in your life. Even when you would hold a beam in your father, Joseph's workshop. However, today, you are no longer your father's apprentice. Having learned the value of sacrifice and patient endurance of hard work, you set out to accomplish the greatest work. You are the master carpenter. Not making furniture or home but carrying the finest carpentry of the Cross and achieving the salvation of all upon it.

Prayer: O Virgo et Mater Sanctissima

Most holy Virgin and Mother, whose soul was pierced by a sword of sorrow in the Passion of thy divine Son, and who in His glorious Resurrection was filled with never-ending joy at His triumph; obtain for us who call upon thee, so to be partakers in the adversities of Holy Church and the sorrows of the Sovereign Pontiff, as to be found worthy to rejoice with them in the consolations for which we pray, in the charity and peace of the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword had passed.*

Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): From Carmen by St. Caelius Sedulius: "As the tender rose springs up among the prickly thorns, But does not offend in any way, since its beauty obscures its thorny branches, So holy Mary, the new virgin descending from the branch of Eve, Makes pure the old virgin's offense. Just so the old nature languished, corrupted under the sentence of death. Once Christ was born, Man could be born anew and cast off his old nature's stain. . . We are the blind offspring of the children of pitiful Eve, Bringing with us the shadows born of an aged-old error. But when God deigned to assume the mortal form of a human nature, then came forth from the Virgin a world of salvation. . . (Carmen 2, 28-34 and 4, 265-269; PL 19, 595-596, 697)"

And, **From *Mary: the Second Eve* by Bl. John Henry Newmann:** “As Eve failed in these virtues, and thereby brought on the fall of the race in Adam, so Mary by means of them had a part in its restoration. . . .not to go beyond the doctrine of the Three Fathers [St. Justin Martyr, Tertullian and Irenaeus of Lyon], they unanimously declare that she was not a mere instrument in the Incarnation, such as David, or Judah, may be considered; they declare she co-operated in our salvation not merely by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon her body, but by specific holy acts, the effect of the Holy Ghost within her soul; that, as Eve forfeited privileges by sin, so Mary earned privileges by the fruits of grace; that, as Eve was disobedient and unbelieving, so Mary was obedient and believing; that, as Eve was the cause of ruin to all, Mary was a cause of salvation to all; that as Eve made room for Adam’s fall, so Mary made room for our Lord’s reparation of it; and thus, whereas the free gift was not as the offence, but much greater, it follows that as Eve co-operated in effecting a great evil, Mary co-operated in effecting a much greater good. (Breen, Eileen, comp., *Mary: the Second Eve* (Rockford, Ill., TAN Books and Publishers, 1982) 5)”

Meditation:

A: I need to lift you up! I need to be beside you! How can a mother watch her child suffer? How can I not suffer with you?

P: In this first fall, we see the fall of all humanity through the original sin of Adam and Eve. However, the Blessed Virgin Mary, free from original sin, is the new Eve who brings forth life to humanity through the gift of her unblemished human nature to Christ, her Son. It is this gift from Mary given to God and given to the world that is sacrificed, the gift of her Son. Thus, the gift of her human nature and the sorrows of the new Eve, the Virgin Mary, are her co-operation in the work of her Son to redeem the whole world.

Prayer: *Prayer to Our Lady of Sorrows*

O Most Holy Virgin, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ: by the overwhelming grief you experienced when you witnessed the martyrdom, the crucifixion, and the death of your divine Son, look upon me with eyes of compassion and awaken in my heart a tender commiseration for those sufferings, as well as a sincere detestation of my sins, in order that, being disengaged from all undue affections for the passing joys of this earth, I may long for the eternal Jerusalem, and that henceforth all my thoughts and all my affections may be directed toward this one most desirable object, honor, glory and love to our Divine Lord Jesus, and to the Holy and Immaculate Mother of God. Amen.

*Oh, how sad and sore distressed
Was that Mother highly blest,
Of the sole begotten One!*

Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Luke: “After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem,

but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, 'Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety.' And he said to them, 'Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?'"

Meditation:

A: You were lost before to me for three days. At that time, my heart was pierced. But, at last I am here! I am here to be with you, my Son. I will not leave your side.

What's that you say? "Mother, I make all things new (Is. 43: 18 and Rev. 21: 5)"

What does that mean, my Son? I know you must do your Father's will, but why must you die?

"Mother, I make all things new. Your faith is unwavering, be not afraid. Continue to trust in my Father's plan. For, if you knew what was to come, you would be rejoicing." You indeed are my salvation; I am confident and unafraid. (cf. Isaiah 6: 2)

P: Encouraged, the Mother of God stays by her Son's side and her faith never waivers, her hope propels her forward and her love will see her by her Son through to the end. Mary will never lose Christ again. But, to gain Him forever, she must be pierced and let Him be sacrificed. She entrusted her salvation to Him. Likewise, we must entrust our lives to her.

Prayer: O Domina mea, Sancta Maria by St. Aloysius Gonzaga

O Holy Mary, my Lady, into thy blessed trust and special keeping, into the bosom of thy tender mercy, this day, every day of my life and at the hour of my death, I commend my soul and body. To thee I entrust all my hopes and consolations, all my trials and miseries, my life and the end of my life, that through thy most holy intercession and thy merits, all my actions may be ordered and disposed according to thy will and that of thy divine Son. Amen.

*Is there one who would not weep,
Whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold?*

Fifth Station: Jesus is Helped by Simon the Cyrene

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Matthew: "Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.' Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, 'Out of Egypt I called my son.'"

Meditation:

A: Joseph, my guardian, and your protector fled with us to keep us safe from Herod. Joseph did not fear the power of a worldly king. Now, who is here to help you? Where are your friends who followed you all around? Who said that they would follow you wherever you go? (Lk 9: 57)

It pains me that this man, Simon, had to be *forced* to help you, my Son. Did you have to be *forced* to help them? Their rejection of you wounds my heart, yet I cannot help but to feel sorrow for them. If they were to return, I would welcome them.

P: While all the Apostles, save John, fled out of fear, and Simon had to be forced to offer aid to the brutalized Christ in carrying his Cross, we can be confident that Mary will never leave us and will always give succor when asked.

Prayer: *Sub Tuum Praesidium*

We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.

*Virgin of all virgins best,
Listen to my fond request:
Let me share thy grief divine.*

Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Christ

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): From Venerable Mary of Agreda, *The Mystical City of God*: "On these occasions it often happened that the Child Jesus in the presence of his most holy Mother wept and perspired blood, for this happened many times before his agony in the garden. Then the blessed Lady would wipe his face, interiorly perceiving and knowing the cause of his agony, namely the loss of the foreknown and of those who would be ungrateful for the benefits of their Creator and Redeemer and in whom the works of the infinite power and goodness of the Lord would be wasted."

Meditation:

A: Yes. Offer Him kindness. He has suffered so much for you. It is good to see that some of his friends will come to his side at the lone time of his need. Veronica, a mother can only be grateful for any kindness shown her son. Your gratitude shown him, by wiping his face, will be greatly rewarded.

P: The Blessed Virgin Mary was the first to show pity to the suffering Christ. Veronica shows pity when she wipes the blood and sweat from his bruised face with her veil. We turn, now, to Mary to have pity on us, pity on those who in fear and suffering have left the company of Christ.

Prayer: *Prayer to Our Lady at Difficult Times*

Holy Virgin Mary, you are reigning in glory, with Jesus, your Son.

Remember us in our sadness. Look kindly on all who are suffering or facing any difficulty.

*Have pity on those who are separated from someone they love.
Have pity on the loneliness of our hearts.
Have pity on the weakness of our faith and love.
Have pity on those who are weeping, on those who are praying, on those who are fearful.
Holy Mother, please obtain for all of us hope and peace with justice. Amen.*

*Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?*

Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Matthew: "When Herod realized that he had been deceived by the magi, he became furious. He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had ascertained from the magi. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be consoled, since they were no more.'"

And, **From Venerable Mary of Agreda, *The Mystical City of God***, words of the Queen: "Well-founded is thy sorrow to see how such a noble creature as man, made according to the likeness and image of the Lord, endowed with such divine qualities, and gifted with the power of knowing, loving, seeing, and enjoying God eternally, should allow himself to be degraded and defiled by such brutal and abominable passions as to shed the innocent blood of those who can do no harm to anyone. This should induce thee to weep over the ruin of so many souls; especially in times in which thou livest, when that same ambition which incited Herod has kindled such great hatred and enmity among the children of the Church, occasioning the ruin of countless souls and causing the waste and loss of the blood of my most holy Son, poured out for the salvation of men. Do thou bitterly deplore this loss."

Meditation:

A: Oh! It pains me so that I cannot get through these crowds to get to you. Jesus, my Son, I am coming!

Why must they beat you so? Why must they spit at you and jeer? Have they no respect for life? Have they no decency? Have they no love in their hearts at all?

P: The second fall of Christ is a fall to end all atrocities against the dignity of human life. The slaughter of the holy innocents pierced the heart of Mary with a sword. The innocent lives lost because of the lack of respect shown to human life. Mary's heart, at the second fall of Christ, is again pierced by a sword for the lack of respect shown her Son.

Prayer: Prayer to Mary in Evangelium Vitae by Pope St. John Paul II

O Mary, bright dawn of the new world, Mother of the living, to you do we entrust the cause of life. Look down, O Mother, upon the vast numbers of babies not allowed to be born, of the poor whose lives are made difficult, of men and women who are victims of brutal violence, of the elderly and the sick killed by indifference or out of misguided mercy.

Grant that all who believe in your Son may proclaim the Gospel of life with honesty and love to the people of our time.

Obtain for them the grace to accept that Gospel as a gift ever new, the joy of celebrating it with gratitude throughout their lives and the courage to bear witness to it resolutely, in order to build, together with all people of good will, the civilization of truth and love, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life.

*Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with bloody scourges rent.*

Eighth Station: Jesus Rebukes the Women of Jerusalem

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from the Gospel According to St. Luke: "And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never gave suck!' Then they will 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?'"

Meditation:

A: He says, "Weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children." Weep. Weep is all that I can do. I do weep for you, because you are my child. But, yes, I weep for all because I see that your message of love is being trod under by hate. Such fire in the eyes of all around me. Such anger. Is this the world they want? A world of judgment based on hate and fear, lust and jealousy? Yes, then, weep we shall. How twisted and sick these people are. Yes, I will weep for them and the whole world if this is what is to become of it.

Prayer: Salve Regina

Hail holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us. And after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

For the sins of His own nation,

*Saw Him hang in desolation
Till His spirit forth He sent.*

Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from the Letter of St. James: “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you of two minds. Begin to lament, to mourn, to weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into dejection. Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you.”

Meditation:

A: The third fall of Jesus teaches us the humility of God and sets the pattern for Mary to come down to us and bring us healing, as St. Bridget of Sweden had revealed to her by Mary:

I am she who hovers over the world in unceasing prayer, like the rainbow that stands above the clouds, which seems to bend down and touch the earth with its two ends. And I consider myself to be like a rainbow, because I bend down to the inhabitants of the world, touching the good ones and the bad ones with my prayer. I bend down to the good ones, to make them firm in keeping the precepts of holy Church. And I bend down to the bad ones, lest they persevere in their wickedness and become even worse. (*Revelationes*, lib 3, c. 10)

P: As the Blessed Virgin exhorts us at Fatima: “Men must amend their lives, and ask pardon for their sins. . . They must no longer offend Our Lord, Who is already so much offended.” As Jesus falls the third time, and Mary is so overwhelmed by her Son’s anguish for our sins, our hearts must be moved with penitence.

Prayer: Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas

O most blessed and most sweet Virgin Mary, so full of mercy: to your love I commend my soul and my body, my thoughts, my deeds, my life, and my death. O my Mother, help me and strengthen me against the attacks of the devil. Beg for me a true and perfect love so that I may love with my whole heart your devoted son, my Savior Jesus Christ. And after him, may I love you above everyone else. O my queen and my mother, by your most powerful prayers, see to it that this love remains in my heart until my death, after which I expect you to conduct me to the kingdom of the blessed. Amen.

*O thou Mother: fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with thine accord.*

Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Clothes

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): From Venerable Mary of Agreda, *The Mystical City of God*:

“Procuring some wool in its natural and uncolored state, She [the Blessed Virgin Mary] spun it very finely with her own hands and of it She wove a garment of one piece and without any seam, similar to knitted stuff, or rather like twilled cloth; for it was woven of twisted cords, not like smooth-woven goods. She wove it upon a small loom, by meshes, crocheting it of one seamless piece in a mysterious manner (John 19, 23).”

Meditation:

A: Have they not even a shred of decency? They must strip and mock you as well? How much more is a mother to bear?

P: At Baptism we receive the white garment as an outward sign of our dignity. In consecrated life, we receive the habit of our order as an outward sign of our special consecration to God. In the clerical life, we wear the attire that shows our consecration to be another Christ. And yet, our Lord is stripped of these dignities and in his nakedness mocked in the presence of his Mother. We must pray for our dignity as lay and clergy in the Church.

Prayer: *Sancta Maria, Succurre Miseris* by Bishop Fulbert of Chartres

Holy Mary, be thou a help to the helpless, strength to the fearful, comfort to the sorrowful, pray for the people, plead for the clergy, intercede for all holy women consecrated to God; may all who keep thy sacred commemoration feel the might of thine assistance. Amen.

*Make me feel as thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my Lord.*

Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah: “And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swims spreads forth his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.”

And **A Reading from the Book of Psalms:** “For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.”

Meditation:

A: Those hands and feet were once mine to play with when you were a babe. I remember your first steps and when you first held me in your arms. These hands that healed so many. Your feet, that brought you to so many lands where you preached. And now. . . I cannot begin to express the cruelty that I must bear.

P: The sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross brings forth the forgiveness of sins for all of us who repent. It is in Mary that we find our hope for forgiveness and the grace to remain

free from sin, as St. Albert the Great teaches: "She [Mary] is the hope of forgiveness for those who are sorry for their sins and expiate them in this world. And in the underworld, they cite the example of the miracle of Theophilus, whom Mary reformed by the grace of forgiveness. But those above, innocent in grace, have in Mary the channel of that grace, by which they are kept from sin. (*In Lucam*, 1, 48)"

Prayer: Prayer of St. Ephrem

O Immaculate and thoroughly pure Virgin Mary, Mother of God, queen of the world, hope of the despairing: you are the joy of the saints, the peacemaker between sinners and God, the advocate of the abandoned, the hope of the shipwrecked. You are the consolation of the world, the ransom of captives, the comforter of the afflicted, the salvation of the universe. O great queen we fly to your protection. We have no trust in anyone but you, O most faithful virgin! After God, you are our only hope. We call ourselves your servants; do not allow Satan to drag us to hell. Hail, most wonderful mediatrix between God and men, Mother of Our Savior, to whom be glory and honor with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Holy Mother, pierce me through;
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Savior crucified.*

Twelfth Station: Jesus is Crucified

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from Mary at the Cross by Romanos the Melodist: "Put aside your grief, mother, put it aside, and go in joy; for now, I hasten to fulfill that for which I came, the will of him who sent me. For from the first this was resolved by me and by my Father, and it was never displeasing to my spirit; that I become man and suffer for him who had fallen. Hasten, then, mother, and announce to all that 'By suffering he lays low the hater of Adam, and comes as a conqueror, my son, my God.'"

"I am overcome, my child, overcome by love, and truly I cannot bear it, that I am to be in my room while you are on the cross, I within my house, you within the tomb. Therefore, let me go with you, for it heals me to look upon you, I shall look upon the outrageous daring of those who honour Moses: for these blind men, pretending to be his avengers, have come here to kill you. But what Moses said to Israel was this: 'You will see life hanging on the cross.' And what is life? My son and my God."

"If you come with me, mother, do not weep, and do not tremble if you see the elements shaken. For this outrage will make all creation tremble; the sky will be blinded and not open its eyes until I speak; then the earth and the sea together will hasten to disappear, and the temple will rend its veil against the perpetrators of this outrage. The mountains will be shaken, the graves emptied. . . . (trans. Constantine A Trypanis, in *The Penguin Book of Greek Verse* (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1971))"

Meditation:

A: I will not leave you. I cannot leave you. I will be by your side.

Prayer: Memorare to Our Lady of the Precious Blood

Remember, O Lady of the Precious Blood, the sorrowful sheddings of the blood of thy Jesus and the most bitter tears thou didst mingle with His redeeming blood. In the name of the Blood of the Victim of Reparation and of thy holy tears; in the name of the seven swords which pierced thy heart, by which thou didst become the Mediatrix of all graces for the human race and the Queen of Martyrs, have pity on my soul and on all its miseries; have pity on sinners and on the innocent souls they seek to pervert; have pity on the poor, the sick, the infirm, on all their sufferings, both physical and moral; have pity on the agonizing, especially upon those who, except for thine intercession, would leave this world without being purified in the blood of the Lamb.

It is by the blood of thy dying Son, by His inexpressible sufferings, by his last plea to His Father in favor of mankind, by His ignominious death and by the perpetuation of His sacrifice on Catholic altars, that I beg thee not to reject my supplications, but graciously to hear them. Amen.

*Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live.*

Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in Mary's Hands

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from the Book of Genesis: "To the woman he said: 'I will intensify your toil in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children.'"

And A Reading from Venerable Mary of Agreda, *The Mystical City of God*:
"The invincible Queen and Mistress of all virtues understood these mysteries beyond the understanding of all creatures, as She was the Mother of the Savior and the Coadjutrix of his Passion. In order that She might participate in it to the end, just as She had felt in her own body the other torments of her Son, She now, though remaining alive, felt and suffered the pangs and agony of his death. She did not die in reality; but this was because God miraculously preserved her life, when according to the natural course death should have followed. This miraculous aid was more wonderful than all the other favors She received during the Passion. For this last pain was more intense and penetrating; and all that the martyrs and the men sentenced to death have suffered from the beginning of the world cannot equal what the blessed Mary suffered during the Passion."

Meditation:

A: Now, I have died with you. The light of my life is gone. My heart is faint within me. I may be alive, but truly I am dead.

P: Having been immaculately conceived, the Blessed Virgin Mary was free from the curse of original sin and did not bear the Christ child in labor pains. However, the blessing of a painless labor was met by the pangs of the birthing of Christ unto everlasting life. Laid in the arms of his Blessed Mother, she offers her son, whole and entire, to the Father in heaven and to the world that took him from her.

Prayer: Prayer to Mary in Deus Caritas Est by Pope Benedict XVI

Holy Mary, Mother of God, you have given the world its true light, Jesus, your Son – the Son of God. You abandoned yourself completely to God’s call and thus became a wellspring of the goodness which flows forth from him. Show us Jesus. Lead us to him. Teach us to know and love him, so that we too can become capable of true love and be fountains of living water in the midst of a thirsting world. Amen.

*Let me share with thee His pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torment died.*

Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

P: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee.

A: For by thy holy Cross, thou hast redeemed the world.

Reader (R): A Reading from *The Glories of Mary* by St. Alphonsus Liguori: “A mother standing at the bedside of her dying child undoubtedly feels and suffers all his pains. But when the child has actually died and is about to be buried, and the brokenhearted mother must say goodbye to him for the last time, then surely the realization that she will never see him again is a sorrow that must surpass all other sorrows. Let us meditate now on Mary’s last sword of sorrow. She has witnessed the death of her son on the cross. She has embraced his lifeless body for the last time. Now she has to leave him in the tomb and reconcile herself to the fact that she will never enjoy his presence on earth again. . . .And so we see Mary plunged in grief, her son locked in her arms. The disciples, afraid that Mary may die of grief, approach and take the body of Jesus from her arms to bury it. With reverence, they lift it from her arms, embalm it with aromatic herbs, and wrap it in a shroud they have already prepared. On this cloth, which is still preserved at Turin, Our Lord was pleased to leave to the world an impression of his sacred body. . . . “O my beloved Son” (for that is what Mary must have said), “am I not going to see you anymore? Receive, then, my last farewell, as I gaze upon you for the last time, the last farewell of your devoted mother. Receive my heart, which I bury with you. (*The Seventh Sorrow: The Burial of Jesus*)”

Meditation:

A: I can’t. I won’t. How can I leave you? They have taken you from me and because of the Sabbath, I cannot stay with you. But I will be with you on Sunday morn!

Prayer: Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary by St. Augustine

O blessed Virgin Mary, who can worthily repay thee thy just dues of praise and thanksgiving, thou who by the wondrous assent of thy will didst rescue a fallen world? What songs of praise can our weak human nature recite in thy honor, since it is by thy intervention alone that it has found the way to restoration. Accept, then, such poor thanks as we have here to offer, though they be unequal to thy merits; and receiving our vows, obtain by thy prayers the remission of our offenses. Carry thou our prayers within the sanctuary of the heavenly audience and bring forth from it the antidote of our reconciliation. May the sins we bring before Almighty God through thee, become pardonable through thee; may what we ask for with sure confidence, through thee be granted. Take our offering, grant us our requests, obtain pardon for what we fear, for thou art

the sole hope of sinners. Through thee we hope for the remission of our sins, and in thee, O blessed Lady, is our hope of reward. Holy Mary, succour the miserable, help the fainthearted, comfort the sorrowful, pray for thy people, plead for the clergy, intercede for all women consecrated to God; may all who keep thy holy commemoration feel now thy help and protection. Be thou ever ready to assist us when we pray and bring back to us the answers to our prayers. Make it thy continual care to pray for the people of God, thou who, blessed by God, didst merit to bear the Redeemer of the world, who liveth and reigneth, world without end. Amen.

*Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,
Be Thy Mother my defense,
Be Thy Cross my victory.*

Closing Prayer: Prayer by St. Alphonsus Liguori:

O Mother of holy love, our life, our refuge, and our hope! You know that your son, Jesus Christ, was not content himself with being our perpetual advocate with the Eternal Father. He also wanted you to act as our advocate to obtain divine mercy for us. He has decreed that your prayers should aid vastly in securing our salvation and he has made them so powerful that they obtain whatever they ask. That is why I, a miserable sinner, turn to you, O hope of the miserable. I hope through the merits of Jesus Christ and your intercession to be saved. I have such confidence in you that, even if my salvation were in my own hands, I would entrust it to you, for I rely more on your mercy and protection than on all my good deeds. My Mother and my hope, do not abandon me as I deserve. Look upon my miseries; pity me; help me and save me. I admit that by my sins I have often closed the door to the lights and help you have obtained from God for me. At the same time, your pity for miserable sinners and your power to help them surpass all the evils of my sins. Both in heaven and on earth it is known that those whom you protect will most certainly be saved. Let everyone else forget me, O Mother of Almighty God, provided you remember me. Tell God that I am his servant and that you are my protector, and I shall surely be saved. O Mary, I trust in you. In this trust I live, and in it I desire and hope to die, saying always: 'My only hope is Jesus, and after Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary!'"

Blessing:

P: The Lord be with You.

A: And with your spirit.

P: May the Blessing of Almighty God, the Father, ✠ and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you forever. Amen.