

## Thoughts in the Time of COVID-19—#13, April 10, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters,

One of the most solemn parts of the Good Friday Commemoration of the Lord's Passion is the Solemn Intercessions.

They are derived from ancient prayers, are recited on Good Friday for various categories of people. They include petitions for the pope; for bishops, priests, and deacons and all the faithful; for catechumens, for other Christians; for the Jewish people; for those who do not believe in Christ; for those who do not believe in God; for those in public office; and those in special need.

The Vatican has asked priests around the world to recite a new prayer during this year's Good Friday liturgy. The Congregation for Divine Worship issued the new intention in light of the coronavirus pandemic.

The new prayer is titled, "For the afflicted in time of pandemic." It begins with the priest saying, "Let us pray also for all those who suffer the consequences of the current pandemic, that God the Father may grant health to the sick, strength to those who care for them, comfort to families and salvation to all the victims who have died."

After a moment of silent prayer, the priest continues, "Almighty ever-living God, only support of our human weakness, look with compassion upon the sorrowful condition of your children who suffer because of this pandemic; relieve the pain of the sick, give strength to those who care for them, welcome into your peace those who have died and, throughout this time of tribulation, grant that we may all find comfort in your merciful love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen."

As I sang this prayer this Good Friday, I had the sense that this is a prayer that will be greatly needed for weeks, perhaps months, to come.

May Our Lady of Sorrows, whom Jesus gave to us as our Mother today from the Cross, bring these intentions to her Son, confident that God will heed her intercession and bless us all who are caught up in this world-shaking circumstance.

God bless you.

✠ Terrence