

The Way of the Cross

By Reverend Robert Flickinger



PRAYING THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS
DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

— MARCH 2020

PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL

OUR FATHER, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day **our** daily bread; and forgive us **our** trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, Amen.

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.

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.



THE FIRST STATION

Jesus is Condemned to Death

There Jesus stood: bleeding, physically beaten and innocent. He was being condemned to a horrible execution because of a paranoid and weak Roman leader. Many of the people who were present at this unfair trial were those who walked with Jesus and were moved by his teachings and miracles. But now they stood silent as an innocent man was led away to be cruelly executed as a common criminal.

Jesus, we too have been condemned innocently as we experience the fear and concern caused by the Coronavirus. Life as we knew it a couple of weeks ago has changed. Church services have been cancelled, schools closed, businesses are shut down, people are dying, and the Virus is spreading. Like Jesus, we are caught in a crisis we have no control over. Give us the courage and love you showed as you willingly accepted an unfair verdict. Help us not to be silent but rather turn to prayer for all those who have died or have contracted the Virus.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



THE SECOND STATION

Jesus Carries His Cross

The cross Jesus carries is heavy. He has been weakened by physical abuse and a torturous scourging. He accepts the weight of the cross. Around him there are shouts of insults and mockery. Despite the angry crowd's derision, Jesus begins his painful walk to Calvary.

Jesus, you showed so much courage as you carried the cross. Help us these days to accept the uncertainty and disruptions of our daily lives caused by the Coronavirus. Help us to speak words of hope in the midst of fear. Help us to turn to prayer for those who actually suffer from the Virus. We need to reassure each other that together we can face this crisis and eventually find a cure. We are not alone.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



THE THIRD STATION

Jesus Falls the First Time Under the Cross

Already weakened, he finds the weight of the cross overwhelming. Jesus collapses. Getting up is difficult but he is determined to complete his journey to Calvary. He doesn't have to but he gets up to show that he loves us. In the midst of jeering and insults, he embraces the cross and continues.

Jesus, you showed us the power of love and commitment. Help us these days to endure the difficult times we live in. So much is going on and we feel a sense of disorientation. Give us the grace to support each other. Give us the grace not to let the weight of our concerns and fears keep us from being people of faith and hope **and all other essential workers**. Help us to be aware of those who may be overwhelmed with the weight of this Virus, and to trust that you are with us always.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



THE FOURTH STATION

Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother

We can only imagine the sorrow that Mary felt as she encountered her son, bruised and beaten, struggling along with the weight of the cross. She heard the blood-thirsty cries of the spectators along the road. How hard it was for Jesus to see his mother so distraught and helpless. They could only look at each other and share the agony in silence.

Jesus, we know that you see the suffering and confusion of a world that is in turmoil. Many have died from the Virus, many are suffering with it, and others are in fear of contracting it. May our eyes and your eyes meet and bring us reassurance that all will be well. May we look to you for strength and hope.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



FIFTH STATION

Simon of Cyrene is Forced to Take Up His Cross

We do not know much about this man called Simon. He was just passing by and was forcibly made to carry the cross for Jesus. This was not done out of compassion for the suffering Jesus but rather because the soldiers did not want Jesus to die before reaching the place of execution.

Jesus, during these days of unprecedented precautions that are changing our daily lives, keep us from depression. Help us to do our part in carrying the weight of so much disruption in our parishes and communities. We are all asked to make sacrifices in order to lift the burden and slow the spread of this Virus. Praying for each other and supporting the efforts needed to erase this Pandemic will make us all remember we are the Body of Christ.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



SIXTH STATION

Veronica Wipes The Face of Jesus

What a courageous and compassionate woman! She saw a human being suffering and reached out with an act of kindness. We do not know if she knew Jesus personally. All we know is that she offered dignity and comfort to a suffering man. While others mocked and insulted Jesus, she did what she could to let him know he was not alone.

Jesus, these days help us to remember the thousands of “Veronicas” who are working hours and hours to help control the Pandemic. They are nurses, doctors, first responders, international, national and local government officials. Help them find the way to end this health emergency. Keep them safe.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Falls a Second Time

Even without the heavy weight of the cross, Jesus falls a second time. Each step on this road to Calvary has been filled with agonizing pain. You might imagine Jesus might have been tempted to stay down. But his love for us was so great, he struggled to his feet and continued toward his destination.

Jesus, the road we are walking these days is so new and uncertain. It is so difficult to live in this isolation. It is so unsettling as we wonder when things might return to normal. We miss gathering for Eucharist and being nourished by your Word and Sacrament. Help us not to stay down in worry but help us get up and walk in faith.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



EIGHTH STATION

Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

Along that dusty road to Calvary, Jesus encounters some women from Jerusalem who are weeping as they see him struggling along. “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.” Jesus seems to be telling them to not worry for him, he knows his destiny. He wants them to care for each other so they will not grieve like those who have no hope.

Jesus, there are many of your sons and daughters who weep these days: some have watched loved ones die, others who are at high risk for the Virus, and others who are losing jobs and savings. Help us to be instruments of compassion. Let our prayers be not only for ourselves but for others who may need our love and support.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



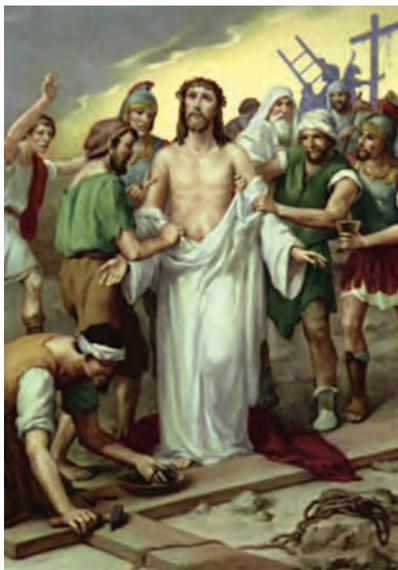
NINTH STATION

Jesus Falls a Third Time

Will this be his last and final fall? What great love he must have for us, to once again get up and continue. There is no hope that at the last minute he will be given a reprieve once he arrives at Calvary. Nevertheless, he continues. Putting aside pain, doubt and fear – he says yes to the will of his Father.

Jesus, when will this health crisis end? We are growing weary as each day seems to bring us more bad news. The isolation and social distance is so hard. Our children are feeling “cabin fever” and are uncertain about when normalcy will return. Give us the strength not to fall under the weight of discouragement but rather bring us all together as we lift each other up and move forth in trust.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



TENTH STATION

Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

Jesus has reached Calvary. Now he must face the indignity of being stripped of his bloody clothing. He came into the world with nothing and soon will be leaving with nothing. But this cruel act could not strip Jesus of his love for us. He accepted this humiliation and opened his arms to be nailed to the cross.

Jesus, the Coronavirus has stripped us of so many things – the celebration of the Eucharist, work, school, entertainment and human contact. Help us to see that all these precautions can be tolerated as an act of love. Help us to understand that making these sacrifices will help save lives, stop the spread of the Virus and bring a faster end to this Pandemic.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus is Nailed to The Cross

As the nails are cruelly pounded into Jesus' hands and feet upon the cross he carried, could he have been thinking: My people, what have I done to deserve this? Why such anger toward me? I spent my whole life loving you. "Forgive them, Father, they do not know what they do".

Jesus, we are tempted these days to also ask: "What have we done to deserve this"? Reassure us that the answer is NOTHING. Help us to always remember that you are a God of love, not revenge and punishment. You are a God of mercy. You are a God of healing. We stretch out our arms to help each other, through prayer and trust, to always remember you have not abandoned us.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



TWELFTH STATION

Jesus Dies on The Cross

Even as Jesus hangs on the cross, he is still proclaiming his message of mercy and hope. He forgives the repentant thief, “this day you will be with me in paradise” he cries out “I thirst” for the salvation of all of us, and proclaims his trust in the Father: “Into your hands, I commend my spirit.” Jesus loved us to the end.

Jesus, we thirst for the end of this worldwide Virus. In our fear and concern, help us to place ourselves in your hands. As we feel nailed to this heavy cross of living in a Pandemic, remind us of the resurrection. We will rise from this moment. Deepen our faith, lead us in hope and let charity guide our every moment. Into your hands we commend our troubled spirits.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Placed in the Arms of His Mother

There is no greater sorrow for a mother or father than the death of a son or daughter. Our Blessed Mother Mary was not spared this sorrow. She witnessed her son's horrible death and could do nothing about it. We can only imagine the pain she felt as she embraced Jesus' lifeless body. She was truly the Sorrowful Mother.

Jesus, there are so many mothers and fathers, sons and daughters that are crying at the loss of a loved one during this Coronavirus Pandemic. We call on our Blessed Mother to hold in her hands these grieving families at this difficult time. Help us to remember we are all in this moment together. And it will be together that we will find strength and hope.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...



FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

This is the last station but it is not the end of the story. Three days later Jesus is raised from the dead, as he promised. Death was defeated. “Christ has died, Christ is risen and Christ will come again.” This is the Good News we profess as Christians – even at this time!

Jesus, we want to believe things will soon get better. Our walk during this Pandemic continues to be our Way of the Cross. We ask that you place Simons on our path to help lighten our burden, *Veronicas* to remind us of our dignity as humans, men and women to hear our cries of concern and faith to believe we will rise from this dark moment.

OUR FATHER ... HAIL MARY ... GLORY BE ...