



Good Friday – April 10, 2020

Stations of the Cross and Prayers

The First Station



The First Station

Jesus is Condemned to Death.

Reading: Mark 15:13

They shouted again, “Crucify him.” Pilate said to them “Why?”
“What evil has he done?”

They only shouted the louder, “Crucify him.”

So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified.



The First Station

Jesus is Condemned to Death.

Reflection:

By the time Jesus stood before Pilate for His sentencing, He had already experienced pain and suffering. He was betrayed by one of His closest friends, mocked and arrested for committing no crime, and forced to wear a crown of thorns. Yet, despite His innocence, Jesus freely accepted the judgement placed on him.



Do we, like Pontius Pilate, cave to the pressures of this world and fail to speak up for those who need our voice? We hear stories of our Christian brothers and sisters being persecuted and killed in other countries for practicing their faith, read of persons desperately trying to escape wars and conflict, see images of thousands dying due to starvation, watch as more lives are taken by senseless violence and greed. Yet, we remain silent and wash our hands of responsibility.

The First Station
Jesus is Condemned to Death.

Prayer:



Jesus, help us see that we belong to one another and grant us the courage to raise our voices and make Your love known in this world.

For the times we have failed to stand for truth, forgive us.

The Second Station



The Second Station

Jesus takes up the Cross

Reading: John 19:16-17

So they took charge of Jesus.

He went out, carrying his cross, and came to
“The Place of the Skull,” as it is called.
(In Hebrew it is called “Golgotha.”)



The Second Station

Jesus takes up the Cross

Reflection:

After beating Jesus and pressing the crown of thorns further into His head, the soldiers placed a heavy wooden beam on Jesus' shoulder.

In freely accepting His cross, Jesus teaches us that the cross is a sign of love without limits.



Jesus said, in Matthew 16:24 that whoever wishes to follow Him must take up their cross. But sometimes the weight of our struggles paralyze us and keep us from moving forward. Sometimes the crippling pain and fear of the unknown beg us to drop our cross and run.

However, the longer we allow ourselves to sit under its weight or the faster we run from our cross, the heavier it becomes.

The Second Station

Jesus takes up the Cross

Prayer:

Jesus, help us to see that we do not bear our cross alone and open our hearts to see Your presence alive in our lives.

We pray for those who suffer the cross of homelessness, unemployment, displacement and aloneness.

May they experience Jesus walking with them.

For the times we have failed to trust in You, forgive us.



The Third Station



The Third Station

Jesus falls the first time

Reading: Proverbs 24:16

No matter how often honest people fall, they always get up again; but disaster destroys the wicked.



The Third Station

Jesus falls the first time

Reflection:

Under the immense weight of the Cross, Jesus is brought to His knees.

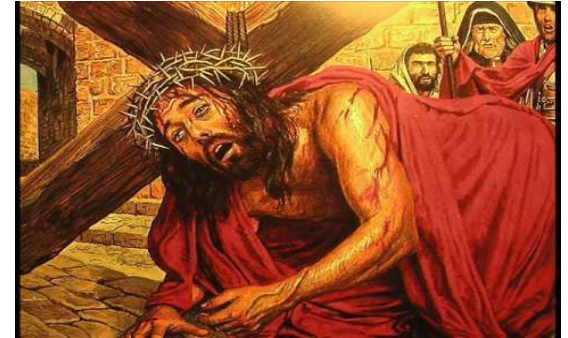
The crowd is watching, laughing – and only a few have pity on Him. Jesus does not remain crushed by the burden. With great difficulty, Jesus stands up and continues His journey.

We've all experienced moments of weakness and failure. Sometimes we learn from our mistakes. Sometimes shame creeps in and robs us from seeing the hope before us. Despite our human weakness, we must try to remember that failing is not the end. Jesus tells us in Matthew 11:29 that if we are burdened we can come to Him for rest.



The Third Station
Jesus falls the first time

Prayer:



Jesus help us to see that no matter the difficulty,
You are always walking with us.
Do not let us be overcome by our mistakes and
failures. May we accept the challenge to stand up
again as You did.

For the times we have failed to rely on Your
strength, forgive us.

The Fourth Station



The Fourth Station

Jesus meets His mother

Reading: John 19: 25-27

Standing close to Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Jesus saw His mother and the disciple He loved standing there; so He said to His mother, "He is your son."

Then He said to the disciple,
"She is your mother."
From that time the disciple took her
to live in his home.



The Fourth Station

Jesus meets His mother

Reflection:

As Jesus continues His journey, His eyes meet His mother's. Mary moves toward her Son, but due to the Cross, their embrace is restricted. No words are spoken. No words are necessary.

Compassion beyond all understanding is evident in their connection. Despite her immense suffering, Mary remains.



Mary felt like a 'sword had pierced her heart' as she watched Jesus suffer. The pain of watching a loved one suffer can be unbearable. Sometimes we lack the patience to walk with them in their suffering. Sometimes we turn away because the burden is too heavy. Even though the challenge to love may at times feel overwhelming, we are invited to put ourselves aside and be present to those before us.

The Fourth Station
Jesus meets His mother



Prayer:

Jesus, help us to see the places (situations) in need of Your healing and give us the grace to make Your compassion known in this world.

For the times we have failed to surrender to Your love, forgive us.

The Fifth Station

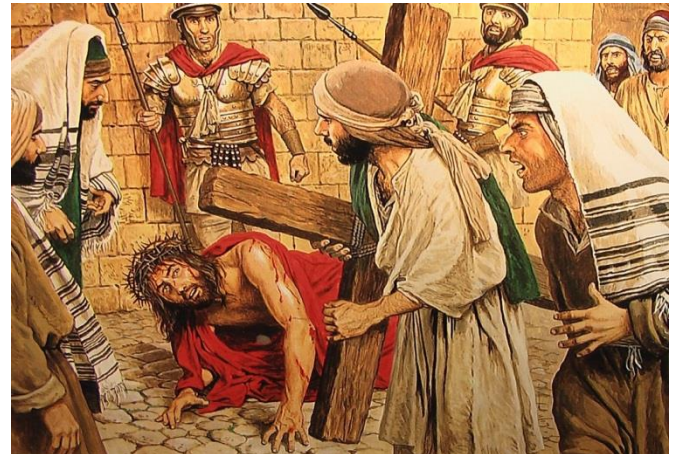


The Fifth station

Simon helps Jesus carry His cross

Reading: Luke 23:26

As they led Him away, they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus.

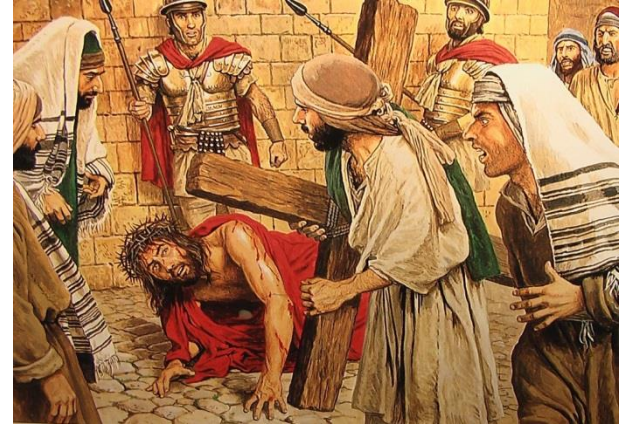


The Fifth station

Simon helps Jesus carry His cross

Reflection:

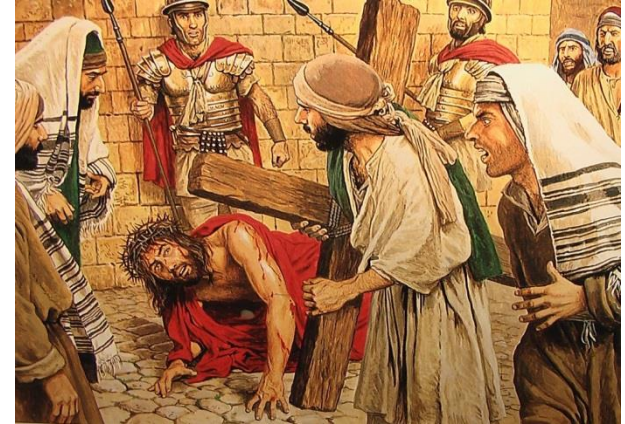
Full of wounds and covered in bruises, Jesus made His way to His death without the support of His friends. Those closest to Jesus, who once walked with Him, were now hiding in fear. He was alone in His suffering and the soldiers saw His strength weakening. They pulled Simon of Cyrene from the crowd. Jesus accepted his help and together they carried the cross.



We can't make it through life without the support of others. Sometimes our friends abandon us in our darkest time. Sometimes we are afraid to ask for help. Even though it may feel scary to lay our needs before others, we are called to be vulnerable and allow others to walk with us.

The Fifth station

Simon helps Jesus carry His cross



Prayer:

Jesus help us to not only embrace our cross, but give us the freedom to receive support from others.

We thank You for the men and women who work tirelessly to support others and help them carry their burdens.

For the times we have failed to accept help and allowed pride to get in our way, forgive us.

The Sixth Station

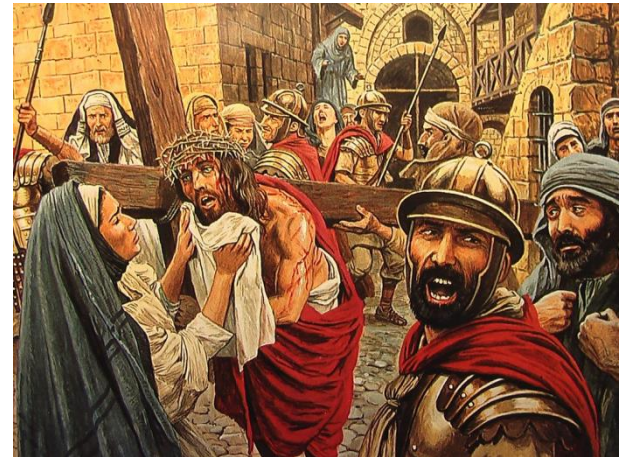


The Sixth Station

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Reading: Matthew 25:40

Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of Mine, you did for Me



The Sixth Station

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Reflection:

Envision the scene. The crowds mock Jesus and the soldiers laugh as they continuously whip His blood stained body. There is no compassion or caring offered to Jesus. The crowd who once welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem waving palm leaves have now turned away. Perhaps they are trying to hide from the suffering, grief and loneliness of Jesus – perhaps the image is too painful.



The weight of injustice may seem unredeemable. Sometimes problems are so vast that we don't know where to begin. Sometimes we turn away from doing what we can, because we believe it won't make a difference. No matter how small the action, we are called to do what we can to make this world a better place. In doing so, we reflect God's love. In Matthew 25:40 Jesus tells us that whatever we do for someone else who is hurting, we are actually doing for Him.

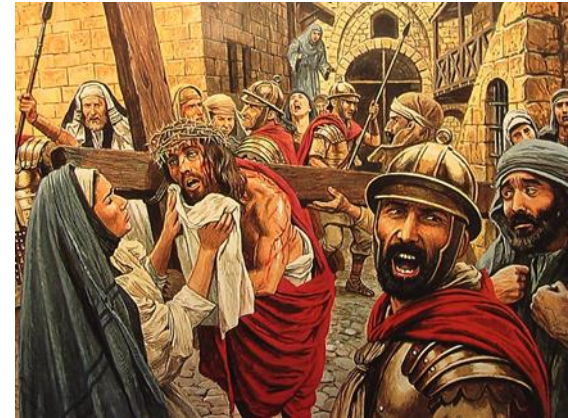
The Sixth Station

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Prayer:

Jesus, help us realize that with every kind deed and gesture of authentic love, Your imprint is left on this world.

For the times we have failed to reach out with compassion, forgive us.



The Seventh Station

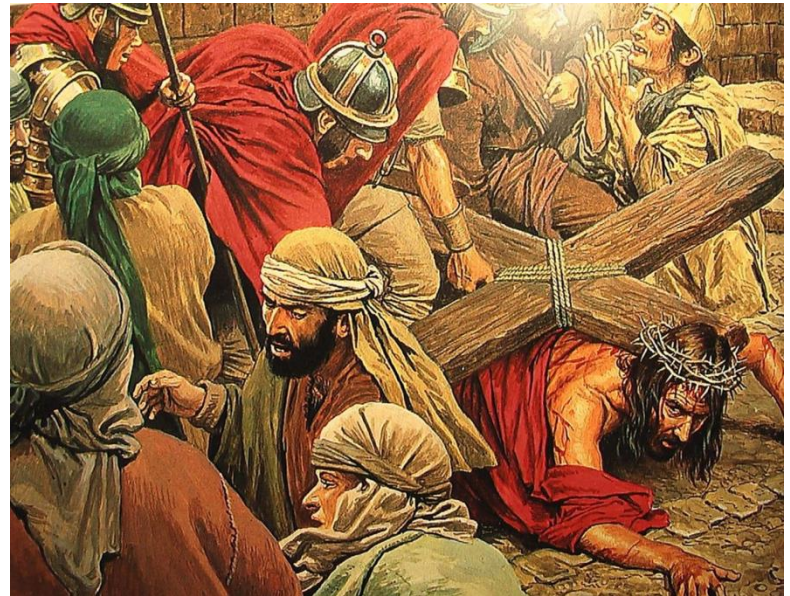


The Seventh Station

Jesus falls the second time

Reading: 2 Corinthians 12:9

My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.



The Seventh Station

Jesus falls the second time

Reflection:

Under the weight of the wood, Jesus falls a second time. His body shakes from the trauma it is enduring. Jesus presses His hands against the dust and dirt of the road and finds the strength to stand again. It is love that gives Jesus the strength – a love for us and every generation that came before us and has yet to come.



When we are in pain we can turn to Jesus who showers us with His grace and compassion. He tells us through our trials we are made powerful and are better able to reach out to others. Love is stronger than any pain. This is a truth we must pass on. Sometimes we lack the confidence to tell others of the Lord's goodness. Sometimes our sin gets in the way and pushes us away from God's love.

The Seventh Station

Jesus falls the second time

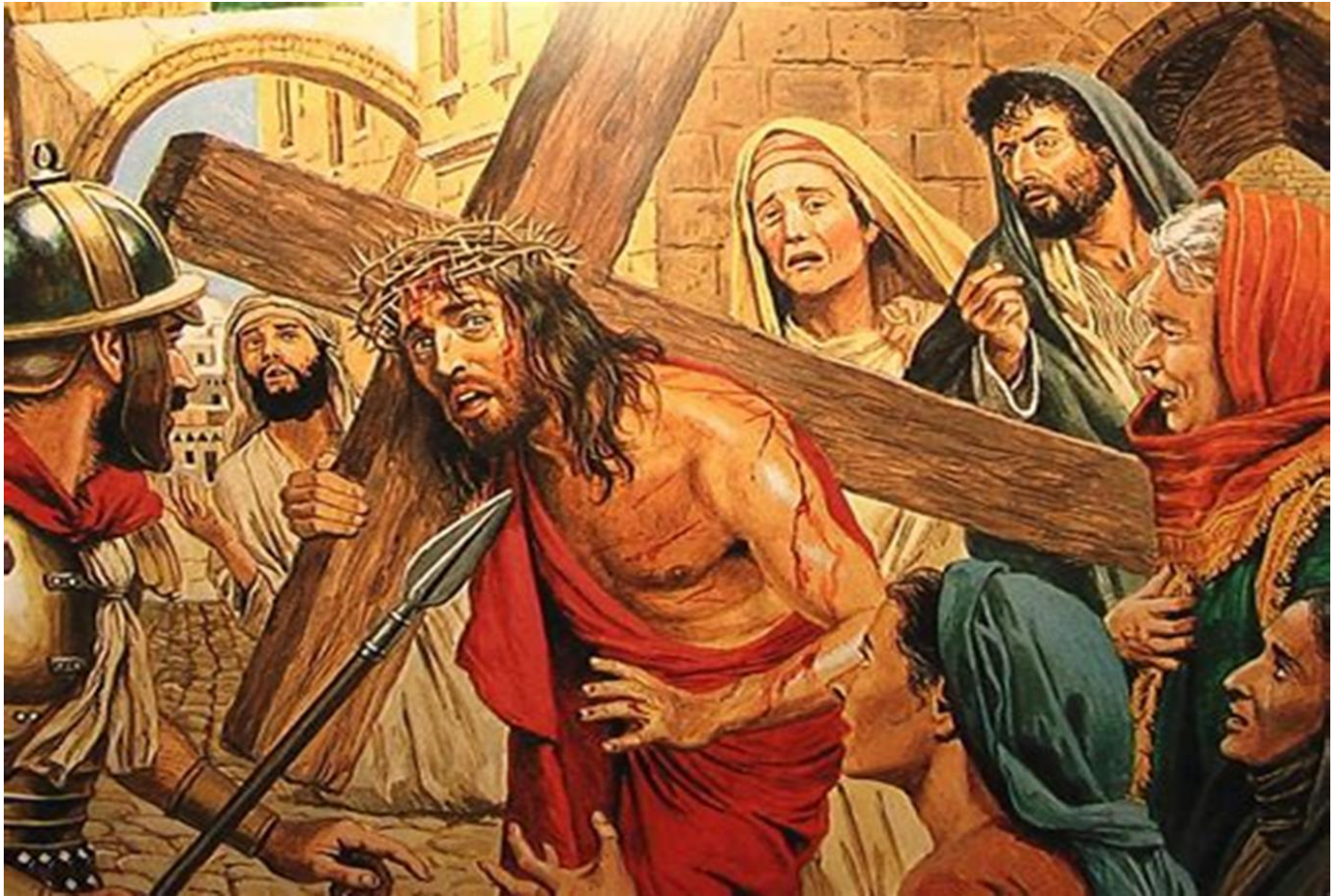
Prayer:

Jesus, help us discover that in all circumstances, You are willing to pick us up, despite the number of times we fall and draw us closer to Your Father.



For the times we have failed to seek Your grace, forgive us.

The Eighth Station

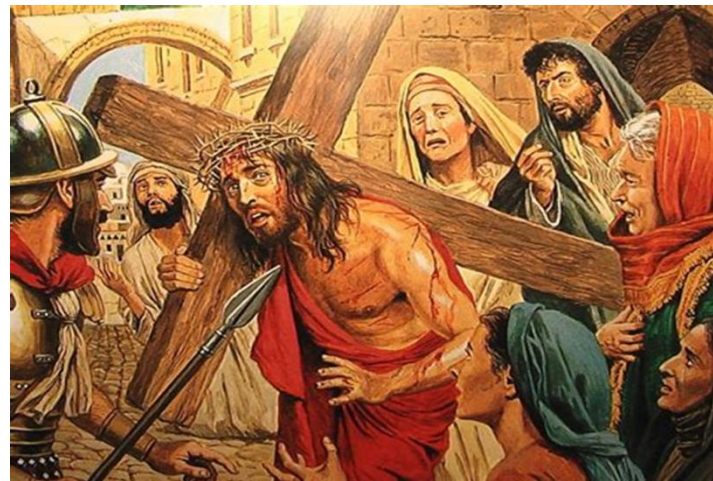


The Eighth Station

Jesus meets the Women of Jerusalem

Reading: Luke 23:28

“Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children.”



The Eighth Station

Jesus meets the Women of Jerusalem

Reflection:

The women Jesus met along the way wept for Him. In His suffering, they saw His innocence – all of which moved them to tears.

The women felt Jesus' pain, but failed to see their actions as cause of His suffering.

Jesus took that upon Himself and with His compassionate heart, carried our sins on His road to Calvary.



Sin clouds our vision and distances us from God. Sometimes we become selfish and don't see how our actions have an impact on others. Sometimes our sins feel so great that we don't trust God could ever forgive us. Despite our failings, God's mercy runs deep.

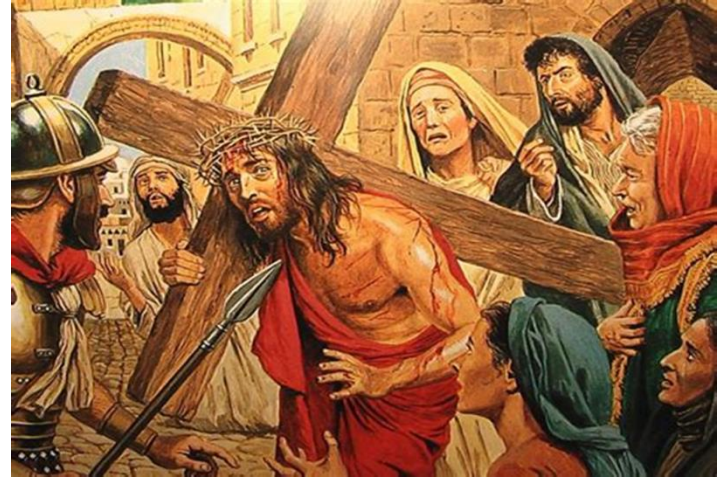
The Eighth Station

Jesus meets the Women of Jerusalem

Prayer:

Jesus, draw us closer to You and into the depth of Your forgiving heart. We thank You for those who challenge us to examine our lifestyle, actions and ambitions and show us a different way to live in Your world with Your people.

For the times we have failed to see the connection between our sins and Your Calvary, forgive us.



The Ninth Station



The Ninth Station

Jesus falls the Third time

Reading: Isaiah 49:4

I said, "I have worked, but how hopeless it is! I have used up my strength, but have accomplished nothing." Yet I can trust the Lord to defend my cause; he will reward me for what I do.



The Ninth Station

Jesus falls the Third time

Reflection:

Jesus falls a third and final time. With His energy almost completely depleted and the weight of the Cross crushing His body, the crowd believes there is no way He can stand back up. Yet, Jesus summons every ounce of strength, rises up, and drags His Cross.



Sin, guilt and shame often force us down. Sometimes the weight of our struggles burden us so heavily, we don't believe there is any hope left. Sometimes we fail to see how our greed, selfishness, impatience or anger cause hurt in others' lives. In rising this third time, Jesus teaches us, that despite all weakness, we can always be made new for nothing is impossible with God.

The Ninth Station
Jesus falls the Third time

Prayer:

Jesus, rescue us from despair and help us to see that no sin is greater than Your love. We pray for those who remain in despair under the weight of their cross. With Your grace may they be open to rise again, knowing they are worthy people and God is on their side.

For the times we have tried to rely on our own strength instead of crying out to You, forgive us.



The Tenth Station



The Tenth Station

Jesus is stripped of His Clothes

Reading: John 19:23-24

“After the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. They also took the robe, which was made of one piece of woven cloth without any seams in it. The soldiers said to one another, "Let's not tear it; let's throw dice to see who will get it."

This happened in order to make the scripture come true: "They divided my clothes among themselves and gambled for my robe.”

And this is what the soldiers did.



The Tenth Station

Jesus is stripped of His Clothes

Reflection:

In the world's eyes, Jesus has nothing left. He was beaten beyond comprehension. His clothes,

His remaining possessions, were ripped off His body.

From one perspective, Jesus can appear poor and lowly. However, Jesus possessed an interior richness far greater than any human eye can see.

No-one, absolutely no-one, could rob Jesus of His Divine dignity.

This dignity is under attack today. Sexual exploitation and unjust treatment of immigrants are rampant in society. Sometimes our desire for choice attempts to take away the dignity of the unborn and the elderly who need our care. Sometimes we take for granted the gift of creation and strip the earth of its resources. In all circumstances, we are called to protect and defend the weak.



The Tenth Station

Jesus is stripped of His Clothes

Prayer:

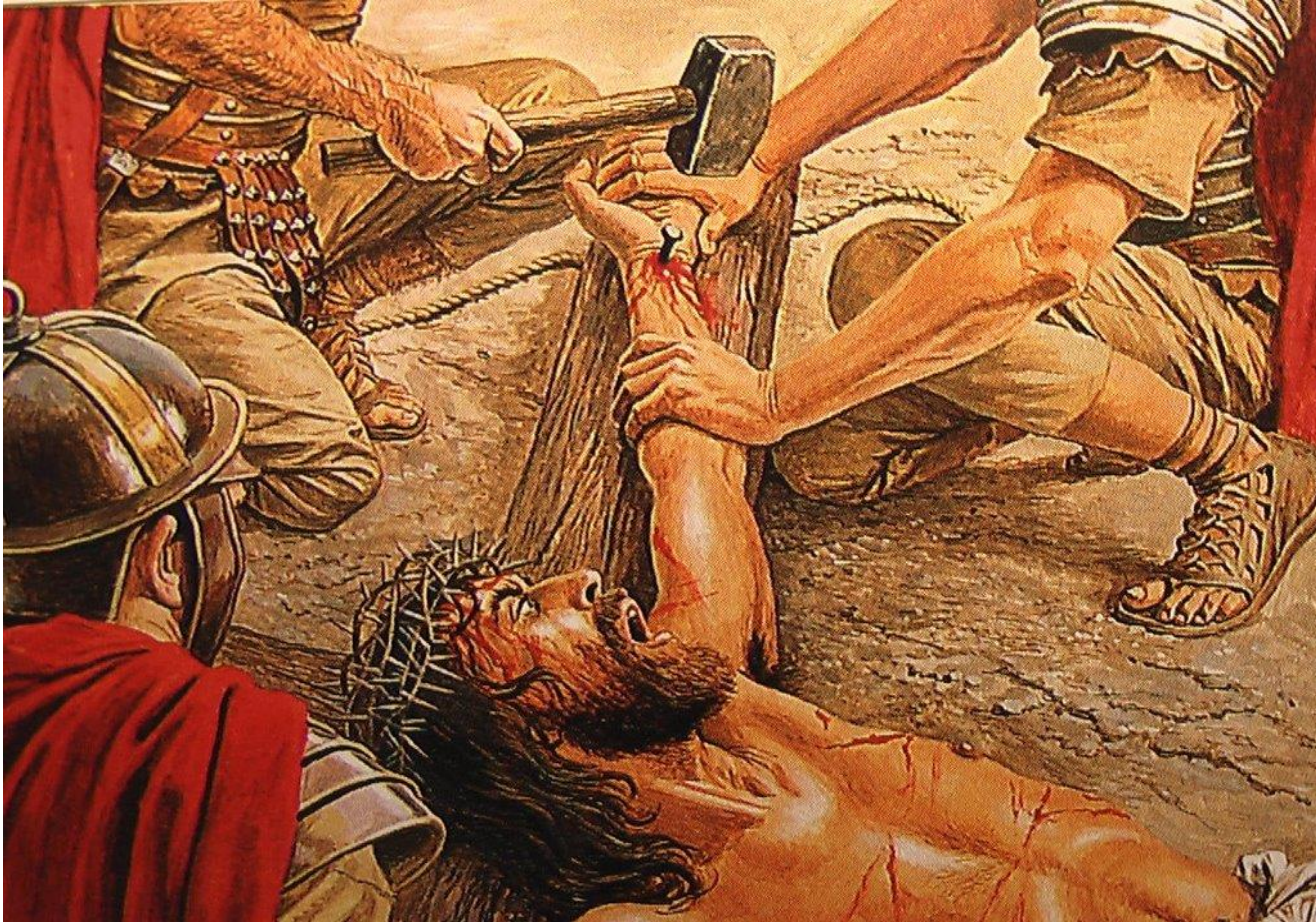
Jesus help us to understand that life is always dignified and teach us the freedom of detachment.

May we act in solidarity with others who are daily stripped of basic rights, decency and self worth.



For the times we have placed possession and our own needs before those of others, forgive us.

The Eleventh Station

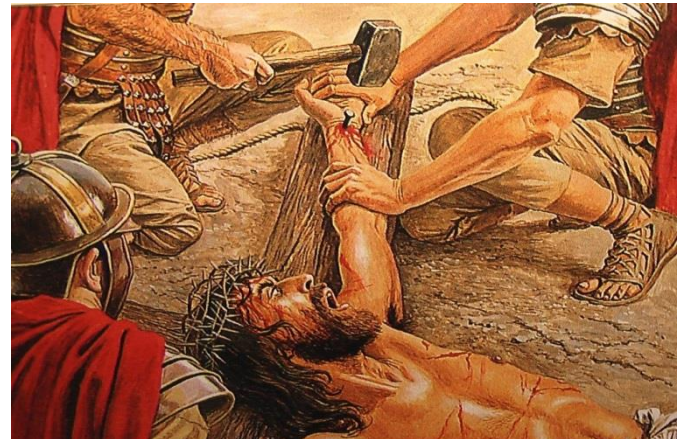


The Eleventh Station

Jesus is nailed to the Cross

Reading: Luke 23:36-7

The soldiers also made fun of him: they came up to him and offered him cheap wine, and said, “Save yourself if you are the king of the Jews!”

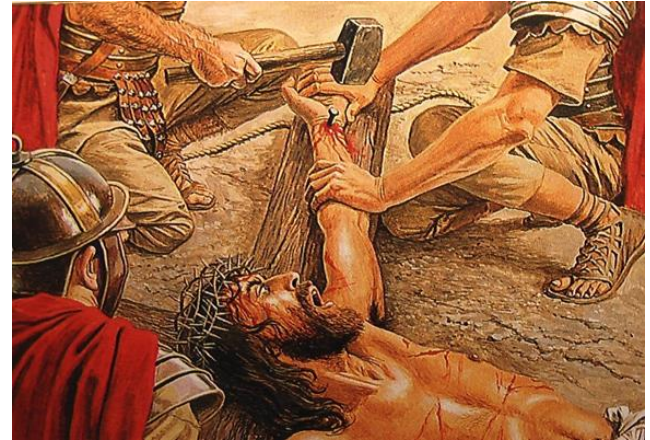


The Eleventh Station

Jesus is nailed to the Cross

Reflection:

The soldiers drive the nails into Jesus' hands and feet. Jesus could have called on the powers of heaven to stop such torture.



Yet, because His love is so great, Jesus accepted the agony of being attached to the Cross. It is one thing to carry a cross, it is another to be nailed to it.

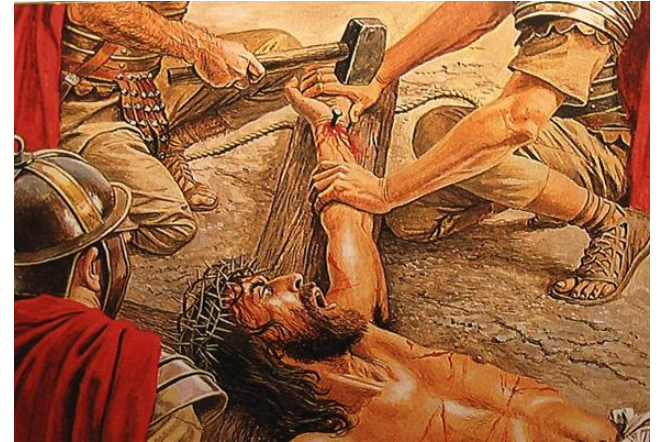
This is infinite love, a love beyond all comprehension.

The Eleventh Station

Jesus is nailed to the Cross

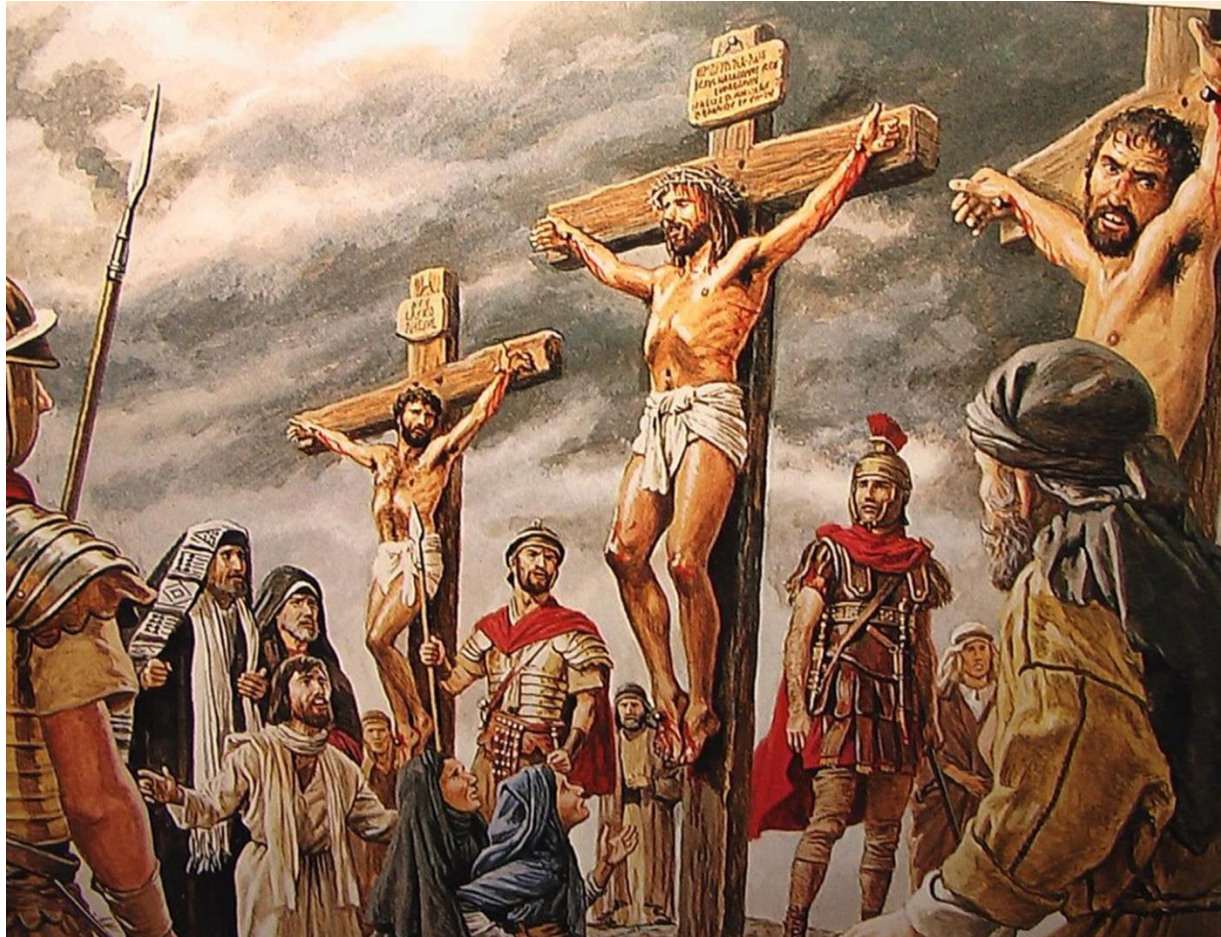
Prayer:

Jesus, we are sorry for ever having offended You. Sometimes we are aware of what we are doing yet we still proceed in hurting You and those we love. Sometimes our self-love is so strong that we are not even aware of the pain we are causing others.



For the pain of being nailed to the Cross, thank You.

The Twelfth Station



The Twelfth Station

Jesus dies on the Cross

Reading: Luke 23:46

Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Father! In your hands I place My spirit!”

He said this and died.



The Twelfth Station

Jesus dies on the Cross

Reflection:

Before Jesus took His last breath, He looked down upon those who remained.

In yet again, another act of love, Jesus ensured His mother would be cared for and for His mother to care for the disciple as her son.



The Twelfth Station

Jesus dies on the Cross

Prayer:

How is it Jesus, that even in Your dying, You cared for us? We are sorry, that despite such deep love, we still choose the path of sin.



For dying on the Cross out of love for me, thank You.

The Thirteenth Station



The Thirteenth Station

Jesus is taken down from the Cross

Reading: John 19:31-37

Then the Jewish authorities asked Pilate to allow them to break the legs of the men who had been crucified, and to take the bodies down from the crosses. They requested this because it was Friday, and they did not want the bodies to stay on the crosses on the Sabbath, since the coming Sabbath was especially holy. So the soldiers went and broke the legs of the first man and then of the other man who had been crucified with Jesus.

But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs. One of the soldiers, however, plunged his spear into Jesus' side, and at once blood and water poured out.

(The one who saw this happen has spoken of it, so that you also may believe. What he said is true, and he knows that he speaks the truth.) This was done to make the scripture come true: “Not one of his bones will be broken.” And there is another scripture that says, “People will look at him whom they pierced.”



The Thirteenth Station

Jesus is taken down from the Cross

Reflection:

It is over. In order for the prophecies to be fulfilled, not a bone in Jesus' body was broken. Yet, His lifeless corpse was taken down from the Cross and placed in His mother's arms.

What a contradiction she experienced. Mary, the mother of Jesus held her dead Son's body so that we might gain eternal life.

Saying goodbye to those we love is never easy. Sickness and death are inevitable. While we know this is a reality, our hearts never seem ready for the pain caused by death and the absence of a loved one.

But because of the Way of the Cross, we know death does not have the final word.



The Thirteenth Station
Jesus is taken down from the Cross

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for the agony You experienced so that one day we might be united with You and all those who have gone before us.

We are inspired by all those who are faithful to the very end, who love to the very end.

May their love and faithfulness give us hope and encouragement when all might otherwise seem lost.



The Fourteenth Station



The Fourteenth Station

Jesus is laid in the Tomb

Reading: John 19:38-42

After this, Joseph, who was from the town of Arimathea, asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body. (Joseph was a follower of Jesus, but in secret, because he was afraid of the Jewish authorities). Pilate told him he could have the body, so Joseph went and took it away. Nicodemus, who at first had gone to see Jesus at night, went with Joseph, taking with him about one hundred pounds of spices, a mixture of myrrh and aloes. The two men took Jesus' body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial.

There was a garden in the place where Jesus had been put to death, and in it there was a new tomb where no one had ever been buried. Since it was the day before the Sabbath and because the tomb was close by, they placed Jesus' body there.



The Fourteenth Station *Jesus is laid in the Tomb*

Reflection:

While this fourteenth station concludes the Way of the Cross, we know this is not the end of the story.



Death has no power over Jesus. Love is victorious. Yet in this space, we come to understand that in order to claim the resurrection, we must also claim the Cross.

The Fourteenth Station

Jesus is laid in the Tomb

Prayer:

Jesus, we ask You to walk with us as we make this earthly journey. Help us to pick up our crosses that are placed before us and assist us in easing the burden of those who walk along our path.

In You, we find strength. In You, we find inspiration. In You, we find hope. Thank You for being Love beyond all telling. Help us to always give witness to Your great love.

