Prayer for all cast and crew:

Lord Jesus,

Help me to remember
that this presentation
is not about me,
but about you.
This is your story to tell.

Let me be the means to deliver your truth,
so you may reach the hearts and minds
of those willing to come to you.

Jesus, use my body to show your story
that all may see something
in a different way, this time.

Jesus, use my voice to clearly tell your story
that all may hear a special way
to become closer to you, this time.

Jesus, use my talents to play the music in my soul
that all may join in worship
of the everlasting life
that comes from your suffering for us.

May we serve your purposes, Lord Jesus,
to the best of our abilities.

Amen.

Prior To Program Beginning:

- Carefully move jugs and table with sound box to back wall corner by credence table.
- Place two kneelers between altar and ambo.
- Microphone on stand with longer cord set low by kneeler closest to altar.
- Cordless microphone in front pew.
- A bowl and a pitcher with a small amount of water are on a table near Priest’s chair.
- I-pod music set up to go by cantor's microphone.
- Sound system turned on - test sound.
- Lights on: Altar, Inner, Center, Side Wall lights, master switch for pew Lanterns.
- Reserve signs on front three left pews.
- Side aisle doors closed with signs asking to be seated in center sections.
- Brochures handed out as people enter.

Music Is Playing:

- We Are the Reason - by Avalon
- Mighty is the Power of the Cross - by Chris Tomlin
- By His Wounds - from Glory Revealed Album
Thank you for being here this evening, and joining us as we enter more fully into Jesus’ suffering tonight.

There will be three readers for each station this evening:

Reader 1 will introduce each station.

Please note your response in the handout during each introduction. *(Because by your...)*

However, we will not kneel during this response as there is another time set aside for this. Reader 1 continues describing what takes place during each station of the cross.

Then a second reader will come forward representing each one of us and take us up close to Jesus. We will reflect with a whisper in our hearts. It is during this reflection time that we will ask you to kneel along with the readers if you are able to do so.

Finally our third reader brings us back to our lives today, giving us all something on which to reflect for our own lives. You may then be seated when all of the readers return to their seats.

There will also be times when our cantors and musicians will lead us in singing parts of songs. All of the music is found in the program guide or in the RED, HARD-COVER GATHER HYMNAL. The song numbers will also be shown on the boards.

At the end of Station 14, there will be time for silent prayer. You may stay and pray if you wish. When you leave, please do so in complete silence, saving any conversation for outside or in the gathering area.

In the penitential spirit of Lent, these Living Stations also act as an Examination of Conscience, allowing each of us to look into our own hearts and find the ways we have drifted away from God. The actors, readers, and musicians are here to help you visualize part of Christ’s sacrifice for us. Let the Holy Spirit speak to you tonight, helping us all to become closer to Jesus.

*Speaker exits through sacristy door and closes it.*

**Lighting:** Turn off main lanterns switch

*After lights are adjusted,*

*Pilate and Servant Girl* enter from sacristy

*Pilate sits in Priest’s chair*

*Servant girl* stands by water table

*Readers and remaining cast process into church from the gathering area, as follows:*

*Readers 1 & 3* go around ambo to the right staying on main floor until the side

*Readers #2* are seated in the front pew

*Soldiers* guide *Jesus* into sanctuary to Pilate standing between Pilate and altar, then turn to face audience

*Soldier 1* near altar

*Soldier 2* near Pilate

*Crowd* follows going to server’s chair area staying on main floor until the side
Reader 1: The first station: Jesus is condemned to death. 
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

See intro page for scene set up.

Reader 1:

Look at the man sitting.
He is Pontius Pilate.
He is the Roman Governor and the most powerful man in Judea.
Angry people have told lies about Jesus, and they want Pilate to kill him.
Pilate knows
   Jesus is an innocent man.
He knows
   He should not be killed.
But Pilate is afraid.
He wants the angry people to like him, to be his friends, or he might lose his job.
So he tells them, "Go ahead and kill Jesus."

Pilate rises and washes his hands.
Servant girl takes pitcher, bowl, and towel into sacristy. Changes her sash to a cloth over her head. Waits in back until station #2.

Pilate takes the table and goes back into sacristy to change out of server's alb and dresses as John. Waits until station #2.

Soldier 2 takes the priest's chair into sacristy and then gets the purple cloak and crown of thorns.

Soldiers put a purple robe and crown of thorns on Jesus (Jesus assists for his comfort).

Soldiers push Jesus forward toward the pews.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
See how hard and fast He is breathing.
He is afraid.
He could stop these men if He wanted because He is the Son of God.
But then who would make up for our sins?
So Jesus is going to let it happen because He loves us.
He wants to save us and win heaven for us.
Still, He's afraid.
Put your hand in His.
Let Him know you care.

Let us now kneel, if you are able. (pause until all kneel)

Whisper to Jesus in our hearts: "Jesus, I'm here. I'll stay with you."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus, please make me brave so I can do what is right even when it is hard to do.
Don't let me be afraid to stand up for somebody when others are telling lies about that person.
Help me to not put luxury, success, popularity, or my own opinions above what is right?

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Soldier 2 goes to back corner by cross and waits there.
Reader 1: The second station: Jesus takes up His cross.
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**John (formerly Pilate) and Weeping Woman (formerly servant girl)** - now become part of crowd.

**Soldier 2** brings cross forward to "stage" back corner.

Reader 1:
Look at the quiet way Jesus does what they tell Him.
He does not fight with the men who push him.
He does not hate them and say rough words to them.
If they had known He was dying for them and all of us, they would have acted differently.
So Jesus forgives them.
He thinks only of how He loves them and us.
Then He takes up the cross but in His heart He asks His heavenly Father to help Him carry it bravely.

**Soldiers and Jesus** should be standing facing pews but as far back as can be

**Soldier 1** is now between Jesus and the crowd
**Soldier 2** is behind Jesus

Reader 2:
Step up close to Jesus.
See what a hard time he has getting the cross onto his shoulder.
It is clumsy and heavy. Jesus adjusts cross
His shoulders are already sore because they have whipped Him extensively.
There are thorns around His head too.
Sometimes the cross hits these thorns.
They go into Jesus’ head like sharp nails.
Let us kneel, if you are able.

**Short pause (count 3) before reading.**

Reader 3:
Dear Jesus,
when something is hard for me to do, help me to remember how you took the cross without fussing about it.
Help me to be good and kind to others even when it is not easy.
Help me to control the anger in my life.
Help me to take responsibility for both the good and the bad things that happen to me.

**Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.**

**SONG:** Behold The Wood of the Cross (Refrain only)
Reader 1: The third station:
Jesus falls the first time.

We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.

Crowd comes up from server's area to be
closer to Jesus carrying the cross.

Soldiers motion pushing Jesus with spears
to hurry him along.

Reader 1:
Look at how Jesus is stumbling along,
struggling just to stand.
The cross is crushing His shoulder,
and the sharp stones in the road
cut His bare feet.
All around Him
people are shouting and pushing,
and the Roman soldiers,
who have been ordered to crucify Him,
want Him to hurry.
Jesus tries as hard as He can to move faster
but He stumbles and falls.

Jesus falls onto one knee with the cross.
Soldier 2 helps balance cross during fall.

Reader 2:
Step up close to Jesus.
See Him trying to get up.
He wants to keep carrying His cross.
Everybody around Him is yelling
and poking at Him.
But Jesus does not get angry.
He offers all the hurting
to His heavenly Father for us
because He loves us.
Then He pulls Himself to His feet
and walks forward.
Think that you
put your arms around Him.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel)
Whisper in our hearts:
"Jesus, teach me to be loving like you.

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:
Dear Jesus,
if something hurts me today,
remind me to offer my hurt to God.
Do not let me be mean
to anybody who gets hurt,
or who makes mistakes,
or to anyone who is different from me.
Help me
to love others
as you loved us.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.
Reader 1: The fourth station: Jesus meets His mother.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Simon joins the crowd near the back.
John comes behind Mary and puts his hand on her shoulder.

They both come forward and Mary touches Jesus' hand on the cross.

Jesus looks toward west side pews.

Mary looks toward stain-glass windows above readers 1 & 3.

Reader 1:

Look at that lady reaching out to Jesus from the crowd. She is His mother, Mary. She comes close and her face is full of tears. Tears are on Jesus' cheeks, too. You can tell how much they love each other. Look at Jesus and see a Son who honors and respects his mother out of the great love he has for her. Jesus performed his first miracle because his mother expressed concern for the shortage of wine at a wedding. Although this man is the Son of God and needs nothing, He still follows the Father's command to honor His mother. But Mary is not allowed to stay close to Jesus, to say kind and loving words to Him. They make her go away.

Soldier 1 then "pushes" Mary & John back to the crowd.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus. He feels so sad to have His mother see him all bruised and beaten. He knows it makes her unhappy. But she is brave like Him. She knows that He chose to carry the cross. And if that’s what God planned for Jesus, she wants Jesus to do it. They are both willing to do what God wants them to do because they know that what God wants is always good for us.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel) Whisper in our hearts: “Help me to always do what is good!”

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus, when I have to be away from someone I love, help me offer my lonely feelings to You. Help me to do what God wants me to do today. Help me to respect those in authority. Help me to always do what is good and just.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.
Reader 1: The fifth station:
Simon helps Jesus carry His cross.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Soldier 2 roughly grabs Simon and then makes him help with the cross. Simon and Jesus stand side by side facing pews, each holding one of the "arms" of the cross.

Reader 1:

Look at that man helping Jesus carry the cross. This is Simon of Cyrene. He was on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast when he was stopped and told to help carry Jesus' cross. At first Simon did not like having to help Jesus. He thinks; “Why must I help this man? Who is He that the crowd so hates him.” He has these doubts and questions because Simon did not know Jesus. But later, when he found out who Jesus was, he was proud that he had helped to carry the cross.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus. See how Simon is trying to get hold of the cross and carry it for Jesus. Simon is strong but the cross is heavy, yet not too heavy. Jesus never asks us to do something we cannot do. Sometimes, when you have hard things to do, it is Jesus asking you to carry the cross, as He asked Simon. Try to think then, Jesus is making you strong.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel)
Whisper in our hearts: "Jesus, I want to be proud like Simon that I helped you with your cross."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
make me strong when I have to do something hard. When I don't like to do something do not let me push it off on somebody else. I don't really want to be singled out, but one look at Simon shows me the importance of helping my brothers and sisters. Help me to willingly and joyfully help others.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

SONG: The Summons Verse 1
Reader 1: The sixth station:
Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Veronica comes forward with the cloth.
Picture of Jesus' face is folded to the inside.

Reader 1:

Look at that woman standing before Jesus.
We call her Veronica
a poor Jewish woman
who sees love in this man's face.
She has pushed her way through the crowd
to get to Jesus.
That was a brave thing to do
with all those rough people around
to scare her.
She does not understand
how they can look at his kind loving face
and do these terrible things to him.
But she does not think of them.
She thinks only of how
she wants to give Jesus
a handkerchief
to wipe his face.
When Jesus gives it back to her
there is an image of his face
on the handkerchief.
It was Jesus’ way of thanking her.

Soldiers push Veronica back.
Veronica steps away from Jesus toward pews
and turns to hold up cloth for all to see
the face of Jesus.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
Think how, if men can be proud
because Simon helped Jesus,
females can be proud
because Veronica helped Jesus too.
It does not matter who we are.
What is important to God
is what is in our hearts.
If our hearts are good and kind,
that is the best
and most important thing.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel)
Whisper in our hearts:
"Jesus, print your face
on my mind and my heart,
so I can learn to be more and more like you."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
let me be thankful
to people who help me
when I need help.
Help me do kind things for other people
even if I don't get any reward.
Jesus you based your words and actions
on charity
and the greater good of others.
Help me to be gracious and generous.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Veronica blends back into crowd.

SONG: The Summons Verse 2
Reader 1: The seventh station: Jesus falls the second time.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1:

Look at how hard it is for Jesus to walk. He feels weak and shaky. He has had nothing to eat or drink and He hurts all over. But the soldiers won’t let Him stop and rest. They keep pushing at Him to walk faster. He tries, but again He falls down in the dirty street, and the heavy wooden cross falls on top of Him.

Jesus falls to his hands and knees. Simon also falls down to one knee. Simon holds most of the weight of cross, but the other "arm" of the cross rests on Jesus’ back.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus. Stoop down to where He has fallen in the street. He is out of breath and very tired. It would help if He could just lie there a minute. But He gets up and tries walking again. You were not there when all this happened; but remember, what you do or say to Jesus now counts as if you had been there.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel) Whisper in our hearts: "Jesus, thank You for showing me how always to get up and to keep going."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus, when I try to do something and mess it up, help me to start over again as You did. If somebody falls down or gets hurt, let me feel for them and help them if I can.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.
Reader 1: The eighth station: 
Jesus meets the weeping women.

We adore you, O Christ, 
and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Women come forward with handkerchiefs - dabbing at their eyes as if weeping.

Reader 1:
Look at the women of Jerusalem 
who are standing at the corner of the street 
where Jesus is passing.
When Jesus draws near, 
they fall to their knees sobbing and weeping for him.
They feel sorry for Him 
and say loving words to Him.
They are weeping 
because they have been touched 
by the immense love and compassion of Jesus.
Jesus has never given them worldly goods, 
but he offered his love, his mercy, 
his hope, and now his life.
He tenderly Slowly and painfully reaches out to them.
Even now in his pain, 
he doesn’t think of himself but stops to comfort them.
He tells them that He will feel better 
if He knows they will always be kind and gentle toward everyone for love of Him 
and if they will teach their children to do the same.
They are good women.
They will do what Jesus asks.

Reader 2:
Step up close to Jesus.
Listen when He talks to these women.
It is hard to behave well when you are sick or feeling bad.
It takes much courage to be unselfish like that.
But Jesus does not think of Himself. He thinks only of being kind to these ladies.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel)
Whisper in our hearts: "Jesus, help me to be thoughtful of others as you are."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:
Dear Jesus, show me how I can help others and make them happy.
Teach me to share what I have with others and to not always try to keep the best of everything just for myself.
Help me to think beyond my possessions, and to think about things that bring joy to others.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Soldiers then push the women back into the crowd and make Jesus retake up his cross.
Reader 1: The ninth station:
Jesus falls the third time.
We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1:
Look at Jesus now.
He is walking slower and slower.
He’s been nearly beaten to death
and has fallen twice already.
The soldiers wish He would hurry.
They are afraid that
all the excited people watching Jesus
and yelling at Him may cause a riot.
Jesus is packed in so close
He can hardly breathe.
He takes several more steps
and then falls down in the dirty street
for the third time.

Jesus falls flat on the ground,
Simon stays standing with cross.

Reader 2:
Step Up close to Jesus.
He is flat on the ground.
It is very hard for Jesus to move,
  but he gets to his knees and
  pushes himself up again.
He knows He has to go on.
Jesus does not like all this pain.
He would like to be rid of it.
But He can’t stop now
  if he wants to do what will help us.
And . . . He wants to.
He started this way of the cross
  for God and for us,
  and He wants to finish it.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel)
Whisper to Him in our hearts:
"Jesus, You are a hero!"

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:
Dear Jesus,
  if I am slow and people rush me;
  help me not to get upset.
Help me to be kind to everybody
  because every one of us
  needs help sometimes.
When I fail, please give me
  the strength and the courage
  to keep picking myself up and continuing.
Help me to keep going
  when times are tough and
  it would be easier to quit
  than to continue.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Entire crowd moves back down to server’s
chair area.

SONG: Change our Hearts-(Refrain only)
Reader 1: The tenth station:
Jesus' clothes are taken away.

We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.

Simon takes the cross and steps back,
holding the cross upright

Reader 1:

Look at Jesus.
He is outside the city of Jerusalem now
and standing on a hill called Calvary.
The soldiers are going to crucify Him here.
One of them is pulling off Jesus' clothes.
The clothes are sticking to Jesus' sore back.
It hurts when they are pulled off
just as it hurts when somebody pulls a Band-Aid off a sore on your knee.

Dismas, a thief,
is being crucified along side of Jesus.
He realizes his sins and asks Jesus to forgive him,
to remember him when He comes into His kingdom.
Jesus promises Dismas that he will join Him today...in paradise!

NOTE: Soldier 2 has taken the spear and
leaned it against the wall and credence

table so that it is ready for watching the


tomb in station 14

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
He stands there without His clothes.
He is like a wrestler or boxer
who takes off his ordinary clothes
so he can fight better.
Jesus is getting ready for a fight also.
He is fighting against death and sin.
He wants to win the fight.
He wants to make it possible
for all of us to have a life
that lasts forever in heaven.
We are on Jesus' side
and want Him to win.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel)
Whisper to Him in our hearts:
"Jesus, I am cheering for You."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
keep me strong in the battles
I will have to fight
to be good and true to You.
Let me never forget
that I can pray for Your help
when I am at Mass.
Help me to share the gifts
God has given me
with those who need them.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.
Reader 1: The eleventh station:
Jesus is nailed to the cross:

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Simon brings the cross forward behind Jesus and supports it upright
Jesus grabs "arms" of cross from underneath and behind
Soldier 2 comes back with rubber mallet and red ropes

Reader 1:

Look at Jesus. He has been laid flat down on the cross. One soldiers takes spikes and hammers them through Jesus' hands.

(PAUSE) Soldier 2 pretends to hammer, while Soldier 1 wraps red cord to "tie" Jesus' wrists to the cross. Out of sight, someone hits metal with a hammer 3X for each hand and his feet. Simon takes mallet and goes to sacristy.

After Jesus' feet also are nailed, the soldiers fix the cross into a hole so it will stand straight. Everybody stands around and looks at Jesus. The good people feel unhappy because they love Jesus. The people who don't love him are unhappy too, because they have done something bad. It was a very sad day - that first Good Friday.

Mary comes forward with John
John holds the kneeling cushion to his side away from pews.

Lighting crew cracks open the door by ambo and prepares for turning off lights.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus. He hurts all over. His head aches. He is thirsty, but in His heart He is not sad like the people. He knows that what He chose to do was the right thing. Now He looks down at the men who nailed Him to the cross and He forgives them. Then He tells Mary to be a mother to all of us and to count us as her children. He keeps thinking of others even when he is dying.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel) Whisper to Him in our hearts: "Jesus, I love you."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus, when somebody hurts me, help me to be forgiving, and help me to live so Mary will be proud to count me as her child.

Turn off ALTAR lights

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

SONG: Were You There
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Reader 1: The twelfth station: 
Jesus dies on the cross.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1:

Look at Jesus hanging on the cross.
He has been there for three hours.
He hurts all over.
He is so thirsty but nobody brings any water.
Jesus does not complain.
He prays to His heavenly Father and tells Him that He has finished what had to be done.
He bows His head and dies.

(On the cross, Reader 1 counts to 10 then stands)

Turn off INNER lights

A soldier runs a spear into Jesus' side.

Blood and water come out, a sign that Jesus gave everything.

Many will wish that they would have met Him sooner so that they could have lived their lives according to His way.

You still have that chance.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
He is dead on the cross.
He suffered all this because He wanted to put down death and find a way to give life.
He has met death and won the fight with it. But it does not look that way.
He hangs there so still as if death has Him for good. But it doesn't. Jesus once said He was life.

He told everybody that, if they would wait three days after His death, He would show them that Life had won the fight over death.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel)

Whisper to Him in our hearts: "Jesus, I believe You bring life."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus, no matter where I am, how long I live, or what happens to me, let me always be thankful that you died for me.

At the hour of your death, I will look at you and see love, hope, and mercy.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

SONG: Were You There
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Reader 1: The thirteenth station: Jesus is taken down from the cross.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Soldier 2 unwraps the rope from Jesus' hands and holds the cross upright
John helps brace Jesus as he "falls" down and helps lay Jesus near Mary
Mary removes the crown of thorns, gives it to John and John hands it to Soldier 2
Soldier 2 takes cross, thorns, & rope into sacristy and waits till next station
Jesus rests his head on cushion
Mary gently puts her hand on his shoulder

Reader 1: (PAUSE)

Look at Jesus after His body has been taken down from the cross and the blood and dirt washed away. The sharp thorns have been taken off, too. Now He is lying on His mother's lap. She holds Him lovingly. She keeps saying His name over and over. How she loves him!

Her heart is broken, but she does not cry or give up. She remembers about waiting three days.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus. All His enemies are gone now, so those who love Him can come near and stay with his mother.

If you had been there you would have done the same.
And you would have been proud of Mary's being so brave.
You would not have cried either even though your heart would hurt for Jesus.
You would be thinking about the third day.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel)
Whisper to Him in our hearts: "Jesus, I love You."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus, when somebody dies, help me to remember that You have given new life and that I can see that person in heaven. Let me be kind and helpful if someone in my family is sad.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

SONG: Were You There
Were you there when the sun refused to shine?
Reader 1: The fourteenth station:
Jesus is put in the tomb.

We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.

All Reply: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Soldier 2 returns with black cloth
While READER 1 is reading....

Musicians get ready to play last song on ipod and then leave the church area

Both soldiers hold cloth to hide Jesus while
Jesus crawls to the sacristy (tomb) behind the black cloth and closes door when text is read

John and Mary follow the cloth to tomb
Soldiers remain at the tomb
The crowd sits on the steps in the server's chair area

Reader 1:

Look at how Jesus' friends have put clean clothes on His body and sprinkled Him with a sweet smelling perfume.
Now they are putting His body into a tomb. cloth covers Jesus
The tomb is a small cave-like room cut out of a big rock.
After they lay Him inside, crawling soldiers
they leave the tomb and roll a giant stone in front of the doorway.
It is so large that it takes several big men to roll it into place.
Then they all go home.

Soldiers remain and sit on steps by door.
Soldier 1 grabs spear.
John and Mary lead the crowd, to be seated in pews.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
You cannot see Jesus because He is still inside the tomb.

It is Saturday, the next day.
Pontius Pilate, the judge who let Jesus be killed, sent soldiers to the tomb so that nobody would steal the body of Jesus.
The soldiers sit by the tomb all day and all night.
Imagine that you also sit there and that you watch, pray, and remember the promise of the third day.

Let us kneel. (pause until all kneel)

Whisper to Him in our hearts:
"Jesus, I am waiting for You."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
help me to pray even when I cannot see you or You don't seem very near to me.
Teach me how to wait when I cannot have what I want right away.
Help me to be patient and allow Your ways to happen as You have them planned.

Count to 10, then turn off CENTER lights

All readers, musicians, and cast walk back to gathering area in COMPLETE SILENCE

Songs: play quietly in the background
You Are My King (Amazing Love) by Newsboys
Above All by Michael W. Smith