

THE LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Most Holy Redeemer Parish



Opening Procession (please stand) ***Behold the Wood***

Introduction (be seated)

This ancient prayer, *The Way of the Cross*, is our way of remembering the events of the last few hours of Jesus' life. Praying the *Way of the Cross* is a journey that each of us walks throughout our life, as we deal with pain and sorrow and experience love. By praying the Way of the Cross, we unite our suffering with the suffering of Jesus and pray that, through his Resurrection, we will find the hope and strength to make it through difficult times. As you experience this prayer today, imagine what it was like for those involved in this journey and get in touch with what they might have felt. But most of all, listen to what the voice of God is saying to you as you participate in this journey that is so close to our hearts. We'll begin each station with this prayer: *Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.* Every time you hear that, please respond: *You are the Savior of the world.* Also, please join in praying the parts marked **Our Reflection**

The First Station: Jesus is condemned to death

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: So this is how it all begins. . . sentenced like a common criminal. Could these really be the same people who cried "Hosanna" and wanted to make me king only days ago? Now they're screaming for me to be crucified. Even the lies they've made up about me don't deserve this kind of punishment.

OUR REFLECTION: How often do I go along with the crowd instead of standing up for what I believe in? Would I have joined this crowd condemning Jesus? Lord, there were so many people willing to believe the lies told about you and go along with it. Give me the strength to stand up for what I believe in. Please forgive me when I don't do what I know is right and I go along with the crowd.

(Silent Pause)

Song

Were you there when the judge condemned my Lord? Were you
 there when the judge condemned my Lord? (1-14) Oh! _____
 Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble!
 Were you there when the judge condemned my Lord?

The Second Station: Jesus accepts his cross

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: Father, your will is what I want to do here. Give me the strength to carry this heavy cross and with it, the injustices of the world. I know this is just the beginning of a tough and lonely walk, so please walk it with me.

OUR REFLECTION: Lord, you were falsely accused of doing wrong and were forced to carry a huge, heavy cross to your death. Life is so often unfair. How do I deal with things that aren't fair? Jesus, help me to be as courageous as you are. Help me to overcome the burdens of my life like you overcame the burden of your cross.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when he carried forth the beam?*

The Third Station: Jesus falls the first time

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: How many times have I walked along here? I don't remember the stones being so rough or the distance so long. I never dreamed it would turn out like this...let me get up...let me get up...let me get up.

OUR REFLECTION: What are some things that cause me to stumble and fall? How do I handle it when I "fall"? Do I just quit instead of getting up and going on? Jesus, even though you have been beaten, whipped, crowned with thorns, and given a heavy, cross to carry, you got up when you fell. Inspire me please, to get up when I fall.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when he fell beneath its weight?*

The Fourth Station: Jesus meets his sorrowful mother

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: Oh please, not my mother. Don't let her see me like this. As much as it hurts me, I know it hurts her more. Mom, you don't deserve this. All you've ever done is love me. Your love has been incredible. Please don't cry. Your faith will help you to understand why this must happen.

OUR REFLECTION: Sometimes, I forget the pain I bring to people who love me, especially my parents. Jesus, it must have been awful to look into your mother's eyes and see such pain. Help me to remember how much love it takes to care for someone. Give me understanding when those who take care of me try to shield me from getting hurt. Help me see their love...teach me to love this deeply too.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when he saw his Mother weep?*

The Fifth Station: Simon helps Jesus carry the cross

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: I don't know who you are, my friend, but thanks for helping me. I really need it right now. Every part of my body hurts from all their beatings, but my heart hurts the most. Your name is Simon? Thanks Simon, for the friendly shoulder.

OUR REFLECTION: Jesus, you accepted help when things were tough. How willing am I to let others help me, or do I see needing help as a sign of weakness? I can't go through life alone. I have to let people help me along the way, even people whom I don't know very well. Let me be strong in my weakness by trusting the hand that reaches out to me.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when they called for Simon's help?*

The Sixth Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: I can't believe this woman is willing to take such a risk for me. Doesn't she see how crazy everyone is getting around here? She is liable to be punished for showing that she cares for me. She is brave to take such a risk. And I am thankful for her compassion.

OUR REFLECTION: Friends care and their actions show it. Who are the Veronicas in my life? Have I thanked them? How willing am I to be a Veronica for those who are struggling? Jesus, help me to be willing to take the risk of helping someone who needs it. When I see someone struggling, give me the courage to help them in any way I can, even if it means being embarrassed.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when Veronica wiped his face?*

The Seventh Station: Jesus falls the second time

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: This is truly killing me. I hurt so badly. I can hardly do this even with help. I'm so tired...I'm wearing out...and there is still a long way to go.

OUR REFLECTION: What am I struggling with that wears me out; hurts me and makes me want to give up? Jesus, sometimes I am overwhelmed with life's burdens. When I feel like giving up, remind me that you got back on your feet and kept going.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when he fell again in pain?*

The Eighth Station: Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem.

Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: You women know so much with your hearts and have shown me so much love...don't let your love die. Love one another. Take care of each other as you've taken care of me.

OUR REFLECTION: Sometimes, when things are hard, all I think about is myself. But even in your pain you put aside your feelings and thought of others. Help me to do the same. Help me to not feel sorry for myself and to remember the needs of others.

(Silent Pause)

Song *Were you there when the women mourned for him?*

The Ninth Station: Jesus falls the third time

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: I won't give up; I'm not going to let it end here. Father, lift me up. Give me the strength to make it just a little further. I know there's still more for me to do.

OUR REFLECTION: Who are the people who have shown me how to survive? Who has shown me how to get back up and go on with my life, no matter how many times I fall? Jesus, it would have been so easy for you to give up here...but instead you got up again. Sometimes I feel like giving up too, but I know that you are always with me and you keep reminding me about the people who can help me to survive. Thanks for keeping them in my life.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when he fell yet once again?*

The Tenth Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: They hurt my body and now they humiliate me in front of everyone. They have taken everything from me that protects me and guards my dignity. All I have now is myself.

OUR REFLECTION: How do I react when others disrespect me? Handling tough times is hard enough, but to have someone disrespect me on top of that is too much. Lord, even when they tried to strip you of your dignity they couldn't take it because your love is so great. Help me to carry your love and respect on the inside and to show that love and respect on the outside.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when they stripped him of his clothes?*

The Eleventh Station: Jesus is nailed to the cross

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: Forgive them Father. They are only doing what others have told them to do. I have become a victim of accusers and abusers, standing far outside the range of these hammers and nails. For every hit, forgive them for what they do.

OUR REFLECTION: Jesus, I don't know how you found the strength and love to forgive those who hurt you. Am I forgiving of those who hurt me? And what about the nails I drive into others? Jesus, I am amazed at how you always forgive people, no matter how much they hurt you. Help me to choose not to hurt others and to forgive those who hurt me.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when they nailed him to the cross?*

The Twelfth Station: Jesus dies on the cross

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: I'm thirsty...I can no longer breathe. Father forgive them. John, take care of my mother. I'm dying...I'm dying. Father, into your hands, I give my spirit.

OUR REFLECTION: Jesus, you gave us all you had. No one could give more. Could I love like this if my life were on the line for my friends? Jesus, you went through pain and suffering beyond what I can imagine. Thank you Jesus for giving your all for me...for all of us. I want to be totally committed to loving others. Give me the courage to love like you, no matter what the cost.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when he yielded up his soul?*



The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is taken down from the cross

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: Most of my friends abandoned me. Only a few stood with me to the end. My broken and lifeless body was placed in the arms of my mother. My pain had ended, but hers only got worse.

OUR REFLECTION: Now, your limp, broken body is taken down from the cross and laid in their arms for the last time. How do I deal with the loss or death of someone I love? It hurts so much to lose a friend or even worse, a family member. Jesus, help me learn to be in touch with my feelings and deal with them in an honest and healthy way. Help me to trust that my pain will be transformed into new life.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when they took his body down?*

The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is laid in the tomb

Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. **RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.**

JESUS' REFLECTION: There wasn't a grave prepared for me. Joseph of Arimathea was a good man...good enough to provide a grave for me from his own expense so that my family could provide a proper burial.

OUR REFLECTION: Sometimes it feels like there is no reason to hope. I wonder what your small group of followers were thinking and feeling as they walked away from your grave. They thought it was the end. Jesus, help me to overcome feelings of despair. Let me never lose sight of hope, knowing that you can overcome anything.

(Silent Pause)

Song: *Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?*

CLOSING PRAYER (please stand)

Jesus, you walked and died on this way of the cross because you loved us more than life itself. Your body was beaten, bruised and broken for us. You were laid in the tomb, but even death was not the end. Your Resurrection gives me hope and helps me to believe that, with your grace, I have nothing to fear. I do not stand alone. I know that you are Risen and that your spirit lives within me and in those around me. I am your disciple and your servant here on earth. My arms are your arms reaching out to others. Thank you for sharing your love and forgiveness with me. Help me to die to sin and to embrace the new life that you gave me in Baptism. You truly are the Savior of the World!

Final Song:

*Were you there when he rose up from the dead?
Were you there when he rose up from the dead?
Oh! Sometimes I feel like shouting,
"Glory! Glory! Glory!"
Were you there when he rose up from the dead?*

Closing Procession:

Veneration of the Cross

