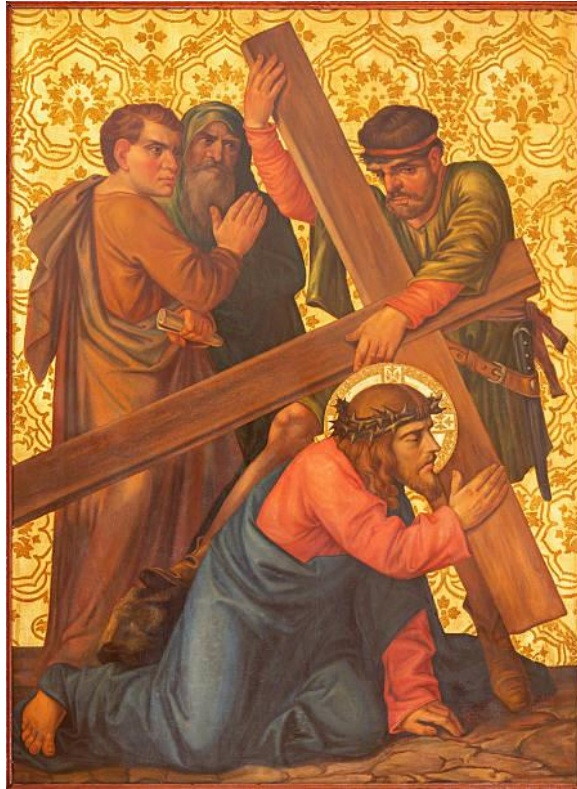




THE WAY OF THE CROSS



INTRODUCTION

COMMENTATOR:

"These fourteen steps..... That you are now about to walk you do not take alone. I walk with you. Though you are you, and I am I, yet we are truly one - one Christ. And therefore, My way of the cross two thousand years ago and your "way" now are also one. But note this difference, My life was incomplete until I crowned it by My death. Your fourteen steps will only be complete when you have crowned them by your life."

OPENING HYMN: HOSEA

1. Come back to me
With all your heart
Don't let your fear keep us apart
Trees do bend
Though straight and tall
So must we to others call

CHORUS:

Long have I waited
For your coming home to me
And living deeply our new life

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

FIRST STATION



JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

LEADER: O Jesus meek and uncomplaining, teach me resignation in trials.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"In Pilate's hands, my other self, I see my Father's will. Though Pilate is unjust, he is the lawful governor, and he has power over me. And so, the Son of God obeys a son of man. If I bow to Pilate's rule because this is My Father's will, can you refuse obedience to those whom I place over you?"

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

My Jesus, Lord, remove the blinders from my eyes that I may see that it is You whom I obey in all who govern me. Lord, it is you.

(STAND)

At the Cross Her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

SECOND STATION



JESUS TAKES HIS CROSS

LEADER: My Jesus, this Cross should be mine, not Thine; my sins crucified Thee.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"This Cross, this chunk of tree, is what My Father chose for Me. This Cross you must bear is largely products of your daily life, and yet My Father chose them too for you. Receive them from His hands. Take heart My other self. I will not let your burdens grow one ounce too heavy for your strength."

(*Pause for reflection*)

CONGREGATION:

My Jesus, Lord, I take my daily cross. Remind me often that in carrying my cross, I carry yours with You. And though I bear a sliver only of Your cross, You carry all of mine, except the sliver in return.

(*STAND*)

Through Her heart His sorrow sharing
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword has passed.

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

THIRD STATION



JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

LEADER: O Jesus, by this first fall never let me fall into mortal sin.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"The God who made the universe, and holds it in existence by His will alone, becomes, as man, too weak to bear a piece of timber's weight. How human in His weakness is the Son of Man. My Father willed it thus. I could not be your model otherwise. If you could be My other self, you also must accept without complain your human frailties."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

Jesus Lord, how can I refuse? Make me content with all my discontents but give me strength to struggle after You.

(STAND)

Oh, how sad and sore distressed
Was that Mother highly blest,
Of the sole begotten One!

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

FOURTH STATION



JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

O Jesus, may no human tie, however dear, keep me from following the road of the cross.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"My mother sees Me whipped. She sees Me kicked and driven like a beast. She counts My every wound. But though Her soul cries out in agony, no protest or complaint escapes Her lips, or even enters Her thoughts. She shares My martyrdom and I share Hers. We hide no pain, no sorrow from each other's eyes. This is My Father's will."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

My Jesus, Lord, I do believe for those who love you, all things work together unto good.

They must!

(STAND)

Christ above in torment hangs;
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of Her dying glorious Son.

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

FIFTH STATION



SIMON HELPS JESUS TO CARRY THE CROSS

Simon unwillingly assisted Thee; may I with patience suffer all for Thee.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"My strength is gone; I can no longer bear the Cross alone. And so, the legionnaires make Simon give Me aid. This Simon is like you, My other self. Give me your strength, each time you lift some burden from another's back, you lift with your very hand the Cross's awful weight that crushes Me."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

Lord, make me realize that every kindness I extend to others, I really give it to you.

(STAND)

Is there one who could not weep,
Whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold?

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

SIXTH STATION



VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

O Jesus! Thou did'st imprint Thy sacred features upon Veronica's veil; stamp them also indelibly upon my heart.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"Can you be brave enough, My other self to wipe My bloody face? Where is My face, you ask? At home whenever eyes fill up with tears, at work when tensions rise, on playgrounds, in the slums, the courts, the hospitals, the jails - wherever suffering exists - My face is there. And there I look for you to wipe away My blood and tears."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

Lord, live in me and act in me and love me. And not in me alone; in all men so that we may reveal no more Your bloody but glorious face on earth.

(STAND)

Can the human heart refrain,
From partaking in Her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

SEVENTH STATION



JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

By Thy second fall, preserve me dear Lord, from relapse into sin.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"This seventh step, My other self, is one that tests your will. From this fall, learn to persevere in doing good. The time will come when all your efforts seem to fail, and you will think; "I can't go on". Then turn to Me, My heavy-laden one, and I will give you rest. Trust Me and carry on."
(*Pause for reflection*)

CONGREGATION:

Give me Your courage, Lord. Help me. Alone there's nothing I can do. With You, I can do anything You ask. I will.

(*STAND*)

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld Her tender child,
All with bloody scourges rent.

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

EIGHTH STATION



JESUS CONSOLES THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

My greatest consolation would be to hear thee say: "Many sins are forgiven thee; because thou hast loved much".

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"How often had I longed to take the children of Jerusalem and gather them to Me. But they refused. Now these women weep for Me, and My heart mourns for them - mourns for their sorrows that will come. I comfort those who seek to solace Me. How gentle can you be My other self, how kind?"

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

Lord, teach me, help me learn. When I would snap at others, Lord, make me kind like you.
(STAND)

For the sins of His own nation
Saw Him stand in desolation
Till His spirit forth He sent.

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

NINTH STATION



JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

O Jesus when weary upon life's long journey, be Thou my strength and my perseverance.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"Completely drained of strength I lie, collapsed upon the cobblestones. My body cannot move. No blows, no kicks can rouse it up. And yet My will is mine. And so is yours. Know this My other self, your body may be broken, but no force on earth and none in hell can take away your will. Your will is yours."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

My Lord, when all my strength is gone and guilt and self-reproach press me to earth, save me from despair! Lord, never let me feel that any sin of mine is greater than Your love. No matter what my past has been, I can begin anew.

(STAND)

O thou Mother, fount of love!

Touch my spirit from above

Make my heart with Thine accord

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

TENTH STATION



JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

My soul has been robbed of its robe of innocence; clothe me, dear Jesus, with the garb of penance and contrition.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"Behold, my other self, the poorest king who ever lived. Before My creatures I stand stripped. The cross - My deathbed - even this is not My own. Yet who has ever been so rich? Possessing nothing, I own all - My Father's love. If you, too, would own everything, be not solicitous about your food, your clothes, and your life."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

My Lord, detach me from the craving for prestige, position, and wealth. Root out of me all trace of envy. Release me from the vice of pride. May I be poor in spirit, Lord, so that I can be rich in you.

(STAND)

Make me feel as Thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt,
With the love of Christ our Lord.

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

ELEVENTH STATION



JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Thou did'st forgive Thy enemies; my God, teach me to forgive injuries and forget them.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"Can you imagine what crucifixion is? My executioners stretch My arms; they hold My hand and wrist against the wood and press the nail until it stabs My flesh. Then with one hammer smash, they drive it through - and pain bursts like a bomb of fire in My brain. They seize the other arm; and agony again explodes. Then raising My knees so that My feet are flat against the wood, they hammer them fast too."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

My God, I look at You and think: is my soul worth this much? I here and now accept for all my life whatever sickness, torment and agony that may come.

(STAND)

Holy Mother, pierce me through,
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified.

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

TWELFTH STATION



JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Thou art dying, my Jesus, but Thy Sacred Heart still throbs with love for Thy sinful children.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"The Cross becomes a pulpit now "forgive them, - Father..... You will be with Me in paradise...there is your Mother... There... Your son...I thirst... It is complete." To speak I have to raise Myself by pressing on My wrists and feet, and every move engulfs Me in new waves of agony, and then, when I have borne enough, have emptied My humanity, I let my mortal life depart."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

My Jesus, God, I offer you my death for my own sins and those of all my fellowmen.

My God! My God! Forsake us not; we know not what we do.

(STAND)

Let me share with Thee His pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died?

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

THIRTEENTH STATION



JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

Receive me into Thy arms, O sorrowful Mother; and obtain for me perfect contrition for my sins.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"The sacrifice is done. Yes, My Mass is complete; but not My mother's and not yours, My other self. My Mother still must cradle in Her arms the lifeless body of the son she bore. You, too, must part from those you love, and grief will come to you. In your bereavements think of this; a multitude of souls were saved by Mary's sharing in My calvary. Your grief can also be the price of souls."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

I beg you, Lord, help me accept the partings that must come - from friends who go away, my children leaving home, and most of all, my dear ones when you call them to yourself. Grant them eternal joy.

(STAND)

Let me mingle tears with Thee,
Mourning Him who mourned for me
All the days that I may live.

LEADER: (*GENUFLECT*)

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

CONGREGATION: (*STAND*)

Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LEADER:

FOURTEENTH STATION



JESUS IS LAID IN THE SEPULCHER

When I receive Thee into my heart in Holy Communion, O Jesus, make it a fit abiding place for Thy adorable body.

COMMENTATOR: (*KNEEL*)

"So ends My mortal life. But now another life begins, for Mary and for Magdalene; for Peter and for John; and for you. My work as man is done. My work within and through My Church must now commence. I look to you, My other self. Day in, day out, from this time forth, be My apostle - victim - saint."

(Pause for reflection)

CONGREGATION:

My Jesus, Lord, you know my spirit is as willing as my flesh is weak. I am nothing, Lord. Help me!

(*STAND*)

By the Cross with Thee to stay,
There with Thee to weep and pray,
Is all I ask of thee to give.

CONCLUSION

COMMENTATOR:

"I told you at the start, My other self, My life was not complete until I crowned it by My death. Your "way" is not complete unless you crown it by your life.

Accept each moment as it comes to you, with faith and trust that all that happens has My mark on it. A simple fiat, this is all it takes; a breathing in your heart, "I will it, Lord".

So, seek Me not in far-off places. I am close at hand. Your workbench, office, kitchen, these are altars where you offer love. And I am with you there.

Go now! Take up your Cross and with your life complete the way."

Let us now pray one "Our Father, "Hail Mary" and "Glory Be" for the intentions of the Pope.

FINAL HYMN

HOSEA

2. The wilderness will lead you
To your heart where I will speak
Integrity and justice
With tenderness you shall know

CHORUS:

Long have I waited
For Your coming home to me
And living deeply our new life