

# ST. JOSEPH'S LENTEN SERVICE

April 5, 2000

Leader: When Jesus issued the invitation "Come, follow me," he was asking for real people to follow him with heart, mind, body and spirit. Today we will think about how we might better follow Jesus as we approach Holy Week and Easter. Let us begin.

Reader One: (Move to visual one) Pilate, a man who did not know Jesus personally unjustly passed judgement on him.

How often do we make unjust judgements about our family or friends? (silent reflection)

Reader Two: (Move to visual two) The cross, the instrument of his death was cruelly thrust on Jesus' shoulders.

What heavy burdens do we carry at home, at school, or at work? (silent reflection)

Reader One: (Move to visual three) Jesus fell to the ground in full view of the crowd.

Are there times when we "fall" in full view of our family and friends? (silent reflection)

Reader Two: (Move to visual four) Mary, his mother, stood there helplessly as Jesus passed by; to all eyes but hers, he was a failure.

How often do those we care about disappoint us or cause us sorrow? (silent reflection)

Reader One: (Move to visual five) Simon the Cyrene reluctantly helped Jesus carry the cross.

How often have we helped our friends and family reluctantly? (silent reflection)

Reader Two: (Move to visual six) Veronica risked personal danger to comfort and cleanse Jesus.

Are there times we take risks to offer comforting words to others?

Reader One: (Move to visual seven) Jesus was so weak that he fell again beneath the weight of the cross.

How many times have we "fallen down" through our own fault? (silent reflection)

Reader Two: (Move to visual eight) The women of Jerusalem wept for Jesus but he rebuked them.

How many times have we "wept" feeling sorry for ourselves? (silent reflection)

Reader One: (Move to visual nine) Though Jesus fell for the third time, he struggled to get up again.

How often have we been tempted to give up, not making the extra effort required? (silent reflection)

Reader Two: (Move to visual ten) Jesus was stripped of everything, even his clothing.

How willing are we to give "everything" when God makes demands on us? (silent reflection)

Reader One: (Move to visual eleven) The soldiers nailed Jesus, now stripped and abandoned to the cross.

Do we rely on the strength of God when we are in pain or discouraged? (silent reflection)

Reader Two: (Move to visual twelve) Jesus, after speaking words of forgiveness, died on the cross.

Do we pray words of blessing and forgiveness for those who do us wrong? (silent reflection)

Reader One: (Move to visual thirteen) The body of Jesus was placed in Mary's arms, his mission *obviously* over.

How often do we give up on others because they are *obviously* hopeless? (silent reflection)

Reader Two: (Move to visual fourteen) Jesus is placed in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea?

When everything goes wrong, how strong is our faith in the resurrection? (silent reflection)

Reader One: (Move to visual fifteen) After three days, Jesus was raised by God to glorious new life.

Do we let setbacks and discouragement rule us--or are we alleluia people? (silent reflection)

Leader: Jesus, our risen savior, help us to use this lenten time to ponder the mysteries of our faith and to deepen our belief in your resurrection. We ask these things for ourselves and for our family and friends

*Now invite fifteen participants to go around and pick up the symbols, one at a time. As each is solemnly brought forward and placed on the prayer table, recite the following together.*

ALL: Jesus, teach us how to follow you.

Now the 7<sup>th</sup> grade will share with us how we might follow him more closely in Jesus' own words.