

## Opening Prayer

O God, we are about to walk with your Son through the stages of His suffering and death. Jesus' sacrifice saved us and brought us new life through His sacrifice on the cross and His rising from the dead three days later. Help us to understand a little better and to love a little more.

Help us to live more unselfish lives. Open our minds to help us see how we can better follow in Jesus' footsteps.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

Station 1. Jesus is condemned to death.

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

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

Jesus, you stand all alone before Pilate. Nobody speaks up for you. Nobody helps defend you. You devoted your entire life to helping others, listening to the smallest ones, caring for those who were ignored by others. They don't seem to remember that as they prepare to put you to death.

As a young person, sometimes we feel alone. Sometimes we feel that others don't stand up for us and defend us when we are afraid. Sometimes we feel condemned, blamed and not treated fairly. Sometimes we feel abandoned and afraid as well. We have a hard time when people criticize us.

Help us be grateful for what you did for us. Help us to accept criticism and unfairness as you did, and not complain. Help us pray for those who have hurt us.

WE PRAY:

God, many times people don't seem to understand me. Sometimes too, I feel like the criticism of others is unfair. Help me accept the mistakes of others as you accept me when I make mistakes. Help me be big enough to ask forgiveness for the mistakes I make and to forgive as Jesus did. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 2. Jesus carries his cross.

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

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

Jesus, as you accepted your cross, you knew you would carry it to your death on Calvary. You knew it wouldn't be easy, but you accepted it and carried it just the same.

Sometimes we don't like the problems that come our way. Sometimes we try to get others to take care of them or solve them for us. Sometimes we become upset and nasty when asked to do even the smallest thing to help others.

Sometimes we feel not appreciated. Sometimes we feel as if we accept more responsibility than we need to. We can feel sorry for ourselves, even though the crosses others carry are much larger than our own. In our self-pity, we don't reach out to help.

LET US PRAY:

God, my problems may seem small to those around me, but you know how hard they are for me to carry sometimes. Help me remember and pray for those who are handicapped and those whose problems are severe. When I'm tempted to complain, help me remember Jesus and the cross He carried for me. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 3 Jesus falls the first time.

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

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

Jesus, the cross you have been carrying is very heavy. You are becoming weak and almost ready to faint, and you fall down. Nobody seems to want to help you. The soldiers are interested in getting home, so they yell at you and try to get you up and moving again.

Sometimes we start to do something, but then get tired of it. We hurry to get finished and sometimes don't do our work as well as we know we can. Sometimes we don't pay attention to what we should be doing. When things get hard for us, sometimes we give up.

Sometimes we put things off and sometimes we give up too easily,

LET US PRAY:

God, I know there are many times when I give up before I should. I need to think of the cross Jesus carried, and how he got up again and kept moving. Help me to do my work as well as I can and to finish what I have started. When I fall, help me get up again and keep going. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 4 Jesus meets his mother.

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

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

Jesus, you feel so alone with all those people yelling and screaming at you. You don't like the words they are saying about you, and you look for a friendly face in the crowd. You see your mother. She can't make the hurting stop, but it helps to see

that she is on your side, that she is suffering with you. She does understand and care.

Sometimes we feel like too many things are going on. Sometimes others pick on us and abuse us. We look around me for a friendly face, and for the help we need. We need to share our troubles with those who truly care about us. Sometimes we feel overwhelmed by many things. Life is so competitive, and we worry so much about our future and those who have some control over it. We need to remember that we do not have to solve every problem all by ourselves. We need to look around for a friendly face, for the help we need.

LET US PRAY:

God, you gave me my parents. Nobody can take their place. I thank you for that gift. Help me to show my love and appreciation to them. Help me to remember to pray for them often. If they have died, help me be challenged by the love they shared with me. When I feel alone, help me to realize that you are my parent, the friendly face that I can depend upon to give me the help I need. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 5 Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross.

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

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

Jesus, the soldiers are becoming impatient. This is taking longer than they wanted it to. They are afraid you won't make it to the hill where you will be crucified. As you grow weaker, they grab a man out of the crowd and make him help carry your cross. He was just watching what was happening, but all of a sudden he is helping you carry your cross.

Sometimes we see people who need our help. Sometimes we pretend not to hear when our parents need us. We disappear when we know others could use our help. Sometimes we try to do as little as we can and still get by. Others might need our help, but we ignore their needs. Even when we're asked to help, sometimes we claim to be too busy.

LET US PRAY:

God, help me notice the needs of those around me. Help me do more than just stand there and watch. Help me see the needs of others as opportunities for me to reach out and help as you did. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 6 Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

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

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

Jesus, suddenly a woman comes out of the crowd. Her name is Veronica. You can see how she cares for you as she takes a cloth and begins to wipe the blood and sweat from your face. She can't do much, but she offers what little help she can.

Sometimes we know someone could use a little help and understanding. They may be picked on or teased by others, or just sad or lonely. Sometimes we feel bad that others don't step in to help, but we don't help either. We notice the needs around us. Sometimes our own family members crave our attention, and we don't even seem to notice. Sometimes a fellow student, friend, neighbor or family member could use help or understanding, but we don't reach out to help fearful we may be criticized, or that they demand more of us than we'd like to give.

LET US PRAY:

God, help me see the needs of others as being as important as my own needs.

Remind me to go out of my way to be helpful, even if I'm not asked. Help me not be concerned about what others may think of me. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 7 Jesus falls the second time.

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

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

This is the second time you have fallen on the road. As the cross grows heavier and heavier it becomes more difficult to get up. But you continue to struggle and try until you're up and walking again. You don't give up.

Sometimes things get us down. Others seem to find things easier to do or to learn. Each time we fail, we find it harder to keep trying. Sometimes we think we should know more than we do. We become impatient with ourselves and find it hard to believe in ourselves when we fail. It is easy to despair over small things, and sometimes we do.

LET US PRAY:

God, sometimes life is hard. Sometimes I grow impatient with myself, and even take that impatience out on others. Help me do my best without comparing myself with others. Help me realize how much you love me, just as I am. Help me keep trying when things get hard and when I fall, just like Jesus did. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 8 Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.

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

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

Jesus, as you carry your cross you see a group of women along the road. As you pass by you see they are sad. You stop to spend a moment with them, to offer them some encouragement. Although you have been abandoned by your friends and are in pain, you stop and try to help them.

Sometimes we think a lot about ourselves. We think about what we want and would like people to spend their lives pleasing us. Sometimes we act like a child. We become so absorbed in ourselves and what we'd like that we forget about the needs of others. We take them for granted, and often ignore their needs.

LET US PRAY:

God, many times I am selfish. I expect others to serve me while doing very little for them. Help me think more about others. Help me remember that others have problems, too. Help me notice and respond to the needs others have, even when I'm busy or I have problems of my own. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 9 Jesus falls a third time.

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

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

Jesus, your journey has been long. You fall again, beneath your cross. You know your journey is coming to an end. You struggle and struggle. You get up and keep going.

Sometimes we fail time and time again. We find it hard to get along with sisters and brothers, sometimes we're not honest, sometimes we're lazy. We're tempted to stop trying. It's just too hard sometimes. We often feel we should have conquered our weaknesses by now. We become discouraged when we're confronted by the same problems over and over again. Sometimes we get weary & can become discouraged and depressed.

LET US PRAY:

God, many times I feel like giving up. Sometimes I grow impatient with myself, especially when I make the same mistakes over and over again. Help me think of the cross you carried. Help me continue to hope that I can make the changes in my life I need to. You didn't give up. I can have the strength to get up again as well. Help me use this awareness to become more compassionate toward others. Help me get up and keep going, as Jesus did. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 10 Jesus clothes are taken away.

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

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

The soldiers notice you have something of value. They remove your cloak and throw dice for it. Your wounds are torn open once again. Some of the people in the crowd make fun of you. They tease you and challenge you to perform a miracle for them to see. They're not aware that you'll perform the greatest miracle of all!

Sometimes we're tempted to repeat stories we know are unclean and disrespectful. We sometimes use crude and vicious words. We can entertain thoughts that are not clean. Sometimes we give children around us a bad example to follow.

LET US PRAY:

God, help me be aware of the prejudices I have against others. Help me value those around me, rather than degrading them by telling unclean stories. Help me strive to be pure in my thoughts, words and deeds. Help me say things that build up the people around me. Help me overcome worldly desires that I may become more like Jesus. Help me set a good example for others to follow. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 11 Jesus is nailed to the cross.

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

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

You are stretched out on the cross you have carried so far. The soldiers take big nails and drive them into your hands and feet. You feel abandoned by the people you loved so much. People seem to have gone mad. You have done nothing but good, yet they drive nails through your hands and feet.

Sometimes we hurt others. Sometimes we join with friends and decide not to hurt another. We gang up against another and cause them hurt and pain. Sometimes we say or do hurtful things to our brothers and sisters. We can wonder what they'd think about themselves if they believed everything we tell them about themselves. Sometimes we discriminate against others. Even without thinking, we judge others because of their color, intelligence, income level or name. We forget that we are to live as a brother or sister to all people. Sometimes we use harsh words when we speak to children and family members. I can find it easy to look for something that isn't very important and make it very important.

LET US PRAY:

God, sometimes I act without thinking. I can be easily led, just like the soldiers and the crowd that put Jesus to death. Never let me drive a nail into another by my

prejudice or hatred. Help me look again at the people around me. Help me see the hurt and pain I have caused in others. Be with me to help me make amends for the harm I have done. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 12 Jesus dies on the cross.

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

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

As Jesus hung on the cross, he forgave the soldiers who had crucified him, and prayed for his mother and friends. Jesus wanted all of us to be able to live forever with God, so he gave all he had for us.

Jesus, let me take a few moments now to consider your love for me. Help me thank you for your willingness to go to your death for me. Help me express my love for you!

Station 13 The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross.

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

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

Jesus, how brutally you were put to death. How gently you are taken from the cross. Your suffering and pain are ended, and you are put in the lap of your mother. The dirt and blood are wiped away. You are treated with love.

Sometimes we treat others better when they're sad or in pain. When somebody dies, we become very gentle and kind. We notice the good and kind things people say about those who have died. If only we could learn to see the good things about them while they were alive. If only we would tell those around us how much we love them, while we still have the opportunity to do so.

LET US PRAY:

God, I never know how many more days I will live. Perhaps it will be many years, perhaps not too many days. Help me make this a better day for those around me. Help me say kind things to the ones I love while they are with me, and while I am with them. It can make my life fuller and their lives happier when I do. Help me look for the good in those around me, especially those I love the most. Help me live this day as if it were the last. Help me become a more gentle and loving person through my greater appreciation for those around me. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Station 14 Jesus is laid in the tomb.

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

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

Jesus, your body is prepared for burial. Joseph gave you his own tomb. Your body laid there and a large stone was rolled in front of the tomb. What a sad day it has been for so many people.

Sometimes we find it hard to share our things with our brothers or sisters and with our friends. We can be selfish. We accumulate things and keep them for ourselves. We try to make sure we have what we want before we share what we have with anybody else.

LET US PRAY:

God, how uncomfortable it can make me to see the loving and generous way Jesus gave all he had for me. How selfish I can feel to hear of the generosity of Mary, Simon, Veronica, the women of Jerusalem, and Joseph of Arimathea. Help me think of Joseph of Arimathea, who risked his own life as he accepted Jesus' body for burial. Help me think of how Joseph loved Jesus so much that he gave him his own tomb. Help me to share my life and love more fully, out of gratitude for the great love you have shown for me.

The Resurrection of Jesus. Jesus rises from the dead.

Jesus, your friends were devastated in their loss. Their darkness couldn't have been any deeper. Yet it is impossible to snuff out the life God has given. Even when all seems lost, your Resurrection gives us new hope!

Sometimes we feel sad; thinking of those who have died and how much we miss them. We forget that Jesus died and rose again in order to save them and prepare a place for them.

LET US PRAY:

God, you so loved the world that you gave your only son, who died and rose for all of us. Help me be thankful for the eternal life promised me. Help me approach you often for the forgiveness I need, the forgiveness Jesus won for me through his passion, death and resurrection. Help me remember that, through Baptism, I have become a child of God. I am united with Christ, with those who live around me, and with those who have died as well. Jesus suffered all the difficulties I must face, so I know you understand my challenges and walk with me as I face them. I know I must face certain difficulties. Even though I don't like them, help me feel your presence with me. Help me use the gifts of the Holy Spirit to face all the challenges that confront me. I know that sin, suffering and death have been overcome by the resurrection of your son. Help me share in the joy of all who have been redeemed, that I may be renewed, made more perfect, and cry out with joy with all your people.