A crown of thorns, made of dark, sharp, and intertwined branches, is positioned on the left side of the image. It casts a shadow onto the light-colored, textured background. The entire image is framed by a dark red border.

# Stations of the Cross



# The Way of the Cross

by Jeremy Harrington, OFM

Used with verbal permission (February, 2017)

## *Preparatory Prayer:*

**LEADER and PEOPLE:** Lord Jesus, my Savior, I want to walk with you on the way of your cross. For love of you, I am heartily sorry for my sins. I beg of you the grace of make this way of the cross in the spirit of true penance, in union with that spirit with which you yourself went up to Mount Calvary. I offer this devotion in thanksgiving for your love, and in satisfaction for my sins and the sins of my brothers and sisters.





## I. Jesus is Condemned to Death



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER Jesus was bound and handed over to Pilate. “What am I to do with this man?” Pilate asked. “Crucify him!” they all cried. He said, “Why? What crime has he committed?” But they only shouted the louder, “Crucify him!” Pilate washed his hands and declared, “I am innocent of the blood of this just man. The responsibility is yours.” Rather than face the truth, Pilate condemned the God-man to death.

PEOPLE **Lord Jesus let me not run from my own or others’ problems nor in desperation accept an unjust solution that hurts someone else.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **Will you come and follow me if I but call you name? Will you go where you don’t know and never be the same? Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known, will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?**

## II. Jesus Accepts His Cross



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER Jesus was already exhausted from his agony in the garden, his sleepless night of trial, the scourging and crowning with thorns. When handed the cross, he took it. He had emptied himself, becoming like us in all things but sin. Now he shouldered even the burden of our sins.

PEOPLE **Out of love for you, Jesus, I will empty myself of selfishness and make a new attempt to accept my crosses. Forgive my complaining and my resentment of the sacrifices I must make to love and serve others.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **Take up your cross, the Savior said, if you would my disciple be; take up your cross with willing heart, and humble follow after me.**

### III. Jesus Falls the First Time



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER The burden was too heavy. The cross forced Jesus down. He stumbled and fell. He struggled to his feet and tried once more. He did not let difficulties or pain shake his determination. He forced himself to stand up, painfully lifted the cross to his shoulder and tried once more.

PEOPLE **Jesus, I fall. I fail. I will accept my weakness and try again, believing in the strength that you give me.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **Take up your cross, the Savior said, if you would my disciple be; take up your cross with willing heart, and humble follow after me.**



#### IV. Jesus Meets His Sorrowful Mother



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

PEOPLE **Because by your cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER Jesus and Mary meet and suffer with one another. There wasn't anything Mary could do to save her son. Like a parent beside the hospital bed of a sick child, Mary had to stand by helplessly and watch her son's agony. Even when we cannot free others from their burdens, like Mary, we can support and console them by our presence and prayer.

PEOPLE **Lord Jesus, let me be understanding to the sick, the depressed, the confused, even when I do not understand their sickness and pain.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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**HYMN (Stabat Mater) While she waited in her anguish, seeing Christ in torment languish, bitter sorrow pierced her heart. Who, that sorrow contemplating, on that passion meditating, would not share the Virgin's grief.**

## V. Simon Helps Jesus Carry the Cross



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER As they led Jesus away, they laid hold of Simon of Cyrene who was coming in from the field. They put a crossbeam on Simon's shoulder for him to carry along behind Jesus.

PEOPLE **Simon helped reluctantly. Jesus, let me help cheerfully. What we do for our neighbor, we do for you. Your apostles deserted you in your time of need. A stranger had to be forced to help you. I make up my mind now not to disappear when a friend needs me.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **Take up your cross, the Savior said, if you would my disciple be; take up your cross with willing heart, and humble follow after me.**

## VI. Veronica Presents Her Veil to Jesus



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER Veronica volunteered to help Jesus. She saw his sweaty, bloody face and was moved by the terrible pain she saw there. She did not hesitate to get her veil bloody and stained.

PEOPLE **Jesus, help me see your image in all the people I meet, especially those suffering from rejection, loneliness, alcohol, or drugs. By my own kindness and by supporting others who help the troubled, I want to relieve your pain.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

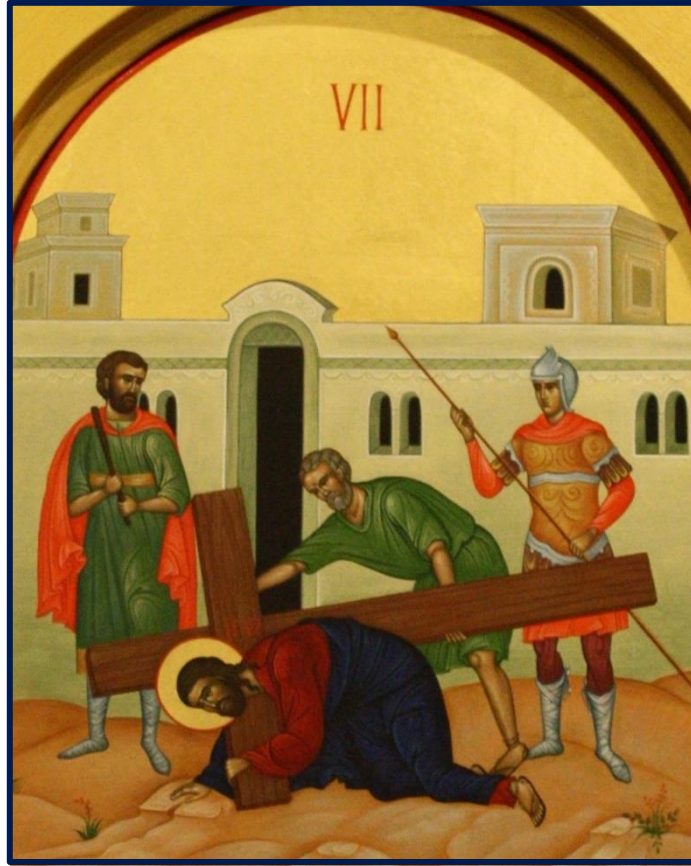
PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love. Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.**



## VII. Jesus Falls the Second Time



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER Even with Simon's help, Jesus falls again. In many things we fail, as individuals, as families, as a parish, as a nation. It takes repeated effort to control our tempers or to learn the art of prayer or to rise to a challenge of real self-giving.

PEOPLE **Jesus, help me to keep on trying. When I fail, give me the grace to accept your healing in the sacrament of penance. Never let us, your pilgrim people, grow weary of trying to follow in your footsteps.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **The Lord is my light and my salvation, of whom should I be afraid, of whom should I be afraid. (Psalm 27)**

## VIII. Jesus Speaks to the Weeping Women



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER A great crowd of people followed him, including women who beat their breasts and lamented over him. Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children.”

PEOPLE **Jesus, merely to feel sorry for the poor or starving is not enough. We need your help to change our world so that all can live decently and have enough to eat. We weep for our own sins of excess and selfishness and resolve to change our lives.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **The Lord hears the cry of the poor, blessed be the Lord. Repeat. (Psalm 34)**

## IX. Jesus Falls the Third Time



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER Totally exhausted, Jesus falls to the ground for the third time. What a terrible burden our sins must be! It took complete trust in his Father and great power of will for Jesus to get up once more.

PEOPLE **Lord Jesus, following you sometimes calls for all the energy we have. If we trust in you, we will be made strong, in spite of our weakness. St. Paul begged three times that the thorn in his flesh be taken away. Jesus, you answered him as you answer us, "My grace is enough for you."**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **Take up your cross, the Savior said, if you would my disciple be; take up your cross with willing heart, and humble follow after me.**



## X. Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER The soldiers roughly tear off Jesus' clothing though it is matted in his wounds. His persecutors have taken advantage of his weakness. They refuse to treat him as a human being.

PEOPLE **Lord Jesus, never let us take advantage of others or try to use them for our selfish purposes. Do not let us rob the poor and helpless of their dignity. As your people, your Church, let us always stand up for the oppressed. We ourselves pledge to treat everyone as a child of God.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **The Lord hears the cry of the poor, blessed be the Lord. Repeat. (Psalm 34)**

## XI. Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER The pain bolts through the body of Jesus as nails are driven into his hands and feet. His thanks for announcing the good news of the kingdom of God was crucifixion as a criminal. It was a convenient way to get rid of him and his challenge to goodness.

PEOPLE **If we want, Jesus, we can shut you out of our lives. We can ignore your call to love. As individuals or as a community we can pretend not to hear your invitation to take up our cross and follow you in the way of generous self-giving.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **Behold, behold the wood of the Cross on which is hung our salvation, o come let us adore.**

## XII. Jesus Dies on the Cross



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER Writhing in agony on the cross, Jesus pleaded, "Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing." Turning to the thief he declared, "This day you should be with me in paradise." In pain Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Then he said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit," and gave himself up to death.

PEOPLE **Nothing was too much for Jesus to do for us. Love knows no half-measures. Lord Jesus, help us to trust our loving Father and to be good to others despite what is done to us.**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Repeat.**



### XIII. Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER When the body of Jesus is lowered from the cross, it is laid in Mary's arms. How immense is her sorrow! As a mother, she remembers holding him as a child and fleeing from Herod to protect him. She recalls the prophecy, "And your own soul a sword shall pierce." Her mother's heart cannot understand the reason, but Mary still has hope. She trusts in the promise made to her by the angel, that her son would save his people, would save you and me.

PEOPLE **Sorrowful Mother, help us to listen to the words of your son. Be with us at the hour of our death.**

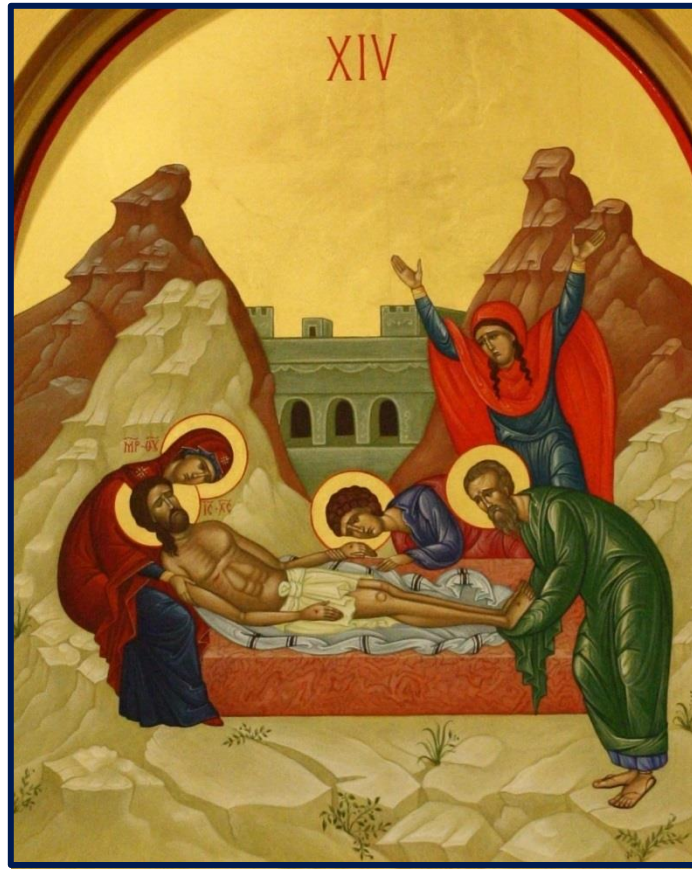
LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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**SILENCE**

#### XIV. Jesus is Laid in the Tomb



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

PEOPLE **Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.**

LEADER They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen cloths with spices. This lifeless body will soon rise victorious over sin and evil.

PEOPLE **Jesus, in baptism we went down into death with you, and rose with you to a new life of grace. May this new life in us grow each day so that we may conquer our selfishness, welcome and forgive all human beings, and work to make the world a better place for all. May we so live in your resurrection that your kingdom may be visible to all of the world. Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life. Come, Lord Jesus!**

LEADER Lord Jesus Crucified.

PEOPLE **Have mercy on us!**

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HYMN **Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom, Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom.**

*Concluding Prayer:*

**LEADER and PEOPLE:** Crucified Savior, accept this short meditation on your passion and death as a sign of my love and gratitude. You sent your Holy Spirit as your first gift to those who believe. Help me to welcome the Spirit into my life, so that I may follow in your footsteps and the victory of your resurrection may grow in me. Together with my fellow believers, let me come frequently to the table of the Lord, and receive your most holy body and blood. I ask you to bless the good resolutions I have made.

Jesus, for you I live;

Jesus, for you I die;

Jesus, I am yours in life and in death. Amen.

**We leave in silence.**



Sacred Heart Catholic Church

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