

Berchmans, Mary John  
- The three hours. (Dev.)  
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# The Three Hours of GOOD FRIDAY



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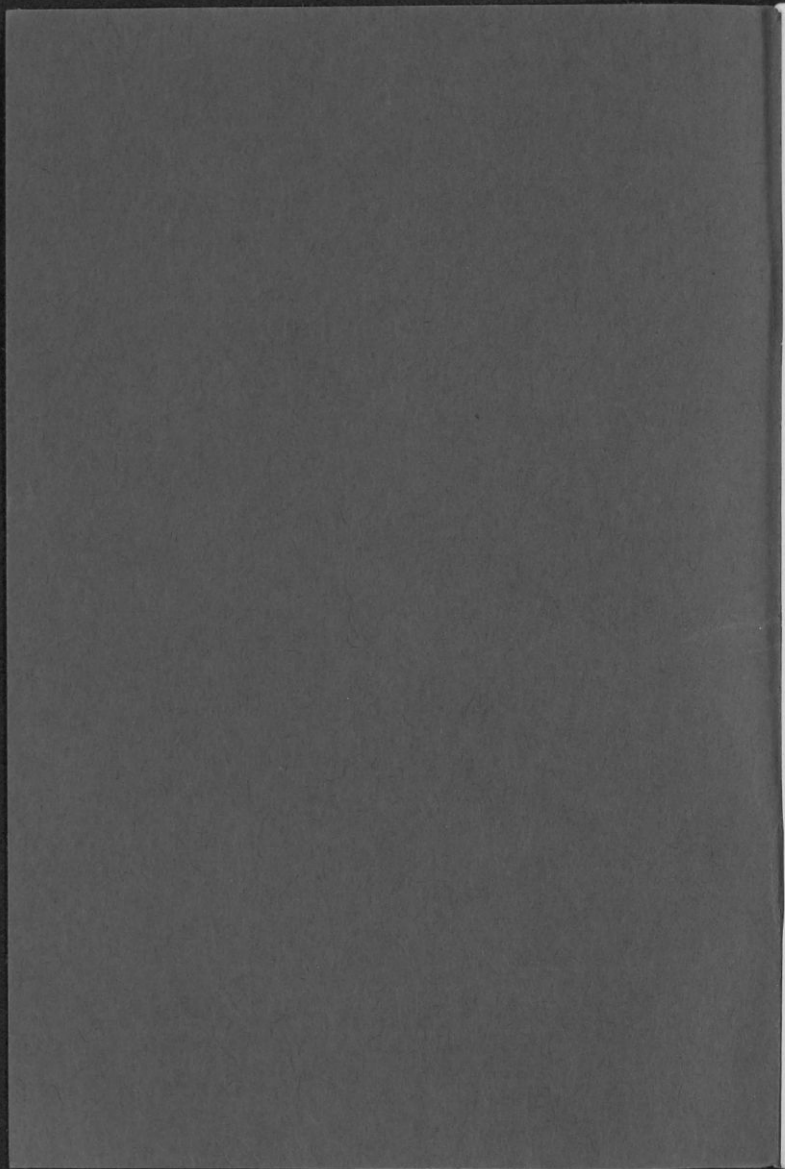
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A GRAIL PUBLICATION

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ST. MEINRAD

INDIANA



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**THE THREE HOURS**  
**of Good Friday**

Adapted for the Use of Sisters  
in their chapels

by

Sister Mary John Berchmans, B. V. M.



Price 15¢

**GRAIL**

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## TRE ORE

- 12:00 NOON Salve Regina  
Beginning of the Passion
- 12:45 P.M. First Twelve Stations
- 1:30 P.M. First, Second, Third, and Fourth  
Words from the Cross
- 2:15 P.M. Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Words  
Thirteenth and Fourteenth Stations  
Apostles' Creed.

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Deacidified



## Foreword

*On the market are many books of devotion for use during the TRE ORE, but I have seen none written for religious. In most large parishes, the devotion of the TRE ORE is held publicly in the Church, and often a book is not needed. However, there are parishes where the devotion is not held publicly, and the Sisters make it privately in their own chapel. In these situations, they may welcome the suggestions for meditation as outlined in these pages. Some may not need a book. However, in many of the hospitals and schools, a variety of outside agencies claim our attention in the line of duty, and little time is left for gathering material for use in preventing distractions. In our schools, especially, Holy Week is next to the busiest week in the year; and some, at least, will be pleased to pick up a small book that has the important steps of the Passion prayerfully strung together in such a way that they may produce a few good thoughts, and possibly a bit of fervor.*

*This brochure is not complete or exhaustive, only suggestive. If it aids anyone in loving Christ, the writer will be happy.*

*Sister Mary John Berchmans, B. V. M.*

*Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas  
March 7, 1948*

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Sister Mary John Bevisman, B.V.M.

Front of St. Thomas Aquinas

March 7, 1912

**"TRE ORE" FOR RELIGIOUS**

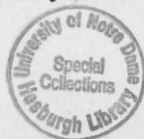
**12:00 NOON**

Come, Holy Ghost, and fill the hearts of Thy faithful; enkindle in them the fire of Thy divine love. Send forth Thy Holy Spirit, and our hearts shall be regenerated; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

O God Who by the light of the Holy Spirit, dost instruct the hearts of Thy faithful, grant that by the light of that same Holy Spirit, we may have a right understanding in all things, a love and relish for what is right and just, and a constant enjoyment of His divine comforts, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

All recite the *Salve Regina*:

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, hail our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve, to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of



mercy toward us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

P. Pray for us O holy mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

#### PRAYER OF OFFERING

Loving God of Heaven and earth, we offer this devotion of the Tre Ore in reparation for our own sins, for all gathered here today, for those who spend three hours with You today, for our families, for our relatives, friends, benefactors, and enemies, to prevent at least one mortal sin today, for very special graces for Our Holy Father, Pius XII, and that the children of the Church may remain faithful in time of persecution.

#### CONSIDERATION

The beginning of the Passion

The second Person of the Blessed Trinity always existed; but when it pleased the Triune God that Christ should come on earth, Mary of Nazareth was asked to be His

mother, and she gave Him a heart that might be broken. At Christmas time, Christ is born to us; at Passion time, Christ dies for us.

During the war, a young soldier, describing a route march in a letter home, wrote:

*"I had got to the stage when I could feel the weariness of the man beside me aching in my bones."*

This is the stage we shall try to attain this afternoon in walking or standing beside the Blessed Christ in His sorrowful and prolonged agony and death on the Cross. Over nineteen hundred years ago my Beloved Spouse gave His life for me on a cross, an infamous gibbet, on Golgotha. On this Good Friday let me remain with Christ for three hours, trying to comfort Him with my compassion and my determination to make reparation. Human nature desires to be remembered, loves to be comforted, to be soothed. Christ is human. Perhaps in the past I have not spent so much time as I should in thinking on the Passion. Now in this Tre Ore, let me make up for past negligences, let me give myself wholly to remaining beside Christ. Let me comfort Him. It is not only saints

who comfort Christ; it is all who know how to love. In the Passion all are drawn together in one act of suffering and love. Reverently and humbly let me approach this abandoned Christ; I beg that He may use me as a support, allowing me to share the vicissitudes, the desolation, the mockeries, the insults, to cling to Him, to suffer with Him.

True, we have come here this afternoon, to offer our sympathy, aye, even our compassion to Christ our Savior as He died on the Cross. On Good Friday, this is not hard . . . perhaps some word we hear or read may arouse our emotions for the time . . . No, it is not hard on Good Friday to suffer with Our Savior, but how long will this frame of mind continue? Is it the same on the fifteenth of August, or in late November? It is well to remind ourselves that we must not only look on the gentle Christ, but we must also look at ourselves, and our neighbors. We have the task of keeping alive in the world the mind and heart of Christ. We have long been taught that Christ hated evil. St. Ignatius thinks of Christ entering His Passion as a King, going into the battle to fight for the

standard of innocence, justice, and love, against the standard of evil.

There has never been anyone who valued life as Christ did. He was the source of all life and He came to give life and to increase it. He was the beauty and splendor and wonder of all the Christian lives that were to come. The price He paid to fight evil was high: the agony in the garden, the betrayal of His friend, the cowardly desertion of many followers, the utter loneliness with which He faced failure and death, the mockery, the night in prison, all . . . none of this was too much for Christ to pay to overcome sin. He suffered it all for sinners, to save them from the death of their souls. During Christ's life, He lived among His friends, but He had an enemy even in His own household. He tried to make His enemies His friends. As He looked at the world from the Cross, and saw the sinners of that day and of our day, He saw them wounded by evil, twisted out of shape, mutilated, too much hurt to be able to put themselves right. His abundant love flowed out to them, begging them to be His friends. So He died.

Our mission here on earth is to keep Chris-

tianity alive; and in the first place, we must ourselves become Christlike, not for Good Friday only but for all the year and all the years. This cannot be done if there is the least compromise with love; if we do not try to cast out fear, in loving acts, if we do not use the energy grief gives us, in loving acts, if we do not imitate Christ literally, we cannot long keep our resolutions when suffering comes.

“Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends.” Sacrifice is not mortification. It is an offering, a GIVING. Christ suffered all that preceded the death on the cross, that He might experience everything we would ever meet, and be an example for mankind; finally, He GAVE His life; it was an offering, a complete sacrifice. All through life, Christ furnishes us with innumerable opportunities and materials for sacrifice, and we prove our oft-repeated love for Him by what we actually *give* to Him. These little gifts with which He supplies us may seem hard at times, and even if we accept them, we regard them as mortifications; but as we make an honest endeavor at working for Christ, and becoming Christ-



like, and working for our neighbor also, these mortifications can become sacrifices or offerings. Every trial and grief and sorrow and tribulation, everything we at first find hard, is sent us that we may decide whether to offer it or not. It is just an opportunity of GIVING or LAYING DOWN something for love of the suffering Christ.

*".... The little words in kindness said  
To a heart that was burned so—  
The flower we left in the withered hand,  
Before we turned to go.  
For we never know in the offing, friend,  
Just how will fall the spray—  
We are only sure that the things we GIVE  
Are the things we may take away."*

The habit of GIVING postulates a deep love; no one can arrive at a perfect love at once. It is attained only after repeated efforts, and sometimes painful ones. In the beginning, perhaps, all we can acquire is a patient submission and resignation that excludes all murmuring. In spite of repugnance, we really will what God wills; through tear-dimmed eyes, we see the Hand of God. We may pray for relief, we may seek help, but we pray "Thy Will be done,"

in imitation of our Master in the Garden of Olives, Who Himself showed a repugnance to the sorrows of His Passion.

Once we are in the proper dispositions, continued faithfulness without faultfinding may bring us another grace: not only do we see the Hand of GOD in our sufferings, but the Hand of our *LOVING FATHER*. Faith and hope convince us that God is acting for our good; we try to thank Him; we love Him, and if we need sympathy, we seek it from Him. To our fellowmen we are silent. No one knows that we are suffering.

*“Lord, the hurt Thou sendest me,  
Help me to bear  
In silence, nor let others guess  
How sad I fare.*

*Help me to keep it just for Thee,  
To clip its wings  
And guard it close within my breast  
Until it sings.”*

Some few chosen souls attain even a greater grace. Those who have intense love, *EMBRACE* the cross, and delight in sharing the Cross of Jesus. It is not the suffering they love but the One Who suffered. Such

souls seek no reasons; if Jesus suffered, that is enough. To desire suffering seems unnatural, but when every other attachment is gone, when every simple tendency of the heart and will is toward the crucified Savior, no created joy can satisfy the human heart. And love must express itself. Such love is best expressed in sympathy for sufferers, working for them in need, in loving kindness and forbearance. St. Andrew embraced his cross, but we may never be put to such an extreme test; however, if any one lovingly greets even the smallest cross which God sends him, he will find that cross very much lightened and will experience a joy that may open to him a new realm of happiness, for he will discover a wonderful sense of fellowship with Jesus in suffering. While we may never attain to this perfect love whereby we embrace the cross, let us always remember that the first step in advancement requires that we eject from our lives all murmuring and criticism.

Yes, this is Good Friday. Last night we saw our loving Savior at the Last Supper, His heart overflowing with love and yearning. There Jesus listened to His apostles

wrangling. Poor ignorant men. Would they ever learn? But He was patient with them, and on the morrow He would show them what He meant by kingship and kingdom; He would show them that kingship meant trial and sacrifice. Yes, Jesus was patient and humored the apostles, yet He was teaching them what they would understand only later. When the supper part of the ritual was over, Jesus looked from face to face, and there read the hearts of those around Him. He saw their virtues and their weaknesses, even those of Judas, and in him He was most crushed. Some writers are of opinion that Judas was the most well-balanced mind among the apostles, and that his defection was the most serious. Suddenly Christ arose and proceeded to wash the feet of the apostles, even those of Judas. Only one in the group had the courage to protest. "And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?'" Jesus heard but did not desist. With all his faults, Simon could not bear separation from his Master, and he submitted with humility.

- During the rest of the time spent in the Upper Room a torrent of thought and love

poured forth from the Heart of Jesus. He had given them His own Body and Blood to eat, He had given them a symbol of the cleansing Sacrament, and He had taught a lesson of mutual charity and service. Jesus, the good and gentle Jesus, was patient and understanding, kind and forgiving. He is still the same Jesus. He is willing to look through failure and weakness and sin, and beyond them; if only there be truth in the heart, He is content to endure and pity and wait and forgive and serve. Cleanness of heart, self-humiliation, charity of service. Which of these is most pleasing to the Heart of Jesus? That heart admits of no distinction. To Him true cleanness of heart is humble; true humility is kind; and true charity is clean.

On this last night of His life on earth, He tells His own, from whom He has a right to expect more than from any other, that the love He asks from them is not love of their enemies, but merely love of one another. "Little children, a new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you." This is that peculiar something that tells all the world just who are His dis-

ciples. Love does not live on words, but is a crystal, true, burning and pure, without a shadow of secrecy or doubt or fear. "Love one another as I have loved you."

How has Christ loved me? One memorable day in the far-off, or perhaps more recently, the loving Master looked around. He wanted someone to do a particular work for Him, someone to be kind to erring souls, someone to serve the sick, someone to teach young souls the way to Heaven and Him, to bear with the forgetfulness of youth, to discipline them and strengthen them against themselves, to show them the way to love and serve Him, to be a bulwark and an example to lay people in time of persecution. He glanced around, and of a sudden His heart so filled with love for a certain soul, and with confidence that that soul would follow His wishes, that He laid a tender, gentle hand on her shoulder and said, "Come." I am that person. I had been longing for the privilege of helping Christ in His quest for souls, and I followed Him gladly. My heart filled to overflowing with love for Him and gratitude for His having chosen me. . . . Time has fled. Perhaps I have not now the enthusiasm and

zeal that I had then. Has my love cooled? Am I growing tired of His service? This is Good Friday. Loving Master, do let me enter into Your sufferings today during these awful three hours. Let me see Your sufferings and Your sorrows; let me be filled again with my early fervor; let me by my compassion, comfort You for my lukewarmness in the past, for the indifference of others, and for the cruel sins that made Your passion so inhuman. Let me follow You today in Your agony and passion; and gain from it the strength I need to carry on in the loving service I signed for, long years ago. My soul, here let me get the strength that Christ purchased for me as a bank account—the bank on which I may draw in every need. *Passio Christi, conforta me.*

After leaving the Upper Room, Christ walked, together with His disciples, across the Brook Cedron and into the Garden of Olives. Just inside the entrance, He asked the apostles to remain. Taking with Him only Peter and James and John, He went further, and then asked them to stay where they were, while He went "Yonder to pray." I shall try to creep up unseen and follow the

Master. I want to be near Him, and He won't mind. If I get really close to Him, will He hear my heartbeats, and be comforted in knowing that every beat of that poor heart is for Him? When things are easy and pleasant, and we have many consolations, and our work apparently succeeds, when everyone is kind and loving to us, we know that Jesus loves us; but when things are hard and dark, when our every effort seems failure, and we go on just the same, doing our duty, then it is that WE LOVE JESUS.

O my Savior, how You are suffering on this eve of Your passion! I see the weight of my sins crushing Your heart, so that You fall to the ground, weak and broken. "My soul is sorrowful even unto death!" Red drops ooze from His body. Tears of blood fall from His eyes. Blood on His lips. Blood on His hands. A bloody sweat from His whole body. Silently and gently I wipe the Sacred Face with my kerchief, hoping that, in some mysterious way, the image of Christ crucified may be seared forever on my poor weak heart. Christ hated evil, but Christ loved us, and this battle was the greatest torture that a human heart has been asked to



suffer. The God-Man suffered this torture.

The Savior alone in the wilderness of desolation, crushed to earth, abandoned by His Father, the Savior on this night in the garden looks back and ponders: many good deeds I have done ye, and for this do ye kill Me? The lame, the blind, the crippled, these I healed. And here is the return made to Me. I am alone, crushed under your crimes and sins and corruptions. Mental sorrow, to a sensitive, generous, noble nature is far greater than any physical disability, and mental suffering in the extreme was Christ's lot. His intellect suffered from our sins of thought; His heart suffered from our lack of love; His body suffered from the cruel tortures inflicted on Him.

Dear Jesus, I offer You my intellect: fill it with Your light, fill it with Your certitude. Strengthen my will. Dear Jesus, I offer You my heart with all its miseries and weaknesses and shortcomings, its aspirations and its longings for You. I offer You my heart with its beatings and its power to love, that You may fill me with devotion, sacrifice, pure, holy, uplifting friendship, a noble and sacred love modeled on Your love, O Jesus. Let me

immolate myself for the little ones, for the weak, for the suffering. I give You my slothful body which dreads suffering, that it may be transfigured, that it may become a consecrated tabernacle for You. O Jesus, covered with a bloody sweat for me, give me strength not to sleep when You are suffering, to unite my prayer and my offering to Yours, and not to let You enter alone upon Your agony.

Here in Gethsemane, Christ sees our world of now, and fears with our fear, and the Angel who brings Him the chalice brings all that any of us will do to comfort Him.

Judas left his Master during the Last Supper, and under the guidance of this traitor, a multitude of soldiers and servants, collected by the chief priests and Pharisees, comes to the garden about the midnight hour. Jesus allows Himself to be arrested by this wild, cruel mob, to be tied and pushed and jostled. The arrest, the brutal treatment from the garden to the court, the hateful and scornful gaze of the priests, the soldiers and the servants, the curious crowd, all torture His soul one after the other. The gentle Savior is tried before the Ecclesiastical Court, appearing before Annas, who sends

Him to Caiphas, the High Priest. During the mock trial, Peter's triple denial of Jesus takes place. The Savior is insulted and mocked. Here He is unjustly condemned for blasphemy, but since this Court of the Sanhedrin is not impowered to execute the death penalty, Jesus is sent to Pilate, who alone has the power to inflict it.

What ignominious treatment here at the house of Pilate! After asking a few questions, Pilate is convinced that Jesus is innocent; yet, he fears the mob of Jews. He is about to release Jesus when he hears that Jesus is from Galilee. That furnishes him with a way of getting out of trouble. Pilate sends Jesus to the court of Herod and thinks himself through with the matter.

No other scene of our dear Lord's passion is so vivid with contrasts, so powerful to rock the soul and banish selfishness forever from our lives, as that meeting between Jesus and Herod. The Jewish monarch sits on his throne, pleased with himself, because the Roman governor Pilate has deigned to notice him by sending Jesus to him for a quiz. Perhaps he will give this sick, weary man pro-

longed life; the bloated face, the flabby figure, the weary body, show that dissipation is wrecking what remains of the man. Herod looks to the gentle Savior for at least a distraction, some entertainment; possibly a miracle will be worked to amuse the court. Here Jesus stands meekly in utter abasement, so lovable, so beautiful, so human. But Jesus is silent. Am I silent when suffering from false accusations? Perhaps I must admit that I don't even keep my own rule of silence to which I bound myself on the day of my profession. Am I silent when I think I have been insulted, when I am contradicted? Do I close the door of my mind to disturbing thoughts? Do I bar distractions that I may commune with my heavenly Father?

Herod is utterly disgusted at Christ's silence, and he has Him returned to the court of Pilate in the white robe of a fool. There that weak magistrate is quite concerned. He hovers between the knowledge and conviction of Christ's innocence and the fear of what may come upon himself if he does not follow the petitions of the Jews that Jesus be slain. Three times he has declared Jesus innocent. Accepting an impulse of grace, Pilate asks

Jesus, "What is truth?" But, refusing to listen to the answer, he rejects this grace, and he commits another of his many acts of cowardice. He can stand ridicule, he can control a riot among the people, but he has not the courage even to think of displeasing the emperor, Caesar. He knows Christ has not committed the crimes imputed to Him. He even considers Christ a good man; yet, the crowds are calling for His condemnation. After all, Christ is only one man, and Pilate cannot quite risk his own welfare. Ah, now he strikes upon a second compromise: he will have Jesus scourged, for he is sure that the sight of a bleeding man will touch the hearts of the Jews, and that they will be satisfied not to have Him put to death. "I have found no guilt in this man. . . . I will therefore chastise Him and release Him."

Oh, what a satanic joy these brutes take in torturing a victim Who remains silent, and gives Himself up to their power, in venting their rage on a delicate man Whose whole being shudders with pain at each cutting blow, administered by laughing monsters! Under the lash of thongs loaded with leaden balls, the flesh is ridged with long violet and

brown welts, which soon burst and become intersecting red furrows; soon pieces of flesh hang suspended or are torn off and washed away in a stream of splashing blood; the muscles stand out, and the ribs are laid bare; the nerves twist and contract under the terrible pain. The soldiers tire and replace one another in relays; the blows continue. At last the poor victim Whose body is a mass of wounds from head to foot, collapses, prostrate in His own blood. Someone pushes Him to His feet, and they drag Him back to Pilate. Even this governor is moved with pity, and as he shows Him to the people, he must tell them that this is Jesus: "Behold the Man." A shudder of astonishment sweeps over the people, but the leaders, like animals at the first sight of blood, urge the crowds on and yell, "Crucify Him." Poor, weak Pilate, unable to withstand that surge of anger, hands Him over to the Jews to be crucified. Pilate fears not God but men, and he fears that he may have to forfeit his standing in society. Because of human respect, Jesus is sacrificed. "Take Him you and crucify Him."

*This or a similar hymn may be sung at this time.*

*Jesus, on the cross suspended,  
Pierced with nails and crowned with thorns,  
Thou hast died for us poor sinners  
Who have oft offended Thee.  
Filled with shame and dread confusion,  
We behold Thy sacred wounds;  
Filled with sorrow we implore Thee  
To forgive us ere we go.*

*O Jesus, full of love,  
Do pardon us, we pray Thee.*

*Mother Mary, crushed with sorrow  
As thou stoodst beneath the cross,  
Looking up at thy Son Jesus,  
Watching every move He makes,  
Who can tell the pain and anguish  
That asunder tore thy heart  
When thy loving Child, the Savior,  
Closed His eyes in wicked death!*

*O Mary, full of love,  
Do mother us, we pray thee.*

**Here—Intermission for Reflection**



12:45

“Take Him you and crucify Him.”

“And bearing the cross for Himself, He went forth to the place called Golgotha . . . where they crucified Him.”

Like all others to be crucified, the Savior has to carry His cross to the place of execution. It is made of rough wood and weighs more than 200 pounds. Now I'll try to make myself small enough to follow my suffering Redeemer without being noticed by the soldiers.

All Recite *An Act Of Contrition*

#### FIRST STATION

Jesus Is Condemned to Death

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

(*Standing*) I see the gentle Jesus accept an unjust sentence, but not unjust if I remember that He is suffering for my sins; He is taking on Himself the weight of my guilt. Can I



condemn Pilate? Do I not often do the same?  
Have I the moral courage to fight distractions  
during Mass, to accept cheerfully the little  
inevitable crosses that meet me every day, to  
perform at least one mortification daily?

*(Kneeling)* O Jesus, weighed with Your  
cross, teach me to go to You for strength  
each time I find things hard. Teach me to  
deepen my love for You by accepting what  
comes to me, by finding no fault with others,  
and remembering that I, myself, am not per-  
fect.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,  
R. Have mercy on us.

At the cross, her station keeping,  
Stood the mournful mother weeping,  
Close to Jesus to the last.

Stabat Mater dolorosa  
Juxta crucem lacrymosa  
Dum pendebat filius.

## SECOND STATION

### Jesus Carries His Cross

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.  
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed  
the world.

(*Standing*) Jesus carries the heavy cross on the shoulders already torn by the scourges, the cross which causes acute pain during the entire journey of almost a mile. The road is rough and uneven, up hill and down, requiring continuous effort. Weary, hungry, aching, He makes the most tortuous journey known to history.

(*Kneeling*) Beloved Jesus, You have made of the cross a symbol of sacrifice; it gives to all my crosses a hidden value that will sustain me when they grow heavy. Teach me to recognize Your love in all my trials, no matter how great the disguise.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,

R. Have mercy on us.

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

Cujus animam gementem  
Contristatam, et dolentem  
Pertransivit gladius.

### THIRD STATION

#### Jesus Falls the First Time

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

*(Standing)* Jesus falls under the cross to give an example to the hurt, the wounded, and the weak. He wants to let me know that crosses will come to those He loves, that I must despise no one who falls under a cross, and that I must be patient with myself.

*(Kneeling)* O Jesus, Your knowing the agony of exhaustion brings You very close to me. Grant that I may remember to offer frequent sacrifices with a view to comforting You in Your distress.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,

R. Have mercy on us.

O how sad and sore distressed  
Was that Mother ever blessed  
Of the Sole-begotten One!

O quam tristis et afflicta  
Fuit illa benedicta  
Mater Unigeniti!

## FOURTH STATION

### Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

*(Standing)* Our blessed Lady, with St. John, went to meet Jesus at the winding of a street. The eyes of Jesus meet the eyes of Mary. In both, love for each other, balanced by their love for mankind, encouraged and consummated the sacrifice. He will not shut His eyes to His mother, will not spare His heart from her. He will not send her away; she meets Him only to go with Him, to be with Him to the very end.

*(Kneeling)* O my loving Jesus, teach me to bear responsibility without flinching. When I am worried about my dear ones, when I long for them, let me remember Your meeting with Your Lady Mother.

Pater Ave Gloria

How she stood in desolation,

Gazing at the desecration

Of her dying glorious Son.

Quae mœrebat et dolebat

Pia Mater, dum videbat

Nati poenas inlyti.

## FIFTH STATION

### Simon Helps Jesus to Carry the Cross

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

*(Standing)* Fearing that Jesus may succumb before reaching the top of Calvary, the soldiers force Simon of Cyrene to help Jesus carry His cross. Must I be forced to help Jesus? A tiresome companion, or one who wants too much attention, one who makes endless demands on my sympathy or assistance, may be a cross. I must remember that it is HIS cross.

*(Kneeling)* My merciful Savior, You know my limitations; let me not miss Your cross through selfish blindness. Let me gladly help others, knowing that I am helping You.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,

R. Have mercy on us.

Who could mark, with tears refraining,  
Christ's dear mother uncomplaining  
In so great a sorrow bowed?

Quis est homo qui non fleret  
Matrem Christi si videret  
In tanto supplicio?

## SIXTH STATION

### Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

*(Standing)* Breaking through the crowd, representative of the more generous lovers of Jesus, Veronica brings a simple unfolded towel to wipe the blood and dirt and spittle from Christ's sacred face. On the towel He leaves the image of His lovely countenance.

*(Kneeling)* My Jesus, I see how you love to reward every slightest thought of others. Make me so impressed by Your holiness and beauty that creatures may never draw me from You.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,

R. Have mercy on us.

Who unmoved behold her languish  
Underneath His cross of anguish  
'Mid the fierce unpitying crowd?

Quis non posset contristari  
Christi Matrem contemplari  
Dolentem cum Filio?

## SEVENTH STATION

### Jesus Falls the Second Time

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

*(Standing)* Again Jesus falls and the cross well-nigh crushes Him. Knowing our human frailty, He provides courage and strength and grace for souls, who find themselves constantly in need of beginning again.

*(Kneeling)* O Jesus, I thank You for this second fall. Repeated falls and beginning again are characteristic of my life. Make me patient with myself and always desirous of doing better. Give me grace to renew my resolutions every day.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,

R. Have mercy on us.

For His people's sins rejected  
She, her Jesus unprotected  
Saw with thorns, with scourges rent.

Pro peccatis suae gentis  
Vidit Jesum in tormentis  
Et flagellis subditum

## EIGHTH STATION

### Jesus Consoles the Women of Jerusalem

- P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.  
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

*(Standing)* Some few who believe in Christ crowd up to the road that they may get a sight of Him through their tears; but He warns them that their weeping should not be over crucifixes of ivory, but over other human beings who have to carry their own crosses.

*(Kneeling)* Master, teach me to weigh all things in the scales of salvation. Make me ready to purchase at the price of sacrifice the needs of my companions. Make me utterly unselfish.

Pater Ave Gloria

- P. Jesus Christ crucified,  
R. Have mercy on us.

Saw her Son from judgment taken  
Her Beloved in death forsaken  
Till His spirit forth He sent.

Videt suum dolcem natum  
Moriendo desolatum  
Dum emisit spiritum.



## NINTH STATION

### Jesus Falls under the Weight of the Cross the Third Time

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed  
the world.

*(Standing)* In utter weariness, Christ, completely exhausted, falls back to earth a third time, to warn me that I must continually beg grace for whatever lies ahead. I must never get the habit of trusting entirely in myself.

*(Kneeling)* Weary Jesus, somewhere along the road of life, there may still be for me a last disappointment, one more failure, bodily or moral weariness. The road may be narrow, my feet may be bleeding, I may be gasping; Oh, then have mercy on me. Give me courage and make me go forward when I would halt.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,

R. Have mercy on us.

Fount of love and holy sorrow,  
Mother, may my spirit borrow  
Somewhat of thy woe profound.

Eia Mater, fons amoris  
Me sentire vim doloris  
Fac, ut te cum lugeam.

## TENTH STATION

### Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed  
the world.

*(Standing)* The robe which adheres to Jesus' wounds is rudely torn off. The poor body is covered with red furrows, open in some places to the bone.

*(Kneeling)* My unsullied Jesus, when death strips me of all things, let my soul appear before You clothed in a mantle of Your Precious Blood.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,

R. Have mercy on us.

Unto Christ with pure emotion  
Raise my contrite heart's devotion,  
Love to read in every wound.

Fac ut ardeat cor meum  
In amando Christum Deum  
Ut sibi complaceam.

## ELEVENTH STATION

### Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

- P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.  
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed  
the world.

*(Standing)* It has come: they have nailed Him to a cross, each nail confirmed by man's ingratitude down the ages.

*(Kneeling)* Sweet Jesus, let me be gracious when I meet ingratitude; let me be patient with all men, even with myself, and let me cling close to You with confidence. Never let me forget that by my vows I am willingly nailed to the cross of Your service; let every moment of my life be a renewal of these VOWS.

Pater Ave Gloria

- P. Jesus Christ crucified,  
R. Have mercy on us.

Those five wounds on Jesus smitten,  
Mother, in my heart be written  
Deep as in thine own they be.

Sancta Mater, istud agas;  
Crucifixi fige plagas  
Cordi meo valide.

TWELFTH STATION  
Jesus Dies on the Cross

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.  
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed  
the world.

*(Standing)* Here the hatred of men and the love of Jesus reach flood-tide, the sacred wounds pleading for us. The nails are fast, the blood flows afresh, every movement increases the torture. The cross is raised and put in place and the blessed Jesus is left there to shed the rest of His life-blood for the souls He loves.

*(Kneeling)* O Jesus, I can say no more. No words can tell You how my heart aches for You. I am ashamed; I am grieved. Help me to love You; speak to me.

Mine with thee be that sad station  
There to watch the great salvation  
Wrought upon the atoning tree.

Juxta crucem tecum stare  
Et me tibi sociare  
In planctu desidero.

*Intermission for Reflection*



1:30 P.M.

**FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH  
WORDS FROM THE CROSS**

Yes, Jesus is nailed to the cross and raised on it, while His enemies watch Him dying. To Cicero, the crucifixion of a Roman citizen was such an unspeakable atrocity that he frankly confessed himself unable to characterize it adequately. What would he have said of the crucifixion of GOD for the salvation of men, the death of Jesus which is our life! Because of that vivifying death, the cross, so abhorrent to Cicero and civilized ancients, has become the symbol dearest to the Christian heart. What is the meaning of the cross of Jesus Christ to me? We can catch only a glimmer of the truth; as we look in tears of bitterness and joy, the light grows upon us; only those who draw near, and place their hearts beneath the dripping blood, and pierce their hands and heads with the nails and thorns, and let the world close round them in blackness and night, even the night

of death, can hope to come to that perfect understanding which is the glory of the Lord and the perfect joy of earth as well as Heaven. Jesus Christ the beginning and the end! Let us now draw near, away from all else, so near that we may hear our Redeemer speak.

The words we hear from Christ's lips form the song of the cradle and the cross; always it is for others. Christ is alone; crowds are around Him but they do not recognize Him; they pass by. As God hangs nailed to a cross the angels are stupified with amazement at the sight of their Lord in torments. All nature demands justice and vengeance of the Heavenly Father. At a deathbed we share the sufferings with the victim, but who may share Christ's sorrow? We would punish those who have wounded Him; we resent His death. But the Victim is not so minded. What are the first words He speaks?

**"FATHER FORGIVE THEM FOR THEY KNOW NOT  
WHAT THEY DO"**

Jesus had been accused of being the friend of sinners; the title on the cross acknowledges Him to be a King. Throughout His

teachings He had emphasized His constant forgiveness. Pilate crucified Him for trying to be a King; His own people, because He claimed to be the Son of God. He had offered these men His kingdom and they refused it; light, and they had preferred darkness; Himself and they crucified Him. He had preached forgiveness as no one else; He had taught forgiveness without limit. Now He gives us a supreme example, asking His Heavenly Father to forgive His enemies, even looking around for an excuse, "for they know not what they do."

No, they do not know what they do. He excuses them because of their ignorance. They do not know *fully* how grievously they are sinning. With some, it is the blindness of indifference; others, selfishness and pride; but LOVE uses it as a plea for mercy. The excess of His pain extorts nothing but this precious prayer, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

No, they do not know what they do; nor do we know what we do today. When we realize how Jesus has loved us, when we know what He asks of us, why do we fail Him so often? Christ said, "Love one an-

other as I have loved you." Then we must forgive as He forgives. What fools we are! For some slight injury we are up in arms, for a spiteful act or even a cutting word. Yes, sometimes the wound is very deep, and we feel we can never forgive; the wrong is too cruel, the injury too great. Remember we *profess* to be followers of Christ. He forgives us; shall we not forgive others? Why do we so often seem to want to break the law that binds us to Him? Why are we so vindictive when some one seems to wrong us? Why do right-minded people, even apparently holy people, so often hurt others? Looking up into the sad face of Christ, surely resentment for wrongs must fade into definite forgiveness, and the supposition that possibly they do not know they are hurting us. At any rate, we can ask God to forgive us if we have hurt others.

Standing there in the eerie silence, we notice that it grows dark, although so shortly after noon; soon darkness covers the earth. "And they crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right hand and one on His left." "And they who were crucified with Him reproached Him." The two thieves were what



we would expect them to be: Vile, vicious, resentful of their fate. Both were suffering for their crimes; we have already considered the dreadful torment of crucifixion. Suddenly grace comes to one of the thieves, and he dares to accept the grace; he dares to try to stop his companion from reviling the good and gentle Jesus. There, in public, before Christ's enemies, he dares to vindicate Him, and to offer to be friends. "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom." And Jesus answered

**"THIS DAY THOU SHALT BE WITH ME IN  
PARADISE"**

Yes, as Monsignor Sheen says, "The thief remained a thief to the end, for he stole Heaven."

Suffering makes or breaks our personality. It comes to all, a potent curative, or a potent poison. Inevitable—when accepted it is a bundle of myrrh in our bosom; when angrily rejected, it is a nettle, stinging our soul to frenzy, with an aftermath of supine dejection. Shared resignedly with Christ, as did the good thief, it brings the company and peace of Christ. Wrongly borne, it isolates

the soul from God and estranges us from our fellowmen in bitterness and resentment. Great love is had only by those who suffer greatly. Love collected from bitter suffering is sweet to the soul and free from selfishness. Let us offer our heart to the Master, and if He passes it through the winepress of suffering in His own way, He will bestow upon us, too, the mark of His dearest love. In all trials, let us have the courage to say, "Lord, remember me." He will always answer.

After Jesus has spoken to the good thief, the darkness continues, but gradually as the crowds diminish, the few faithful ones draw near to the cross, hoping they may not be noticed by the soldiers. Mary takes a step forward, John ever by her side. With an intense effort the gentle Christ endeavors to peer through the clotting blood on His eyelids, and behold with tenderest affection the lovely Mother Mary. The sight of her sorrow is a new grief to His Sacred Heart. He is dying and His own mother cannot console or embrace Him. John, too is overwhelmed with sorrow. The silence is again broken. Jesus speaks to His mother:

**"WOMAN BEHOLD THY SON."**

After that He said to the disciple:

**"BEHOLD THY MOTHER."**

Has generosity such as this ever been met elsewhere? Our standards can never measure what Christ does in these two addresses. Christ had nothing material during His lifetime; He wrote nothing with His pen; He shared the work of preaching with His disciples, and eventually left the whole of that ministry to them; the one zenith He determined to reserve to Himself was suffering. Looking at His work as it appears today, He is a failure; Palm Sunday has turned to Good Friday; His friends have disappeared . . . . but He still has His mother. That the prophecy may be fulfilled, He even gives her up. Mother, I am no longer your son. . . . I am an outcast. . . . relinquish me . . . . help me in my work . . . . take the souls of mankind for your children. Be a mother to all of my creation. Woman behold thy son, thy children, all the children of Eve. To John and to us: Behold thy mother. Accept My mother to care for you. The purest creature ever made I chose for my mother, and now I give her to you. Go to her for all you wish. I can

refuse her nothing. She is my mother. Have her teach you how to love Me. Have her shield you from harm. Learn from her the way to Heaven. Behold My mother, she is yours.

Yes, Mary, the Mother of Christ, stands by the cross on Calvary, and theologians call her the Co-Redemptrix; Mary has long known what the end would be for her divine Son; she has no delusions like the Apostles, concerning "the kingdom." The grace that fills her soul gives her a capacity for suffering that we cannot understand. Only a mother can know the sufferings of a mother, only a lover can know a lover's anguish, and only the Mother of God, herself, can know much of the sufferings that racked the Heart of Christ. She knows the horror of sin; she knows what agony men are causing her Son; she knows what a loss men are sustaining themselves. Mary is our mother because she is the Mother of Christ; Mary is our mother because of her special association with the work of redemption; Mary is our mother because the dying Christ solemnly proclaims it from the cross. Thus, in the third word from the cross, this unselfish Savior not only an-

nounces the dignity of Mary, but gives her a function to be exercised continually in the future. Calvary is only the starting point. The mystery runs through the whole of history and the whole of the spiritual life. The mystery was foreshadowed even when Mary gave herself up to be the handmaid of the Lord at the age of 15; and again at Cana, when Our Lady herself said, "Whatever He shall say to you, do ye." Then at the foot of the cross, she abdicated her maternal rights over her Son, so that it might be said by Pope Benedict XV "She with Christ redeemed mankind." And today, no grace comes to us without her co-operation. St. Bernard says "God wills us to obtain all through Mary." Thus what deep significance, even a life-long study, do we find in the words of Christ; "Woman behold thy son ... Behold thy mother."

It is nearing three o'clock, the ninth hour. The end is drawing near. Those who know the signs of death have no doubt of it. Though the two by His side may linger on, for Him the loss of blood since the agony of Gethsemane, the fasting since the evening before, the unrest of that night, the torture

of that day, the tearing of the body at the scourging, the abuse and mauling by the mob, have utterly exhausted His strength, and death cannot be far off. He has besought pardon for sinners, has given the good thief a pass to Paradise, has chosen Mary His mother for our mother, and now He begins to feel in the interior of His soul the greatest pains and afflictions, even the agony and pangs of death. Reflection on the ingratitude of men takes strong possession of His mind. He sees the crimes of the wicked and the indifference of the good; the little desire of advancement in religious, and the folly of those who love power; the small profit mankind will get from His passion; the sorrows of His blessed mother. Added to this are His own pains and torments. Praying to His Heavenly Father, foreseeing that His death will be of no avail for many, He enters into great torments and agony, seeing that He is suffering so many torments in body and soul without the least consolation, and He cries out bitterly:

**"MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU  
FORSAKEN ME?"**

Union with God's will is a flower most

fragrant when it is crushed. Christ's love of His Father's Will and Christ's love of His fellowmen would be but half known had it not suffered without measure, even to abandonment. The seed of abundant harvest is sown in the furrowed heart. "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" This is an act of faith, something we do not understand and cannot probe. But from it we can learn that He did experience the feeling of despair, that he did reach the depths of misery, humiliation, fear and sorrow; that He really did suffer all that we can suffer. He was as human as we; His love had to empty Him out to the last dreg of life—and in that moment He professes aloud and confesses to the Godhead of His Father, "My God." When we despair, let us in our misery proclaim the Being of God. Grant that we may never forget this fourth word on the cross. We are human, we are often afraid, depressed, lonely, deserted, unjustly accused, even by those who have reason to trust us. When snubbed by those whom we have helped, when misunderstood, when we must give pain where we love, when we are shamed by our sins, when all that we attempt

for Christ fails, we are one with Him. If I am one with Christ, I must experience the loss of the sense of God. I shall at times feel abandoned. But thank God I have faith. I can only pledge my love and make of my promise nails to hold me when there is nothing else.

In the Garden, although He had identified Himself with the sinner, Jesus could still say, "My FATHER. . . ." Now He is permitted to endure the sense of separation from the Father. It is no longer "My Father," but "My God." Now He knows by experience ALL that man endures, that dark night of the soul, which few souls of prayer escape, but which is known at its worst by souls who have come to closest union with Him. Oh my soul, melt with tears and sorrow. Never abuse His mercy. Abandon me not, O Jesus.

*The Lord ruleth me.*

*He hath set me in a place of pasture.*

*In pastures green?*

*Not always; sometimes He*

*Who knoweth best, in kindness leadeth me*

*In weary ways, where heavy shadows be;*

*Out of the sunshine warm, and soft and  
bright,*

*Out of the sunshine, into the darkest night.*



*I oft would faint with sorrow and affright,  
Only for this—I know He holds my hand.*

*So whether in a green or desert land,  
I trust Him, though I do not understand.*

*This or a similar hymn may be sung:*

*Oh, come and mourn with me a while,  
See Mary calls us to her side;  
Oh, come and let us mourn with her,*

*Jesus, our Love, is crucified.  
Have we no tears to shed for Him,  
While soldiers scoff and Jews deride?  
Ah, look how patiently He hangs—  
Jesus, our Love, is crucified.*

*Come, take thy stand beneath the cross,  
And let the blood from out that side  
Fall gently on thee, drop by drop,  
Jesus, our Love, is crucified.*

**Intermission For Reflection.**



2:15 P.M.

**FIFTH, SIXTH AND SEVENTH WORDS FROM  
THE CROSS**

— Slowly the moments drag. Silence. Darkness. Quiet grief. Surely there is nothing more for the gentle Christ to suffer. We know that He was human; He often suffered from the needs of the body. We read that He was hungry, so hungry that Satan thought to take advantage of His weakness. He was weary at the well by the roadside; as He sat there He asked a woman to give Him a drink. In Capharnaum the people had so thronged around Him that He had been unable to take His meals. He had slept in a boat. For some He turned water into wine; for others He had multiplied bread so that they might eat; but for Himself, He was content to ask a passer-by "Give me to drink." Now Jesus has had nothing to drink since the night before. He has lost much blood and sweat, which robs His body of its strength-giving salt. Thirst has always been considered one

of the most acute sufferings of crucifixion; many have died of thirst. Christ's lips are parched, His tongue black, His throat and palate dry and burning. And in an agony of torture, He cries out,

**"I THIRST!"**

He asks for nothing. He simply mentions His thirst to let us know that this is one of His additional sufferings.

However, do not think that bodily thirst is the only thirst He suffers. Great is the thirst of the Sacred Heart for souls, thirst for the salvation and redemption of men. He thirsts to obey His Father. He thirsts to suffer for love of us. Even this far removed, we can allay that thirst somewhat. We can pray for sinners, we can pray for those who persecute the Church, we can help others with their salvation; we, ourselves, can strive after perfection. Personal sanctity will comfort the Savior. Let us be apostles of good example at least. We can keep the Commandments, be fervent at our spiritual exercises, refuse to say an unkind word either to or of another. Conquering ourselves in this way cannot fail to appease the thirst of Jesus.

It may be our lot to teach in the Church's schools,—at once a privilege and a responsibility. God grant that we may do it as He desires. It is possible that we may be carried away with the endeavor that our bright pupils may win prizes, get high marks, make an impression on visiting inspectors, while that poor little slow girl in the corner, of whom there is nothing noticeable but her calico dress, may be hungering for a Christ-like word from our lips. She won't make much of a showing, but speaking an encouraging word to her will appease the thirst of Christ.

Religious teachers are called upon especially to assuage the thirst of Christ, His thirst for souls. To this end they should have the constant consciousness of their sublime mission, and the faithful fulfillment of their duties. Ours is not a dull drudgery or a mechanical process; we derive unceasing inspiration from the thought that we enjoy this precious privilege of guiding and fostering the development of free, righteous, God-like personalities and of fashioning immortal souls in truth, justice, loyalty and love. We envy the teacher who first introduces a child

to the knowledge of God, and the teacher who prepares a child for his First Holy Communion. No more sublime vocation can be imagined. But all of us are allowed to concur in this supreme mission of satisfying the thirst of Christ on the cross, by guiding the minds, hearts and consciences of our youth, making them citadels of truth, shrines of piety, agencies of justice and charity, and preparing citizens for Heaven. It may be our lot to work among the sick, and there in each painful cry for water, we may behold the Person of Christ calling to us.

*Lord grant that the greater harvest  
Which we came on earth to save,  
May be golden and ripe for the reaping  
Ere we go to our lonely grave;  
That our souls in the last dread autumn,  
May be clean as the hill and lea,  
When we bring life's grain to the haggard  
And offer it all to Thee.*

For three hours, Jesus, the eternal God, has hung on the cross in torture, His limbs trembling, His body afire with wounds. Three hours the Mother has stood there, her heart bleeding. The end draws near. During all this time Christ's body has been dragging and widening the wounds until it seems as if

the hands must give way and the body will be torn from the nails. The breathing becomes more labored. The little channels of trickling blood are getting darker and drier. The sacred head drops lower on the breast. The Savior is dying. Suddenly the head lifts and Christ speaks.

**"IT IS CONSUMMATED."**

It is the expression of the joy of love. The sacrifice is perfect, the work is completed, the seed has been sown. Christ is consumed in His love. What was this work? this life of Christ on earth? Some happy years, childhood, and the voice and touch and smell of the mother, her warmth and laughter and gentleness. Some years of work in obscurity. Then the fasting and temptation, the public life, the life without rest, always the crowd, always the critics, always some one to find fault. And the healing, giving light to the blind, cleansing lepers, comforting the poor—and all of it ending in what? The cross; the work a failure; all the gentleness, poetry and beauty of it ending in violence, brutality and death. Or is it ending?

"It is consummated." Peer a bit farther.

That is not failure. That is success. The gentleness, the humility, the courage, the generosity, all are consummated, perfect, complete, and all are offered and accepted in sacrifice. We, too, must be consummated. His love in us, given to us to save the world, —this must come, too, to its fullness, and love will overcome all things through the forgiveness, the longing, the courtesy, the bigness, the faith, and the wholeness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Give us this grace, noble Lord, to consummate Your love in every single thought and act, to bring the fullness of Your love to consume everything else we do. My crucified Lord Jesus Christ, in Your immense love, shower many copious graces on all those gathered here today at the foot of the cross.

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water from the side of Christ, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me.

Within Thy wounds hide me.

From the wicked enemy defend me.

At the hour of my death call me and bid me come to Thee

That with Thy saints and angels I may  
praise Thee for all eternity. Amen.

Jesus has but to die. As man He is exhausted by suffering, and the words He speaks from the cross are scarcely audible. But now He utters a loud cry, which is heard at a great distance, and fills the centurion, who commands the guard, with fear and astonishment.

**"FATHER INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND  
MY SPIRIT."**

At the same moment the veil of the temple is rent in two, the earth quakes, and rocks are rent. Christ's head drops on His breast; His heart is still. His soul is with the Father. All nature cries out in horror. Fear fills the guards and then the centurion, enlightened by grace, glorifies God and confesses the innocence and divinity of Jesus.

My suffering Jesus, mercifully accept the prayer which I now make to You for help in the moment of my death, when all my senses shall fail me.

When, therefore, O sweetest Jesus, my weary and downcast eyes can no longer look up to You, be mindful of the loving gaze



which now I turn on You, and have mercy on me.

When my parched lips can no longer kiss Your most sacred wounds, remember these kisses which now I imprint on You, and have mercy on me.

When my cold hands can no longer embrace Your cross, forget not the affection with which I embrace it now, and have mercy on me.

And when at length my swollen and lifeless tongue can no longer speak, remember that I called upon You now.

We must note that Christ begins and ends His agony on the cross with the word, "Father." "Father forgive them." "Father, into Thy hands. . . ." God is our Father, and He loves us with a Father's love, all of us. We all grieve our Father; we all need His forgiveness. Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. A renowned scholar writes that in the original Hebrew the words are: "Father in Thy hands I bury my head." Perfect trust; He is going to die; this is complete surrender; this is the adoring Son, literally putting Himself into His Father's hands. "Under us are the eternal arms." Ours, too,

is the spirit of Christ, literally; and now in a world as dark, as confusing, as strange as the hour of death how shall we keep the integrity, the sweetness, the tenderness of the spirit of Christ, our trust?

We are with Him on the cross, helpless in every way, bound to go through with our passion, bound to face it with His love. But we have His love. Who, however, shall keep it for us, what flame keep it bright, burning in this cruel storm, what wind give it shade? Who is there gentle enough to keep its delicacy for us, who strong enough to defend its valor, who noble enough to keep its chivalry? Our trust, the spirit of Christ, in all that assails us? Our heavenly Father, alone, can keep it; in His hands it is safe, strong to forgive, to heal, to purify, to love. The power of the love of Our Lord! "Father into Thy hands I commend my spirit."



**JESUS HAS DIED.**

**WE RESUME THE WAY OF THE CROSS**

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,

R. Have mercy on us.

Virgin thou, of virgins fairest  
May the bitter woe thou sharest  
Make on me impression deep.

Virgo virginum praeclara  
Mihi jam non sis amara  
Fac me tecum plangere.

**THIRTEENTH STATION**

**The Body of Jesus Is Taken from the Cross.**

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed  
the world.

*(Standing)* Here we see our Lady with her  
Son in her arms. His work is finished and  
His passion ended. What the executioners  
have left of Him now belongs to His mother.  
Once she uttered her fiat in giving herself to  
Him; now she utters her fiat in giving Him  
to the Church. This is the end of the cross.

(*Kneeling*) Oh, my Jesus, I must linger here, though the whole world has stolen away, out of the black shadow of the cross. In Your broken heart, and in the drying blood of Your wounds, in the arms of the mother that bore You, You are being born again—to the Church. And I am a member of that Church. Thanks to You, Lord, for this mercy, and for the mother who holds both of us in her arms.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,

R. Have mercy on us.

When in death my limbs are failing  
Let Thy mother's prayer prevailing  
Lift me, Jesus, to Thy throne.

Christi cum sit hinc exire  
Da per matrem me venire  
Ad palmam victoriae.

#### FOURTEENTH STATION

The Body of Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb

P. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

(*Standing*) The broken body of my Jesus is taken from the arms of His mother, and the few faithful ones wind about it the sheet of

death. Loving hands carefully wash the sacred blood away, and pour into the wounds an ointment, too late to soothe and cool and heal. In the grave, cut from the rock, will rest flesh and bones which on the cross had no rest. His body is laid in the tomb, but in a deeper sense, it is in the arms of the Church that it is laid. This is the end of the Cross and the beginning of the Tabernacle. Men could harm His body before His death, but now, under the white mantle of the Host, which hides His divinity and His humanity, the substance of His body is out of their reach. A new era has begun.

*(Kneeling)* O Jesus, live out Your new life in me in the bosom of the Church. In the Church I was baptized; I can daily witness the Last Supper; and I can learn what sacrifice is. Grant that my happiest moments may be near the Tabernacle where Your Sacred Body is forever cradled. I will not leave You; for here the Cross ends that the Tabernacle may begin.

Pater Ave Gloria

P. Jesus Christ crucified,  
R. Have mercy on us.

To my parting soul be given  
Entrance through the gate of Heaven  
There confess me for Thine own. Amen.

Quando corpus morietur  
Fac ut animae donetur  
Paradisi gloria. Amen.



## AFTER THE STATIONS

O sweet Jesus, here I can talk to You freely. Very often I need You and I do not realize it. When I am crushed and humbled, when those dearest to me have gone back to You, give me grace to go to You. When my most earnest endeavors are called failures, when nothing I try seems to succeed, when I am misunderstood, urge me to turn to You. When my years of service have diminished my accustomed bodily vigor, when my health begins to fail, when I feel outcast and alone, let me get the habit of going before the Tabernacle frequently, to pour forth all my pains and heartaches. You are the only one Who will understand. You will fathom my loneliness and disappointment, and comfort me. Bethlehem, Calvary, the Tabernacle: these are my strong supports.

I shall steal into the silent chapel when my heart begins to grow weary of life, and lonely. I shall kneel quietly and try to let the silence sink into the depths of my being.

Who loves me most? Where is He? Why is He here? Has He ever wanted consolation? Has He ever been tired? Did He go on? For Whom?

With bowed head and humbled heart, I must acknowledge I have often lacked trust. Now let me make up for it, O Jesus. I offer You all I have suffered, and all I may yet suffer, knowing that some day I shall meet You beyond the Gates of Death, to be parted from You no more. Amen.

3:00 P.M. All Recite Aloud *The Apostles' Creed*.







