

Meditation Music *Rachmaninov Cello*

1ST STATION **JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH**

Scripture:

For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God 2 Corinthians 5:21

Reflection:

Jesus stands in the most human of places. He has already experienced profound solidarity with so many on this earth, by being beaten and tortured. Now he is wrongfully condemned to punishment by death. His commitment to entering our lives completely begins its final steps. He has said “yes” to God and placed his life in God’s hands. We follow him in this final surrender, and contemplate with reverence each place along the way, as he is broken and given for us.

Let us pray:

Lord, this was for me that I might be free. That I might think of others more than myself. That I might be a champion of justice. As the journey begins I ask to be with you Lord Jesus. To follow your journey.

2ND STATION **JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS**

Scripture:

If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. Mark 8:34

Reflection:

Jesus, you understood that your journey to Calvary was necessary to bring peace and well-being to all of us. Likewise, may we understand that our lives should be directed to justice for all of creation.

Let us pray:

God of justice, your son identified himself with the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of his time. Strengthen me, a disciple of Jesus Christ, to take up the cross of our global responsibilities as a seeker of justice and agent of healing for God’s creation. Amen.

3RD STATION JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

Scripture:

Surrounded by a jeering crowd, Jesus sets out on the way to Calvary. He bears upon his shoulders the heavy cross. His strength fails, and he falls to the ground. There is no-one to help him, no-one to show compassion. Instead, He hears only mockery and insults.

Reflection:

Christ, we see you alive in all your creation, and know your love extends in a special way to the poor and suffering. Like you, the poor fall so often under unjust social systems that strangle their right to food, housing, health care and meaningful work. May we awaken to see how our economy could be made more just. May we create systems which benefit all peoples.

Let us pray:

O God, how often I have caused the living Christ to stumble and fall. It happens each time I acquiesce to unjust laws. As hundreds of millions of desperately poor people are being denied their basic human rights and even life itself, the whole structure of God's creation begins to collapse. Strengthen my baptismal commitment to strive to overcome every form of exploitation and oppression. May your Kingdom come, O Lord, where wealth is measured by how much we can afford to do without, by my ease in sacrifice. Amen.

4TH STATION JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

Scripture:

As a mother comforts her son, so I will comfort you (Isaiah 66:13)
Mary hurries to the street to see Jesus being lead to his execution. She makes her way through the crowd and comes upon a tragic sight: Jesus, her beloved Son, is carrying a heavy cross. Stricken with grief, she cannot utter even a single word.

Reflection:

Just as you met and received comfort from your mother, so too can we receive comfort through the provision of Mother Earth. You express your love through her. May we be aware of the healing, nurturing love with which you care for us and all creation. May we awaken to know your wisdom and care. May we, like you, know our sacredness as children of God and as children of Earth?

Let us pray:

O God, so many people in our world are forced to walk a *via dolorosa* of unjust policies, violence, poverty and hunger. As this happens, our earth also suffers. Like Mary who comforted Jesus, we too can be consoled, strengthened and reassured of your steadfast love for us through our encounter with the wonder and beauty of your creation. May it engender in me a greater sense of compassion and solidarity with all my kin in the community of life. Amen.

Meditation Music for 1 minute

5TH STATION

SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY THE CROSS

Scripture:

Truly I tell you, whatever you did for the least of my brothers, however insignificant, you did for me. (Matthew 25:40)

Jesus is severely weakened by his ordeal. They fear he may die along the way. So they force Simon of Cyrene, a by-stander, to help carry the cross.

Reflection:

Christ, your Earth must stand under her cross of multiple injustices and environmental problems. May we alleviate the burden of your suffering Creation, by acting in the spirit of saints such as Francis of Assisi

Let us pray:

O God of compassion, help me to recognize that I am our sister's and brother's keepers. Like Simon of Cyrene who helped Jesus carry his cross, may I too work to alleviate the suffering of those who are being crushed by the heavy cross of injustice and violence. Amen.

6TH STATION

VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

Scripture:

I knew of you then only by report, but now I see you with my own eyes. Therefore I yield, repenting in dust and ashes. John 42:5-6

Reflection:

Jesus' journey is at times brutal. He has entered into the terrible experiences of rejection and injustice. He has been whipped and beaten. His face shows the signs of his solidarity with all who have ever suffered injustice and vile, abusive treatment. He encounters a compassionate loving disciple who wipes the vulgar spit and mocking blood from his face. On her veil she discovers the image of his face – his gift to her and for us to contemplate forever.

Let us pray:

Lord, one person had the courage to challenge the powerful and give you some relief. May I also learn to challenge the culture of unjust suffering and death and see you revealed in the majesty of creation and all the worldly sufferings. May I honour this revelation with the fervour we offer our scripture. Amen

7TH STATION

JESUS FALLS FOR THE SECOND TIME

Scripture:

Woe to those who add house to house and join field to field until everything belongs to them and they are the sole inhabitants of the land. Isaiah 5:8

Reflection:

As Pope John Paul said, "...God entrusted us with the earth to till it and keep it. When this principle is forgotten and we become tyrants rather than custodians of nature, sooner or later nature will rebel...." By taking so much for ourselves we leave little else for others – the poor, the homeless, the unemployed.

Let us pray:

Lord, you fall to the ground crushed by the social forces of your time. Help me to recognize you today in those who carry the heavy load of unjust public policies. Give me the courage to step off the sidelines in the struggle for a more just and sustainable future. Amen.

8TH STATION

JESUS SPEAKS TO THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Scripture:

There followed after Jesus a great multitude of the people and among them were women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

Reflection:

Christ, you look with compassion on women: the birth-givers, the nurturers, and the comforters. May we commit to bringing women out of poverty; providing adequate nutrition, healthcare and education; and honouring the lives of all women. May we have the courage to stand side by side with the Women of countries such as Afghanistan where they have no rights? Let us remember that we were all made equal by God and as such respect each other's uniqueness.

Let us pray:

O God, we may lament when we see Christ suffering in the poor. Still, like the women of Jerusalem, we should perhaps also weep for our own children who will bear the brunt of global degradation. May my tears of repentance purify my vision and empower me to choose life, for my children, grandchildren and all God's creatures. Amen

Meditation Music for 1 minute

9TH STATION

JESUS FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME

Scripture:

And now I say: 'My strength is gone, that hope which came from Yahweh' Lamentations 3:18

Reflection:

This last fall is devastating – so weighed down by the evil in the world, You who have suffered and are so broken that we may be liberated. May we understand that your hands are our hands that your love can work through each of us, that we may in many small ways help in bringing all people back into the fullness of your love.

Let us pray:

O Lord, you have graced us with your intelligence, wisdom and power. You have called us to exercise leadership for the good of all. And yet, so many times we as the Church and as members of the larger society fall short in responding to that call. Diverting our attention away from the search for truth and justice to lesser things, we let you fall. Forgive me Lord, and renew in me a commitment to you the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. Amen

10TH STATION

JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Scripture:

He was despised and forsaken of men. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And like one from whom men hide their face. He was despised, and we did not esteem him. Isaiah 53:3

Reflection:

Part of the indignity is to be crucified naked. Jesus is completely stripped of any pride. The wounds on his back are torn open again. He experiences the ultimate vulnerability of the defenceless. No shield or security protects him.

The Romans tried to silence your message of freedom by stripping you of everything. We live in a time when too many parts of our world suffer from a culture of domination, control and death. This strips us all of security and peace.

Let us pray:

Lord, all too often we act recklessly and thoughtlessly towards others. Never thinking of the destruction, harm and problems we are causing. Touch my heart Lord that I may embrace your humility, that I may let go of my controlling, dominating attitudes. May I let go of my fear and live with trust and faith in You. Amen

11TH STATION JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Scripture:

When they came to the place which is called the Skull, there they crucified him, and with him they crucified two criminals, one on the right, the other on the left, and Jesus between them. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, "He was numbered with the transgressors."

Reflection:

Christ, we continue to drive the nails when we try to bind you to a cross of small visions. We need to see you through the revelation of some fifteen billion years of amazing creation and evolution. May we be free of our limited visions of you. May we greet you living abundantly in our lives as revealed in science, history and the arts and above all in each other.

Let us pray:

O God whose forgiveness is boundless, your Son spoke to you of us when he cried out, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they are doing." Our dismissiveness of the intrinsic dignity of all human life, our obliviousness to the wonder and sacred destiny of all your creation – these are like nails with which we crucify you today on a cross of small visions. May my tears of repentance reawaken me to your abiding presence in everything that lives, moves and has its being. Amen.

12TH STATION JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Scripture:

Though he (Jesus) was in the form of God, he did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Philippians 2:6-8

Reflection:

Christ, as we remember the solemn and sorrowful events of your death, may we understand more fully that you died for all of us. May we transform ourselves into a culture of life and may we become more open to dialog with all peoples and religions of the earth.

Let us pray:

O God of compassion, you who embrace and keep close to your heart all human suffering and earth's travails, hold me in your mercy. Give me courage to accept my vulnerability and personal crosses. Free me from the fear of changes to which you call me in my personal life, my society and its institutions. Amen.

Holy Darkness (2 verses)

13TH STATION THE BODY OF JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN

Scripture:

For in Jesus, God in his fullness chose to dwell, and through him to reconcile all things to himself, making peace through the blood of his cross – all things, whether on earth or in heaven.
Colossians 1:19

Reflection:

Today as Catholics, some of us are tempted to discouragement or disillusionment. We are tempted to cry out to the Lord: why does God not intervene when violence threatens his people; why does God let us see ruin and misery; why does God permit evil? Our trust falters and we lose patience – we no longer feel liberated by our faith. The world and all its transgressions overwhelm us – where is God amongst all the devastation of the earth and its people. Simplicity, moderation and discipline, as well as a spirit of sacrifice, must become a part of everyday life, lest all suffer the negative consequences of the careless habits of a few.

Let us pray:

O Loving God who makes all things new, help me hold on to my faith, hope and love when I feel overwhelmed and discouraged by the daunting challenge of living today. May I gently lift Earth off the cross of our materialistic ways. Deepen my courage and use me as your instrument for the reconciliation and peace that you desire for all. Amen.

14TH STATION JESUS' BODY IS BURIED

Scripture:

At the place where he had been crucified there was a garden...they laid Jesus there. John 19:41-42

Reflection:

Jesus, you were buried and those who loved you wept at your death. May we be inspired by your loving memory, may we have the faith to change, choose life, and love you and your wonderful creation more deeply. May our tears heal our hearts and give us strength to carry on.

Let us pray:

Dear God, nothing is impossible for you. Help your Church to be faithful to you in the midst of adversities. Empower me to be a bearer of your dream of justice, peace and harmony for all, and a prophet of hope in our world today. Amen.

St. Theresa's Prayer *John Michael Talbot*