

Stations of the Cross During the COVID-19 Pandemic
By Ellen Salmi van Cleef

Opening Prayer

All: Lord Jesus,
I want to walk in your footsteps.
I want to be your disciple,
And yet, so many times I fall short.
I'm so sorry for the ways I turn from your love.

Tonight, as I walk the path of your Passion,
I surrender my heart to you once more.

In a special way,
I offer this prayer for all who are suffering right now
during this COVID-19 pandemic.
Be near to us, Lord, as we pray,
for we place our trust in you.

Amen.

First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death

Prayer Intention: Freedom from fear

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

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

Minister: Jesus, out of fear, Pilate condemned you to death. He was too preoccupied with his own self-interest to see the Messiah before him. We know that we can be like that too. We let our fears and insecurities drive us to judge and condemn others. In this time of crisis, it is easy to let fear control us. Lord Jesus, teach us how to be like you, placing all our trust in the Father.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Second Station: Jesus Accepts His Cross

Prayer Intention: The sick

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

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

Minister: Jesus, thousands of people around the world are suffering because of the coronavirus and the numbers of the afflicted keep on growing. For all who are sick, this illness is a scary cross to bear. Lord, you know what it's like to hurt. Be with the sick in a special way this day. Heal them. Show them they are not alone. Our hearts ache for them. Theirs is the cross of the Body of Christ.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

Prayer Intention: Medical professionals

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

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

Minister: The cross was too heavy, the burden too great. The weight of the wood pushes you to the rock hard ground. Right now in hospitals around the world, medical professionals are shouldering an immense charge, risking their own wellbeing to help others. Jesus, when the cross was too overwhelming, you fell, but you got up again. In these trying times, grant our medical professionals a share in your strength. When they are discouraged or tired, give them your courage to get back up once more. Remind them that each step they take, they take with you at their side.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Sorrowful Mother

Prayer Intention: The families of the sick

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

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

Minister: Mother Mary, you stood helpless as your son Jesus was beaten and tortured. Your love for him is so great, and yet you could not stop his suffering. As a loving mother, you would have traded places with your son in an instant if it were possible. Today too so many families must watch from afar as their loved ones battle this illness. Console them, Our Good Mother. Be their example of hope and draw them closer to the heart of your son. As the world battles this pandemic, we may not always see or understand the suffering of our neighbor. Teach us to respond like you: always with compassion and charity.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Fifth Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

Prayer Intention: Grocery store workers, truckers, factory workers, cooks, cashiers, delivery drivers, food bank workers, all those working in essential businesses

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

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

Minister: The weight of the cross was too heavy for you, Jesus. Simon of Cyrene was forced to help you carry it down that long and dusty road. Lord, in this time of crisis, the ordinary jobs of many now demand extraordinary sacrifice. Like Simon, they are being asked to shoulder the heavy burden of this virus, to put themselves at risk for the good of others. Sustain them, Lord, and give them peace in knowing that their efforts help carry their community's cross. Let us all commit to kindness, patience, and gratitude to those who must work during the pandemic.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Sixth Station: Veronica Presents her Veil to Jesus

Prayer Intention: Leaders of nations and communities

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

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

Minister: Though it was dangerous, Veronica stepped forward to wipe your sweaty and bloody face. Jesus, how her boldness must have consoled you! Empower our political leaders, Lord, to be bold in the face of this pandemic. Help them to put people over profits and community over political gain. Guide them by your Holy Wisdom so that their decisions serve the common good and uphold the dignity of all. May they see your face in those they serve.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

Prayer Intention: Mental health wellbeing

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

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

Minister: Again, your body falls on the rocky ground, as the wooden beam you carry comes crashing down. Jesus, in this time of trial, loneliness and discouragement threaten our mental and emotional wellbeing. We feel overwhelmed, frustrated, impatient. So much is outside of our control! And it scares us. We fall, and our anxiety makes it feel impossible to get back up again. Grant us your perseverance, Lord. We surrender our lives to you. Give us the strength to arise once more.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Eighth Station: Jesus Speaks to the Weeping Women

Prayer Intention: The Church

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

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

Minister: Our churches are empty, Lord, and we cry out, longing to be reunited with our faith family. We mourn the loss of receiving you in the Blessed Sacrament and repent for all the times we took you for granted. Comfort your faithful, Jesus. Open our eyes to your presence with us, right here, right now. Strengthen pastoral leaders as they accompany your hurting pilgrim people. Help your Church to trust in your promise that all who mourn shall be consoled.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

Prayer Intention: The homeless and those quarantined in unsafe homes

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

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

Minister: Yet again the cross proves such a heavy burden. It pushes you to the ground one last time. As we all stay home to avoid spreading the virus, we remember those who have no place to rest their head. We hear the cries of the spouses and children trapped in the clutches of an abusive family member. We think of those who have no access to water, electricity, or heat at home. Jesus, when you fell for the third time, you had to summon all of your strength. Grant resilience to those who suffer in their homes. Empower us, your followers, to help them, as together we seek freedom in you.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

Prayer Intention: Children & youth

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

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

Minister: They stripped you of even your clothes, Jesus. They took everything from you, and yet nothing could stop you. Your love was so powerful; you persisted in your saving mission. During this scary time, the children and young people of our world are even more in need of experiencing your unstoppable love. Empower us to make you known and loved before all else. Grant us patience with the little ones we care for. Bless teachers as they adapt to accompanying students under quarantine. Inspire us to be creative in the ways we reach out to young people in need. Jesus, we entrust our youth to you. They are the future and now of our Church.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

Prayer Intention: People struggling with poverty and unemployment

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

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

Minster: Agony ripped through your flesh as they nailed your hands and feet to the cross. Jesus, our world is wounded with the pain of this pandemic, and not all have the same resources to weather the storm. In this world, injustice and inequality abound. Millions of people across the globe and in our own community live in poverty. Even more find themselves now unemployed and struggling to provide for their families. Jesus, our wounded Savior, give them strength during these difficult times. Convert our hearts, Lord, and rid us from the selfishness that keeps us from caring for our neighbor.

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Prayer Intention: For those who have died

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

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

Minister: "Father, into your hands, I commend my spirit." Jesus, even in your last breath, you embodied the undying love of God. Be with the thousands of people dying from the coronavirus across the world today. O sweet Savior, "dying you destroyed our death; rising you restored our life." May all who die today rest in your peace and see your glory!

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

Prayer Intention: The media & our social media habits

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

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

Minister: They took your broken, bruised body down from the cross. You came to share the Good News of God's love, and yet they killed you as a criminal. Lord Jesus, during this pandemic, we rely heavily on the news and social media to stay connected. Lead those in the media to always tell the truth, and to be witnesses of hope. Grant us all discernment as we use social media, in what we consume and in what we post. Bombarded by headlines, help us to fix our eyes on you. Make us heralds of your Good News!

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid into the Tomb

Prayer Intention: For an outpouring of hope

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

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

Minister: It was finished. They laid you in the tomb. Yet you promised that death would not have the last word. Jesus, as your followers, we are called to be a people of hope. In times of darkness, like these, we may be tempted to despair, to question, to fear. As we stand before your tomb, instill in our hearts the certain hope of your resurrection. No matter what comes, show us how to live in the light of your victory!

Minister: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Concluding Prayer

All: Lord Jesus,
out of love for us you humbled yourself,
even to death on a cross.
As we remember your passion and suffering,
help us to share
in the hope
of the resurrection.

In a special way,
Be with all those struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.
As your followers,
empower us to be beacons of light
in this turbulent world.

Lord Jesus,
send your healing spirit upon our world.
We place our trust in you!

Amen.

Our Lady of Guadalupe... Pray for us!