

The Cancellation of the Outdoor Way of the Cross

The Alberta government has implemented important safety measures to slow or stop the spread of COVID-19. The government has also declared a state of public health emergency. This is an unprecedented moment in our history, which requires decisive action. Therefore, Bishop McGrattan has cancelled all Masses in the parishes and now the Outdoor Way of the Cross, scheduled for Good Friday, April 10, 2020.

We know that these measures will have a profound impact on the lives of Catholics and people of different faiths across Alberta. Still, these are necessary to protect the health and safety of everyone during this growing global pandemic. For more information on COVID-19, please visit Alberta Health Services at <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>

We invite you to individually pray the Stations of the Cross on Fridays this Lent for all those affected by COVID-19 worldwide.

2020年4月10日耶穌受難日的戶外拜苦路取消

阿伯特省政府已採取重要的安全措施，以減緩或阻止COVID-19的傳播。政府還宣佈了公共衛生緊急狀態。這是我們歷史上前所未有的時刻，需要採取果斷的行動。

因此，威廉主教決定取消原定於2020年4月10日耶穌受難日的戶外拜苦路。

我們知道，這些措施將對整個阿伯特省的天主教徒和不同信仰的人們的生活產生深遠的影響。

儘管如此，在不斷增長的全球冠狀病毒大流行中，這些對於保護所有人的健康和安全是必不可少的。

有關COVID 19的更多信息，請參閱：

<https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>

我們邀請您為世界各地所有受COVID19感染的人們，在星期五分別作個人朝拜苦路祈禱。

十四苦路禱文



(領)：因父、及子、及聖神之名。阿們。(劃十字聖號)(跪下)

(眾)：主、耶穌基督，我們藉著洗禮與稱同死同葬，稱既藉著父的力量，從死者中復活；求稱也使我們能度一種新生活。昔日的我們已稱同釘在十字架上；求稱消除我們的罪愆，不再做罪惡的奴隸。我們既與稱同死，亦必與稱同生；死於罪惡，活於天主。

主，我們會多次掙扎，多次跌倒；雖然我們知道稱就在我們身旁，但卻掉頭離稱而去。基督，請原諒我們，並幫助全人類認識、愛慕和尊敬稱。願我們能在眾兄弟姐妹中找到稱，跟隨稱，在苦路上與稱並肩前進。(起立)

第一處耶穌被判死刑

領：主、基督，我們欽崇稱、讚美稱。(跪下)

眾：稱用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

司祭長和長老們對耶穌提出許多控訴，比拉多問耶穌說：“他們對稱提出這麼多的控訴，難道稱一點也不答辯嗎？”可是耶穌依然沒有作答。比拉多召集了司祭長、議員和民眾，說：“我在他身上實在找不到什麼可以處死的罪狀。”可是司祭長們早已煽動群眾，要求給他們釋放巴拉巴。於是群眾高聲喊叫，要求釘耶穌在十字架上，比拉多終於為他們釋放了巴拉巴；同時，他下令把耶穌先行鞭打，然後釘在十字架上。

默想

朋友！雖然比拉多並不公允，但當日耶穌在他的判決中，卻看出天父的旨意，屈服在比拉多權下。你怎能拒絕因聽命而帶來的煩惱呢？

禱文

領：主、基督，稱在受審判時，我們亦是其中判死罪的人。但稱卻為愛而釘在十字架上。

眾：我們還不知自愛，時常冒犯、違反稱。請幫助我們認識、愛慕稱，並遠離罪惡。

領：天主，仰仗稱所受的苦難。

眾：求稱垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍(起立)

第二處耶穌背十字架

領：主、基督，我們欽崇稱、讚美稱。(跪下)

眾：稱用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

兵士們將耶穌帶進總督府內，就召集全隊兵士，圍著耶穌，然後把祂的衣服脫去，叫祂穿上紫袍，又編了一個荊棘的冠冕給祂戴上。於是他們開始對祂致敬說：“猶太人的君王，萬

歲！”然後用一根蘆葦打祂的頭，唾祂的面，又跪著向祂行禮，戲弄既畢，他們就把紫袍脫下，仍舊給祂穿上原來的衣服，然後帶祂出去，要把祂釘在十字架上。耶穌自己背著十字架，走出城外。

默想

這十字架，這根樹干，是天父給耶穌選擇的。我的朋友，你所背負的十字架亦是天父給你選擇的，從祂的手中接納吧！請放心，天父絕不會讓你的負擔，超過你的能力。

禱文

領：主，我們常常祇看到自己的擔子，並認為它很沉重，當沒有人注意它的時候，我們覺得這擔子更重。

眾：可是我們忘記了別人的痛苦，也忽略了在我們身旁背著重擔的稱。即使知道了別人的痛苦，也從沒有加以援助。求稱使我們不要以自我為中心，多顧及他人，正如稱照顧我們一樣。

領：天主，仰仗稱所受的苦難。

眾：求稱垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第三處耶穌第一次跌倒

領：主、基督，我們欽崇稱、讚美稱。（跪下）

眾：稱用此聖架，救贖普世。

先知書

當時，我們看到他，沒有讚美，沒有尊嚴，也沒有什麼儀容可供我們欣賞。他祇是一個被人鄙視、被人棄絕的人物，祇是一個憂苦的人，飽嘗了苦難。人家對他祇是掩面不顧，他是被人舍棄的人，因而我們也把他視同無物。哪曉得，他竟替我們負擔著苦痛，替我們承受著憂愁。

默想

創造及管理宇宙的天主子，由於對父的服從，變得像人那樣軟弱，竟不能肩負起一根木頭的重量。但那正是天父的旨意，否則耶穌不能成為我們的模範。若我們要成為耶穌的朋友，也該無怨無憂地承擔人的軟弱。

禱文

領：主，我們離開了正路，祇得到空虛和酸苦。

眾：求稱光照，使我們認為，當我們軟弱時能得到稱的扶持。稱無盡的愛，將一切罪人抱於懷中，請讓我們都能共享稱的寬宏與慈愛。

領：天主，仰仗稱所受的苦難。

眾：求稱垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第四處耶穌途中遇母親

領：主、基督，我們欽崇稱、讚美稱。（跪下）

眾：稱用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

西默盎祝福了他們，並對耶穌的母親說：“你看這個孩子，他被注定要以色列中許多人跌倒，許多人升起，並將成爲眾人排斥的標記。這樣，許多人的秘密心思便會洩漏出來。至於你，一把利劍將刺透你的心靈。

默想

聖母見耶穌被鞭打，被腳踢，像畜生一般被驅趕。她的心靈疼痛哀傷；可是從來沒有吐出任何申訴和報怨。

禱文

領：我們常常爲自己的痛苦而嗟嘆，卻忘掉了其他兄弟姐妹也受著同樣、或甚至更惡劣的遭遇。

眾：主，我們明白，隻有分擔別人的困苦與悲傷，我們才能團結起來抗拒痛苦和患難的挑戰，求你使我們永不關閉自己的心，卻接納每一個人，能像稱的慈母一樣奉行稱的聖意，與稱一同救贖世界。

領：天主，仰仗稱所受的苦難。

眾：求稱垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第五處西肋乃人西滿幫耶穌背十字架

領：主、基督，我們欽崇稱、讚美稱。（跪下）

眾：稱用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

他們把耶穌帶走的時候，抓住一個剛從鄉下來的基勒乃人西滿，兵士將十字架放在他的肩上，強迫他在耶穌后面背著。

耶穌說：凡不能背負自己的十字架而追隨我的，就不配作我的門徒。凡保全自己生命的，終必喪失生命。但爲我之故而喪失生命的，必能獲得生命。

默想

耶穌已無力，不能再獨自肩負十字架。因此士兵便勉強西滿幫助。朋友，這位西滿就是你。把你的力量交給弱小者吧！你每次減輕別人的負擔，就是親手托起那壓在耶穌身上的十字架。

禱文

領：主，稱接納西滿的幫助。稱挑選了一個膽怯而被迫的人來幫助禰。

眾：求稱幫助我們，了解為兄弟姐妹服務的真正意義。我們時常忽略了四周的親友，請幫助我們互相依靠，互愛互助，使我們背負稱的十字架，樂意為他人服務，並除去驕傲，樂意接受別人的幫助。

領：天主，仰仗稱所受的苦難。

眾：求稱垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第六處聖婦為耶穌拭面

領：主、基督，我們欽崇稱、讚美稱。（跪下）

眾：稱用此聖架，救贖普世。

聖詠

恥辱和憂悶，折傷了我的心；我指望有人會體恤我，卻沒有一個；我渴望有人會安慰我，可是找不著。

默想

朋友，你有勇氣觸摸耶穌染滿血漬的臉嗎？你問：耶穌的臉在哪裡？在充滿淚水的眼睛裡，在遍布皺紋的額頭上，在貧民窟裡，在醫院中，在病榻上——總之，凡有痛苦存在的地方，耶穌的臉就在那裡。祂就在那裡等待著你，替他抹掉血和淚。

禱文

領：我老實告訴你們，凡你們為我這些兄弟中最小的一個所做的，也就是給我做的。

眾：主，求稱協助我們在迫害中，勇敢承認稱是主基督，正如物羅尼加一樣。她堅信這個死囚是天主；其他人的譏諷、批評、迫害都不能阻止她愛主之情。請幫助我們善於運用稱所賜給我們的才智，服務人群，幫助需要幫助的人，讓我們明認稱活在每個人的心中。

領：天主，仰仗稱所受的苦難，

眾：求稱垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第七處耶穌第二次跌倒

領：主、基督，我們欽崇稱、讚美稱。（跪下）

眾：稱用此聖架，救贖普世。

先知書

當時我們祇以為他是被懲罰的人，為天主所打擊、為天主所貶抑。殊不知他實在是為了我們的過失而被刺傷，為了我們的罪惡而受盡了苦刑。透過他的受刑，我們才得安寧，透過他的受傷，我們才得康復，我們都是迷途的羊，各走各的路；然而上主卻把我們眾人的罪債，加在他一人的肩上。

默想

朋友，這第七處，是考驗你意志的一個機會；從這次跌倒中學習，堅持行善吧！有一天，當你感到前功盡廢時，你會想，“我不能再繼續下去”，那時請你轉向耶穌跌倒的事實吧！信賴耶穌，繼續奮鬥吧！

禱文

領：主，我們會向往奢華的享受，沒有體察別人的勞苦及艱辛。

眾：許多人在生活的鞭撻下，已一次又一次地跌倒，圍觀的人多，援助的人少。願我們不在圍觀的人群中。

領：天主，仰仗稱所受的苦難，

眾：求稱垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第八處耶穌勸告耶路撒冷的婦女

領：主、基督，我們欽崇稱、讚美稱。（跪下）

眾：稱用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

有一大群民眾跟著耶穌，其中還有一批婦女為祂哀悼痛哭。耶穌轉身對她們說：“耶路撒冷的女兒！你們不要為我而哭，要為你們自己的子女而哭。”

默想

耶穌會多麼的渴望，把耶路撒冷的子女聚集起來，但他們一一拒絕。這些婦女現在為耶穌哭泣，而耶穌的心卻為她們哀痛——哀痛她們面臨的憂傷。耶穌在身受痛苦時，仍然去安慰他人。朋友，你如何表現你的溫良和仁愛呢？

禱文

領：耶穌親臨世界，世界也原是靠祂而存在的，但世界卻不認識祂；祂來到自己的領域，而祂自己的子民卻沒有接納祂。

眾：我們深信祂居於全人類中、特別在那些被人冷落的人群中。請助佑我們在人群中體驗祂的存在、祂的痛苦，並且以關懷及愛心去接近祂。

領：天主，仰仗祂所受的苦難，

眾：求祂垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第九處耶穌第三次跌倒

領：主、基督，我們欽崇祂、讚美祂。（跪下）

眾：祂用此聖架，救贖普世。

先知書

凡看見他的人，莫不驚愕，因為他的容貌毀傷得不再像人。上主的聖意要用苦難磨煉他。當他的心靈苦痛到了盡頭以後，他必定看見光明而心滿意足。我的僕人要以自己的苦難使眾人成義，因為他承擔了他們的罪過。他甘願充當一個罪人，而犧牲自己的生命。其實，他負擔了眾人的罪債，並且時時刻刻為所有的罪人祈求。

默想

耶穌已全無氣力，到臥在地上，身體不能再動彈，就是拳打、腳踢，也不能再站起來。然而，耶穌願意接受一切。朋友，你的身體可以被摧毀，但天上或地下絕對沒有力量，能夠剝奪你的意志，你的意志是屬於你的。

禱文

領：主耶穌，祂為了我們而受鞭打、凌辱，但我們卻時常跌倒、犯罪。

眾：主！請幫助我們體會每一位兄弟姐妹應有的權利，明白自己的責任，盡量幫助需要我們的人。

領：天主，仰仗祂所受的苦難，

眾：求祂垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第十處耶穌被人剝去衣服

領：主、基督，我們欽崇祂、讚美祂。（跪下）

眾：祂用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

當時，他們另外還帶了兩個凶犯，同耶穌一起去處死。他們既到了那名叫“髑髏”的地方，就在那裡把耶穌釘在十字架上，同時也釘了兩個凶犯，一個在右邊，一個在左邊。耶穌說：“父啊！求你寬恕他們，因為他們不知道自己做的是什麼！”當時，他們還拈阄分了耶穌的衣服。民眾都站著觀望。

默想

朋友，請看！世上最可憐的君王，在受造物前，被剝掉衣服，身無一物；然而，誰還比耶穌更富有？同樣，你要生活豐滿，首先要關心天國的義德。

禱文

領：人子來不是為受人服侍，卻是為服侍人，並且要犧牲自己的生命，救贖大眾。

眾：主，你成了罪犯，其實，犯罪的卻是我們。我們所追求的奢飾華物把你掩蓋了。社會上許多傷殘老病的人，願我們伸出援助的手，給予他們所需要的。許多人沒有一個合理的生活環境、更得不到別人的關懷與協助、失去了人性的尊嚴；願我們真正體會他們，把他們當作兄弟姐妹般看待。

領：天主，仰仗你所受的苦難，

眾：求你垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第十一處耶穌被釘在十字架上

領：主、基督，我們欽崇你、讚美你。（跪下）

眾：你用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

在耶穌的十字架旁，站著祂的母親和祂母親的一個姐妹，還有克羅帕的妻子瑪利亞，及瑪利亞瑪達肋納。耶穌見母親和祂的愛徒一起站著，就對母親說：“母親，那就是你的兒子！”又對愛徒說：“那就是你的母親！”從此，那門徒就把她奉養在自己的家中。

默想

朋友，你能想象釘十字架是怎樣的滋味嗎？刑吏拉直了手，把手腕緊壓在橫木上，用釘刺透肉，然後拿起沉重的鐵錘用力敲打，直至手被釘穿，疼痛辛酸就像火藥筒在頭腦內猛然爆炸。他們又抓住另一隻手，死亡的痛苦又再一次爆發，然後再屈起膝蓋，好把腳站在木干，也用鐵錘釘在架上。

禱文

領：我給你們一項新命令，你們要彼此相愛，如同我愛了你們一樣。

眾：主，你對我們的愛至深至大，竟不惜任何犧牲，我們願意效法你，在我們的生活環境中實踐憐愛人的精神，努力減輕別人在精神上及肉軀上的痛苦，與你一同救贖我們的弟兄。

領：天主，仰仗祢所受的苦難，

眾：求祢垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第十二處耶穌死在十字架上

領：主、基督，我們欽崇祢、讚美祢。（跪下）

眾：祢用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

從中午開始，太陽失光，遍地黑暗；直到下午三時，耶穌大聲呼喊說：“我的天主，我的天主！祢爲什麼舍棄了我？”有一個人跑過來，把海綿浸透了醋，綁在蘆葦上，送上去給祂喝。那時耶穌又大聲呼喊說：“父啊！我將我的靈魂托付在祢的手中。”說完，便斷了氣。

默想

十字架已成了一座講壇——父啊！寬恕他們吧……你要和我在天堂裡……這是你的母親……這是你的兒子……我渴……一切都完成了……耶穌需要挺著手腕及腳，把自己托起才能開口說話，每一個動作，都使祂陷入一陣新的痛楚，然後，當祂受夠了，才放棄這可朽壞的肉軀。

禱文

領：一粒麥子非經落地而死，隻不過是一粒，死了以後，才会有豐盈的收穫。

眾：主，藉著祢的聖死，我們才獲得一個更充實及更珍貴的生命。請幫助我們，使我們關懷別人的生死存亡，重視肉軀和靈性的生命，使人們充分地領略生命的意義。

領：天主，仰仗祢所受的苦難，

眾：求祢垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第十三處耶穌屍體從十字架卸下

領：主、基督，我們欽崇祢、讚美祢。（跪下）

眾：祢用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

那天正值安息日的前夕，而那安息日又是大節日，猶太人不願在安息日有尸首留在十字架上，就來請求比拉多叫人打斷他們的腿，把尸首拿去。於是兵士來了，先後把釘在耶穌左右的兩個人的腿打斷；他們來到耶穌跟前，看見祂已經死了，就沒有打斷祂的腿。有一個士兵用長矛刺透了祂的肋旁，立刻就有血和水流出來。

默想

祭獻已完成，是的，耶穌的祭獻已告完成。但，我的朋友，聖母和你的祭獻尚未結束，聖母還要在手中接抱，她親生子的尸體。你在離別自己所愛的人時，也會感到哀痛。你在沉痛時應該想到，因著瑪利亞分擔耶穌在加爾瓦略山的苦難、參加救世的工程；同樣，你的哀痛，亦可充作靈魂的代價。

禱文

領：主，請寬恕我們的愚昧、固執、嫉妒及怨恨，並減輕所有因此而引起的痛苦與悲傷。

眾：求稱以稱的愛充盈世界，使我們生活在愛的滋潤中。慈母瑪利亞，你是罪人的避難所，請為我們祈禱，使我們因你聖子的功勞，幸獲天父的寬恕。

領：天主，仰仗稱所受的苦難，

眾：求稱垂憐我們。

全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

第十四處耶穌葬於墳墓

領：主、基督，我們欽崇稱、讚美稱。（跪下）

眾：稱用此聖架，救贖普世。

福音

到了傍晚，來了一個阿黎瑪特雅人若瑟，他大膽地向比拉多要求耶穌的遺體。比拉多准許了他，於是他把耶穌的遺體領去了。還有從前在夜間來訪耶穌的尼苛德摩，那時也帶著約一百斤殓藥和沉香而來，兩人按著猶太人的習俗，將耶穌的遺體用細麻布加上香料包裹起來，把祂安放在一座由岩石鑿成的墳墓裡，然後滾了一塊石頭來堵住墓門。

默想

耶穌可朽的生命就此結束，另一個新生命已開始，為瑪利亞，為瑪達肋納，為伯多祿，若望和你，耶穌在人世的工作已完成，但在教會內及透過教會的工作，現在才開始。朋友，由現在開始，時時刻刻，你要做祂的使徒、祭品、聖者。

禱文

領：主，稱極大的痛苦仍要繼續，直到時間的終止。

眾：我們每個人都有自己的十字架，願我們都能分擔稱的十字架。請幫助我們在各人身上認出稱來，並樂意幫助稱，使我們真正的敬愛稱。

領：天主，仰仗稱所受的苦難，

眾：求稱垂憐我們。

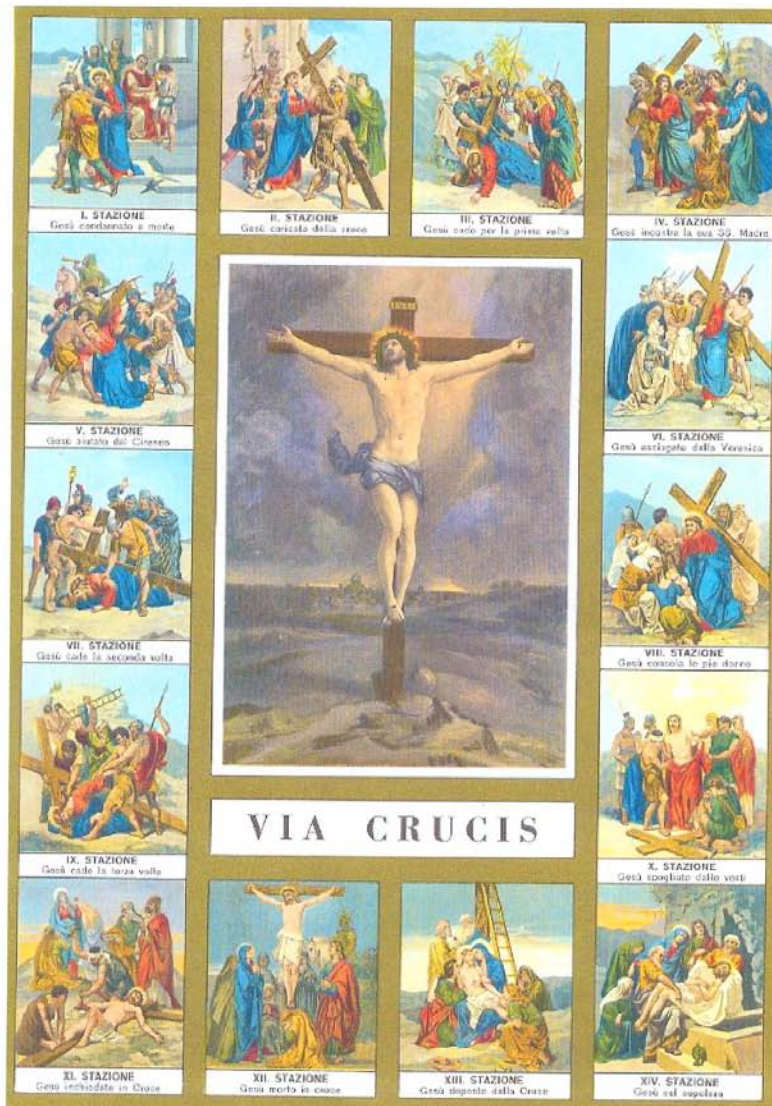
全體：誦天主經一遍，聖母經一遍（起立）

苦路善工（最後禱文）（台前誦）

（領）：耶穌基督，人類的救主，稱用十字架戰勝了死亡，進入了光榮，使痛苦有了意義，賦給世界喜樂。求稱幫助我們繼續稱的救世工程，共同背負十字架。（跪下）

（眾）：主啊，讓我們成為稱的工具，去宣揚和平；
在滿是憎恨的地方，讓我們播下寬恕的種子；
在滿是疑慮的地方，讓我們播下信心的種子；
在滿是頹喪的地方，讓我們播下希望的種子；
在滿是黑暗的地方，讓我們播下光明的種子；
願我們不企求他人的安慰，隻求安慰他人；
不企求他人的諒解，祇求諒解他人。
因為在施舍中，我們有所收獲；
在寬恕他人時，我們也被寬恕；
在喪失生命時，我們將復活而獲得永生。
願主垂允我們的祈禱。阿們。

The Way of the Cross



Station 1: Jesus is condemned to die

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people met in council to bring about the death of Jesus. They had him bound, and led him away to hand him over to Pilate, the governor... He ordered Jesus to be first scourged and then handed over to be crucified." (Matt. 27:1, 26)

Pilate acknowledges that Jesus is innocent but he still orders Him to be captured and condemned. The anticipation of painful things is now a reality. Jesus now experiences uncertainty regarding what scourging and crucifixion will require of Him and fear of dying. Though physically bound, He maintains a dignity and serenity and freely surrenders to what is to come.

We too can be 'captured' by the diagnosis of a life-altering or terminal medical condition. It can overwhelm our life and occupy all our attention. We ask "Why me?" or "Why my son or daughter or spouse or friend?" It changes our perspective on everything.

Reflection: *Can Jesus' response give meaning and consolation if you or a loved one are 'captured' by the diagnosis of a life threatening or terminal illness?*

Station 2: Jesus takes up His cross

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"Then they took charge of Jesus, and carrying his own cross he went out of the city to a place of the skull or, as it was called in Hebrew Golgotha..." (John 19: 17)

Since His baptism, the first miracle at Cana, and His declaration in the synagogue in Nazareth that the reading from the prophet Isaiah regarding the blind seeing, the oppressed going free and the good news to the poor has been fulfilled, Jesus has had a growing sense of who He is. He has confidently called God Abba, Father. But here Jesus, the popular healer, the "well-beloved Son," is a condemned criminal and an outcast who takes up a cross.

Loss of identity can be experienced by all who have serious and chronic illness or disability and those who are dying. Our physical appearance can be profoundly altered; the talents and abilities in which we took pride lost and our role in our families, work and communities unalterably compromised. We can feel that we are truly falling apart.

Reflection: *Can you enter into Jesus' experience of loss of affirmation and acceptance and loss of identity and purpose in life?*

Station 3: Jesus falls the first time

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

While there is no scriptural basis for the three falls of Christ, tradition recognizes in the falls the threefold nature of human suffering: physical, psychological and spiritual. In the first fall, the Christian imagination recognizes the sheer physical burden Jesus experienced in carrying a heavy

rough cross after an emotionally exhausting period of betrayal, imprisonment and judgment. Though He was a young man used to hard labor, He can no longer rely on physical strength. We know that patients become exhausted by pain, suffering and the experience of mounting losses. While there are different abilities for coping, illness can bring us physical falls as well as a deeper, overwhelming feeling of 'staggering' or 'reeling' on the constantly shifting ground of serious illness and dying

Reflection: *Can you recall a time in your life when, like Jesus, you have fallen from sheer fatigue and weakness?*

Station 4: Jesus meets his mother

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, "Woman, this is your son." Then to the disciple he said, "This is your mother." And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home." (John 19:26-27)

Mary, the Mother of Sorrows, accompanies Jesus at a distance throughout his ordeal. Mary, who said the great "yes" to the Father, ponders the meaning in what is happening to her beloved Son. She remains faithful even when there are no easy answers and brings the gift of her presence. On Calvary just before the end, Jesus ensures Mary will be cared for after He is gone. Both the sick and dying and their loved ones are grieving and trying to find meaning in it all. The simple presence of loved ones is essential. Being able to leave others and to give permission for others to go is crucial. Acceptance of dying allows the precious grace of time for completing the goodbyes, forgiveness, expressions of love and gratitude and reconciliation

Reflection: *Imagine the indescribable pain and loss of both Jesus and Mary throughout the passion. How do they help you deal with significant relationships in your life that will be extremely difficult to let go at the end?*

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

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"On their way out, they came across a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, and enlisted him to carry his cross" (Matt. 27:32).

The soldiers, recognizing the difficulty Jesus was experiencing in carrying the cross, enlist a passer-by to help. And Jesus becomes publicly dependent on the help of another. Simon does not volunteer to assist the struggling Jesus but is "enlisted" and forced to help. It is unclear how willingly or reluctantly he took up the cross of Christ.

In our culture today the loss of independence is intolerable. Being free to choose and act as we desire is highly valued and dependence is to be avoided at all cost. When circumstances such as serious illness and dying force our dependence on others we experience it as being a burden. We all need help and companionship in serious illness and in dying.

Reflection: *Can you be with Jesus in His acceptance of dependence on another, perhaps one who is helping grudgingly? How does His experience help you to give and receive help?*

Station 6: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"There were some women watching from a distance...these used to follow him and look after him when he was in Galilee. And there were many other women there who had come up to Jerusalem with him." (Mark 15:40-41)

Veronica was one of the faithful women who followed Jesus at a distance. She had a personal relationship with Jesus long before she reaches out to Him here. This relationship enables her to risk punishment in order to be a loving presence when He needs her compassionate care. Sometimes we look on the suffering and distress of loved ones but don't reach out to offer help even in small ways that matter.

Reflection: *Where does Veronica get the courage to comfort and care even at personal risk? How can we learn such courage?*

Station 7: Jesus falls the second time

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

The second fall recognizes Jesus' experience of psychological and emotional suffering. This time He must have feared that He could not get up again; that it was hopeless. But Jesus shows complete trust in the Father's care and plan for Him despite public humiliation and the apparent failure of His earthly mission.

Hope often arises in situations that are overwhelming. In terminal illness there is first a hope for cure or that the doctors were wrong. But there is an ambiguity in hope. What should we hope for? There can be a 'tyranny of hope' which forces us to look for any option that would change the future rather than to accept the present reality.

Reflection: *What can we know of Jesus' fundamental vision of God in His rising from another fall and hoping in a seemingly hopeless situation?*

Station 8: Jesus consoles the weeping women of Jerusalem

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"Large numbers of people followed him, and of women too, who mourned and lamented for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children." (Luke 23:27-28)

Even in the midst of agony, Jesus reaches out to others. He acknowledges the grief and pain of the women who have been faithful followers. And even nailed to the cross at the very end He recognizes and rewards the faith of the good thief.

Illness isolates us. Physical symptoms and fear and depression can make us focused inward; obsessed with our painful experience and incapable of caring relationships.

Reflection: How was Jesus able to offer compassion to others, especially when His own life was threatened? Does the suffering of Jesus help you to understand and respond to the suffering of others?

Station 9: Jesus falls for the third time

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

This third and final fall recognizes the spiritual suffering of Jesus. In many ways spiritual suffering is the worst. This time it is almost impossible for Jesus to get up and continue. This suffering is rooted in Jesus' need to find meaning in apparent failure of His ministry and in the human temptation to despair. It is directly related to Jesus' faith in God as loving Father.

Today, we lack a language for spiritual suffering. Medicine can give great assistance to pain and other physical distress of the sick and the dying but there is no prescription for spiritual suffering. Finding meaning in the reality of pain and suffering is the most important challenge in dying. For the dying and the grieving transforming the reality of pain and suffering requires faith.

Reflection: Can we be with Jesus as He grapples with the meaning of His passion? What can we learn about suffering as a sacred challenge when we are tempted to give up and give in to despair?

Station 10: Jesus is stripped of His garments

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"They dressed him up in purple, twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple and dressed him in his own clothes."

(Mark 15:1-20)

Jesus experienced profound degradation and humiliation during His ordeal. He was physically disfigured; taunted for His weakness; and derided for His failure to accomplish for Himself the freedom from bondage He had done for others.

Feelings of loss of dignity are common in serious illness and dying, especially when patients need help with intimate care needs and experience profound alterations in their appearance and abilities. One of the major reasons persons request assisted death is their loss of a sense of dignity. While there is much discussion about 'death with dignity' being about control, we know that dignity is an inherent quality of the children of God, not an attribute lost in weakness.

Reflection: *Can you empathize with Jesus in His experience of being humiliated? What do you want to say to Him? When you see a loved one experiencing a sense of loss of dignity in illness, what do you want to say to them?*

Station 11: Jesus is nailed to the cross

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"My God, my God, why have you deserted me?" (Matt. 27:46)

Nailed to the cross and in great pain, Jesus has lost all control over events. In anguish He cries out His feelings of abandonment even by the Father. His sense of failure in achieving the mission entrusted to Him is compounded by a sense that the Father has failed to protect Him.

"When they reached the place called The Skull, they crucified him there and the two criminals also, one on the right and one on the left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:33-34).

But even now, Jesus is full of forgiveness for those who crucify Him and totally trusting in the love and mercy of the Father.

In serious illness, especially when accompanied by pain and other physical symptoms, our sense of abandonment can be overwhelming and our faith and trust in a loving God can be sorely tested. How can a loving God allow such suffering?

Reflection: *What do we hear in Jesus' cry to the Father? When you experience a loss of control and feel abandoned and deserted, what is your deepest cry to God?*

Station 12: Jesus dies

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. With these words he breathed his last. (Luke 23:46)

In the Old Testament, death is personified as the enemy. It is associated with descent into the ultimate darkness where there is no joy, no hope and total isolation. As Jesus experiences death, He remains firm in His trust in the Father. He freely lays down his life for others because for Him, death is not the enemy.

For loved ones and caregivers, the moment of death is both a biological event and a sacred mystery. It is the finality of our life on earth. It can be terrifying for some and a moment of overwhelming peace and gratitude for others even in the midst of sadness and loss. For Christians it is also a deeply personal and transformative act that ends earthly life and fulfills it; not just a passive event.

Reflection: *Can you immerse yourself in these final moments of Jesus' life and find strength and solace from His generosity and trust in the Father?*

Station 13: Jesus is taken down from the cross

"It is accomplished." (John: 19:30)

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

This has been a long physical, emotional and spiritual ordeal in which it appears that the apostles failed Jesus, Jesus failed the Father, and the Father failed to save Jesus. There was no easy out. But we know that the cross, a radical symbol of failure, has been transformed into a symbol of love and life. Jesus endured radical and humiliating failure but through it He did accomplish our salvation!

Our own experience at the death of a loved one is complex. There was no miracle cure. There may be a numbness from the sheer intensity of the dying and a deep sense of loss and disorientation. In some circumstances, amidst the sadness, there is relief that the pain and suffering are over and a consolation that the loved one is now at peace with God.

Reflection: *What do you want to say to Jesus'? What does His death tell us of the meaning of a good death for ourselves and our loved ones?*

Station 14: Jesus is laid in the tomb

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

Response: Because by your holy cross and resurrection you have redeemed the world.

"When it was evening, there came a rich man of Arimathea, called Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. The man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Thereupon, Pilate ordered it to be handed over. So Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean shroud and put it in his own new tomb which he had hewn from a rock. He then rolled a large stone across the entrance of the tomb and went away" (Matt 27:57-61).

Jesus has died but the grieving and bereavement of loved ones has just begun. The rituals of burial become extremely important to the followers of Jesus not only to show their love and respect but to help them come to grips with their loss. The rituals help carry the bereaved forward when they experience the paralysis of grief and loss as do our own Christian rituals.

We need to reflect on our wishes for after our death and convey them in wills and letters to loved ones. In our time many have avoided rituals of death and burial wanting to get it 'over with' soon after the death. Our faith and burial rites remind us that there is more to life than death.

Reflection: *Can you identify with the grief and loss of the followers of Jesus? What experiences of funeral and burials have helped you in your bereavement?*

One Our Father, One Hail Mary, One Glory Be.