



A JOURNEY THROUGH THE  
STATIONS OF THE CROSS  
IN THE HOLY CROSS TRADITION



CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS, UNITED STATES PROVINCE OF PRIESTS AND BROTHERS

# A Journey Through the Stations of the Cross

*Virtual Lenten Retreat*

CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS  
U.S. PROVINCE OF PRIESTS AND BROTHERS





## *With gratitude...*

Dear Friends in Holy Cross,

On behalf of the Congregation of Holy Cross, United States Province of Priests and Brothers, I am deeply honored by your partnership and commitment to our men, ministries, and mission. A heartfelt thank you for this dedication in helping us make God known, loved, and served throughout the world.

This year's virtual Lenten retreat focuses on the Stations of the Cross in the tradition of Holy Cross. Lent is the time for reflection and preparation as we look forward to the hope the Easter celebration brings. On behalf of the Congregation, we are honored and privileged to be part of your faith journey. You are an extension of the mission of Holy Cross by bringing hope to your corner of the world.

I am grateful for the tremendous work of Rev. Wilfred J. Raymond, C.S.C., Rev. Neil Wack, C.S.C., Rev. Fred Jenga, C.S.C., Rev. John Donato, C.S.C., Rev. Daniel J. Issing, C.S.C., Rev. Bruce K. Cecil, C.S.C., and Rev. James Phalan, C.S.C., and for their spiritual reflections. I believe you will find them insightful and heartwarming as we prepare for the resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Along with my thanks, I offer our prayers for you and your loved ones throughout the sacred seasons of Lent and Easter. May God bless you as you are a blessing to the Congregation of Holy Cross.

Sincerely,



Brian T. Lohr  
Provincial Assistant – Office of Mission Advancement

**Ash Wednesday**  
**February 22, 2023**

First Station: Jesus is condemned to die

Second Station: Jesus takes up his Cross

Presented by Rev. Wilfred J. Raymond, C.S.C.



Fr. Willy served as president of Holy Cross Family Ministries in Easton, Massachusetts, (July 2014-June 2022). Before he was appointed president, he served as national director at Family Theater Productions (2000-2014). In addition, he served as assistant provincial superior and provincial superior (1994-2000) of the former Eastern Province of Priests and Brothers in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

Fr. Willy also served as director of Residence Life, assistant dean, and as director of Campus Ministry at Stonehill College, a Holy Cross college in Easton, Massachusetts. In addition, he served on the Boards of Trustees at King's College and Stonehill College and the Board of Directors of Holy Cross Family Ministries.

Fr. Willy entered the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1964. He earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Stonehill College in 1967 and a master's degree in theology from the University of Notre Dame in 1971. He was ordained a priest in the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1971. In addition to English, Fr. Willy is conversant in French and Spanish. He is a native of Old Town, Maine, and one of 12 children. He remains a diehard fan of the Boston Red Sox, even though he served as chaplain for the Los Angeles Dodgers for eight years. He continues to serve on the Board of Directors of Catholic Athletes for Christ.

Since stepping down as president of Holy Cross Family Ministries in 2022, Fr. Willy likes to say he is not "retired" but "rewired." He assists at local parishes as needed in the Brockton, Massachusetts, area and resides at the local Holy Cross community in Easton.

*The retreat conference takes place live at 7:00 p.m. Eastern. Please log in to Zoom 5 to 10 minutes before the retreat webinar begins – [lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org](https://lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org)*

## Ash Wednesday February 22, 2023

### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

Heavenly Father, with confidence and hope, we implore your blessing upon our Lenten journey beginning today. Fill us with the grace and courage needed to experience the life-giving mystery of your Son's Cross. Along the way, give us patience with you, ourselves, and others; give us honesty in recognizing our sin and need for repentance; give us tenacity and grit to stay the course to the end. Let all our thoughts, words, and actions begin with your inspiration, continue with your grace, and come to happy fulfillment in your glory. Amen.

### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion, wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me. (Psalms 51:3-4)

In the Way of the Cross {the Stations}, pilgrims embark on a virtual journey to the Holy Land to meet Christ. Many early Christians either lived in the Holy Land or journeyed there to encounter Jesus on the soil made sacred by his birth, life, and especially by his Passion, Death, and Resurrection. During the first millennium, Christians traveled from Europe on pilgrimage. For safety, they journeyed with others and armed guards. Invasions from surrounding empires and tribes exposed pilgrims to robbery, kidnappings, and even death. Various military/religious orders sprang up to protect Christians on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. When invaders expelled Christians from Jerusalem, popes and European rulers summoned crusader knights to arms to recapture the Holy Land and resume pilgrimages in relative safety. They succeeded briefly, but then a series of failed crusades led to the final expulsion of Christians from Jerusalem and the end of Holy Land pilgrimages. In response, Francis of Assisi and others began promoting the Way of the Cross as what we might call a virtual pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Each Lent calls Christians to a personal and communal journey of faith, a pilgrimage in the company of Jesus to the mountain of Easter. This Lent, let's follow the Way of the Cross to help us progress from the winter of Ash Wednesday to the springtime of Easter.

Willy Raymond, C.S.C.

### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- We beg you, Lord, to bless our pilgrim Church with unity, peace, and truth in living the Lenten call to repentance and new life. R
- We ask you, Lord, to help all nations to seek you with pure hearts as they acknowledge, accept, and welcome the grace of your unconditional love. R
- We implore you, Lord, to make us truly humble. Free us from the illusions of pride and

self-reliance that prevent us from knowing the power of your love and grace to heal hurts and wounds. Forgive our sins and make us whole. R

- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

O Lord, as we begin our Lenten journey progressing from the winter of Ash Wednesday to the springtime of Easter, may we remember that there is no failure your love cannot reverse, no humiliation you cannot exchange for blessing, no anger you cannot dissolve, and no routine you cannot transfigure through the victory of your Cross. Therefore, help us to put our trust in you and you alone. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross*

## February 23, 2023 | Day 2 Thursday after Ash Wednesday

### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

Help us, O God, as we begin our Lenten journey to choose life over death, blessings over curses, and Jesus over all other priorities. Please give us the courage and strength to take up our cross each day and follow him always. Amen.

### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. (Luke 9:24)

John Shea, the storyteller, said he and his mother, a few years ago, had received ashes in the afternoon and then headed directly to the shopping mall. As they passed a lounging bevy of teenagers hanging out at the center of the mall, one of the teens spied their smudged foreheads and announced in a megaphone voice, "Hey, the Catholics are giving out ashes. Let's go!"

Annually, we launch our observance of Lent by donning ashes on our foreheads. What does this smudge mean? Why are the ashes so popular? The haunting phrase of the minister spoken while imposing the ashes announces that this is no longer "ordinary time." These bracing words beckon us to enter a realm of transcendence that is mystical, divine, and profoundly human. The phrase "Remember man (woman) that you are dust and unto dust, you shall return." They are blunt, primal, and unambiguous. They remind us that God created each of us from nothing. At the same time, Jesus discloses that our Creator is our eternal Father. Pope Benedict, in poignant, memorable words, announced to several million young people at the 2005 World Youth Day that, "Each of us

is the result of a thought of God, each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.”  
(Pope Benedict XVI, Cologne, Germany, World Youth Day, 2005)

Yesterday, in humbly accepting the Ash Wednesday smudge, we were ritually choosing life over death, choosing the blessing over the curse, choosing Jesus over all other priorities, choosing to take up our cross each day and follow him always. In the words of the mall teens, “It’s Lent. Let’s go!”

Willy Raymond, C.S.C.

### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

#### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That the Church may always live in the light of Christ’s victory on the Cross and be a beacon of truth and hope in a troubled world. R
- That through prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and acts of penance, Catholics everywhere may strive this Lenten season to unite themselves more closely with the saving mystery that is the Cross. R
- That while looking to grow closer to God this Lenten season, we may also become more attentive to the needs of others. R
- For our own intentions. R

#### *The Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

#### *Closing Prayer*

O God, help us to see that this season of Lent is a season of hope. That by entering more fully into the mystery of the Cross and giving of ourselves more fully to you, we will be led to salvation. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## February 24, 2023 | Day 3 Friday after Ash Wednesday

#### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, help us to see this Lenten season as a journey, a pilgrimage. Help us begin by setting aside time for you daily so we may accept our shortcomings and recognize the need for conversion. Please give us the strength and courage to be honest with ourselves and surrender more to you each day. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me. (Psalms 51: 3-4)

The Church has brilliantly assembled the Lenten daily Mass readings to guide catechumens, those preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation at Easter, and all fellow Christian travelers, that’s the rest of us, on a journey like no other. Think of this trek as a pilgrimage in two parts. First, we all get to travel from the “pre-Lent” of Ash Wednesday and the remainder of the week to Saturday of the Third week of Lent. The theme throughout this first half of the pilgrimage is a call to a life of Gospel conversion. Repeatedly we hear the word of God calling us to begin anew, to reform our lives through fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, through mutual forgiveness, through loving our enemies, through replacing our hardness of heart with compassion and mercy, through hearing the cry of the poor, through repeated calls to holiness, through the pursuit of justice and love over ritual and cult.

By the end of the third week of Lent, we begin to experience the bursting of the bubble of self-sufficiency. Most of the resolutions of Ash Wednesday have been broken, at least partially, or completely forgotten. We realize we cannot be just, merciful, prayerful, holy, and forgiving on our own. We need help. To whom do we turn?

Willy Raymond, C.S.C.

### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

#### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For all those who have lost their way and wandered astray, may they find their way home to our loving and merciful God. R
- For the conversion of a troubled world and peace among all nations. R
- For openness and honesty in confronting the truth, no matter how painful or challenging it may be. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

O God, through prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and acts of penance, may we strive this Lenten season to begin anew. Give us the courage and strength to reform ourselves through mutual forgiveness, loving our enemies, and replacing our hardness of heart with compassion and mercy. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## February 25, 2023 | Day 4 Saturday after Ash Wednesday

### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

God of mercy and consolation, as we journey this Lenten season towards the resurrection of your Son, give us the grace to put all of our hope and trust in him. Like Saint Augustine, may we too, realize that “Our hearts were made for you, O Lord, and they are restless until they rest in you.” Amen.

### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Jesus saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the customs post. He said to him, “Follow me.” And leaving everything behind, he got up and followed him. (Luke 5: 27-28)

The second half of the Lenten pilgrimage to the springtime of the spirit at Easter finds its theme in the call of Jesus to Levi in today’s Gospel: “Follow me.” Levi rises immediately from his counting table, leaves everything behind, and follows Jesus. Knowing now that we cannot make the journey alone to Easter, that we need help, we ask to whom shall we go? Pope Benedict offers one poetic and radiant answer when he says, “There is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know him and to speak to others of our friendship with him.” The business of the second half of Lent is to turn to Jesus, recognizing that we need him, his grace, his help, and his salvation. Like Saint Augustine, we realize, “Our hearts were made for you, O Lord, and they are restless until they rest in you.”

The great spiritual writer Rev. Ronald Rolheiser, OMI, offers an inspiring summary of the business of this half of Lent.

“The belief of the Church is that the ashes, and the shock of receiving them, can draw us into the real business of Lent. ‘Be still and know that I am God.’ In the ashes of Lent, there is some important, unseen work going on inside the person; a healing begins to take place, a healing that leads to eventual rising with the Lord to a fuller life at Easter and beyond in eternity.

“In the Gospel, Jesus presents extreme, cartoonish images: blowing the trumpet to draw everyone’s attention to see that I am giving alms to help the needy poor; the outrageous character standing on the street corner dramatically offering prayers not from a sincere heart to God but to show off before others; and the fake penitent dressing in sackcloth and ashes to appear to others to be fasting. He says pray, fast, and give alms in secret, and your heavenly Father, who sees what is hidden, will repay you.”

Especially in the Gospel of Saint John, does the second half of Lent find a golden road to entering the mystery of the Lord Jesus Christ. The “pre-Lent” is over! Let’s get going!

Willy Raymond, C.S.C.

### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For those who are ostracized or considered sinners or outcasts, may they be welcomed with love and dignity by a compassionate Church. R
- For those times we feel alone, that we may discover the love and peace that comes only from God. R
- For those times we catch ourselves judging others, may we seek forgiveness from a loving God and then extend his mercy to others. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

O God, we come to you as anxious and broken people. Too focused on the distractions of this world and too inattentive to your presence within it. Yet we know you are with us always, and that the love, peace, and acceptance we seek comes only from you. Open our eyes and hearts, therefore, and grant us the grace and courage to hear and respond when you call us by name. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*



**Sunday, February 26, 2023**  
**First Sunday of Lent**

Third Station: Jesus falls the first time

Fourth Station: Jesus meets his sorrowful Mother

Presented by Rev. Neil Wack, C.S.C.



Fr. Neil serves as the superior at Stonehill College, Easton, Massachusetts, and as the administrator of Immaculate Conception Parish, in North Easton. Before this assignment, he served as the assistant provincial and secretary for the United States Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Indiana. He earned a degree in computer science in 1993 at Purdue University and worked for four years in Indianapolis. He entered Moreau Seminary at the University of Notre Dame in 1997 and was ordained a priest at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in 2004. He served as a pastor in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and spent 10 years as pastor and associate pastor at Christ the King parish in South Bend, Indiana. From 2015-2018, he lived in Keough Hall at Notre Dame as a priest-in-residence and worked at Moreau Seminary. While director

of Vocations, he served as part of a team coordinating vocation promotion efforts at Holy Cross campuses, parishes, and other apostolates across the United States.

*The retreat conference takes place live at 7:00 p.m. Eastern. Please login to Zoom 5 to 10 minutes before the retreat webinar begins — [lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org](https://lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org)*

**February 27, 2023 | Day 6**  
**Monday, Week One**

**Opening Prayer** *Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, during this Lenten season, help us to be more in tune with those who are on the margins and those who go without the bread of this day. Please help us to see you in everyone we meet, especially the poor, the homeless, and the addicted. Give us the strength and courage to always put ourselves in service to those in need. Amen.

**Scripture Quote For Reflection**

Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me. (Matthew 25:31-32)

It's the first week of Lent, but our Gospel reading occurs during Holy Week. We hear Jesus during his final discourse after his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. "He will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another..." (Matthew 35:31-32) This isn't a parable where Jesus helps his listeners understand a particular teaching using everyday images. No, Jesus says this WILL happen when he comes again — he will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left and tell the sheep, "I was hungry, and you gave me food, naked, and you clothed me, ill, and you cared for me..." That sounds great! But then, of course, there's the other side of the coin. He turns to the goats — those who didn't help the hungry, the naked, the ill, or the imprisoned. At the end of time, they will be cast into the eternal fire, for they refused to see and serve Jesus in the poor, the marginalized, and the outcasts of society. When we turn our back on those in need by withholding assistance, love, or forgiveness, we turn away from Jesus himself. He came to serve, and in doing so, he showed us how to serve one another. God's call brings us back to the heart of the Gospel time and time again: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."

Neil Wack, C.S.C.

**Capture Your Own Reflection**

**Intercessions**

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- In following Christ, may the Church be especially present to the poor, the oppressed, and those without hope. R
- For refugees and those seeking economic and social justice, may the world's nations welcome them with open hearts. R
- For those who work with the poor, may they be strengthened by our prayers so they may continue to provide hope and nourishment to those they serve. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

Lord, hear our voices raised in prayer. Let the light and hope of your Risen Son free us from the darkness of sin. Help us also to be bearers of this light and hope here on Earth so that we may come to the aid of our brothers and sisters in need. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## February 28, 2023 | Day 7 Tuesday, Week One

### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

Good and gracious God, let your will be done in us. Let us forego and forget our insecurities and brokenness to pray with genuine hearts the perfect prayer your Son, Jesus Christ, gave us. May his words always be in our hearts and minds. Amen.

### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

This is how you are to pray: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. (Matthew 6:9-15)

Our Gospel today goes back to the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry, to the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus teaches his disciples the Lord's Prayer. There are many books about this prayer, and it has been prayed countless times throughout the centuries. It is so familiar that we might speed through the words, forgetting to really pray them. When we pray the Our Father, we praise him, ask for our daily needs to be met, and for the grace to forgive others as God forgives us. Most importantly, we echo the prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane when, knowing the tremendous suffering he would shortly undertake, he prayed that somebody might take the cup of suffering from him. At the end of his prayer, however, he did as he taught us to do: "yet, not my will but yours be done." We would do well to pray the Lord's Prayer every day, in praise of our God, in petition for what we need, and for a greater conforming of our will to the Father's. If we were to pray this prayer sincerely each day, alone or with our family members, we would pray as Jesus did, deepening our fidelity to the Gospel and our desire to serve.

Neil Wack, C.S.C.

### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That the will of God be known and proclaimed by the leaders of the Church. R
- That those who reject God's will in pursuit of their desires will have a change of heart. R
- That those who struggle with prayer may begin to see God's loving presence in their lives more clearly. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

O God, relying on your infinite goodness, give us the confidence and faith this day to put all of our trust in you. Please help us to see that you will take care of our every need so that we may surrender more fully to your loving Providence. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 1, 2023 | Day 8 Wednesday, Week One

### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, as we strive to open our minds, hearts, and souls to you, help us this Lenten season to persevere by praying just a little bit more, fasting a little more, and giving to others a little more. May we create within ourselves habits of faith that will endure a lifetime. Amen.

### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. (Psalm 51:10)

It seems every generation looks critically at the generation before it. Today Jesus goes even further, telling the people they are part of an evil generation. He's frustrated because they keep asking for a sign while missing the Son of God in their midst. So Jesus reminds them of the story of Jonah, the reluctant prophet who travels throughout Nineveh, telling the people they will be destroyed in 40 days. In an act of penitence, the king and all his subjects put on sackcloth and ashes. God listened and relented. In our day, we don't have a reluctant prophet like Jonah to call us to repentance and fidelity; we have Jesus himself, who showed us what it means to serve, sacrifice, and show mercy. He doesn't want us to settle for just doing an okay job and being kind of good sometimes. He wants us to be the best version of ourselves with the gifts that we have been given. In this season of Lent, we prepare our minds, hearts, and souls to celebrate Easter,



and we make good habits that last beyond these 40 days. God keeps calling us to come back to him with our whole heart. Let's work on that this Lent, praying just a little bit more, fasting a little more, and giving a little more. You and I have something greater than Jonah here — we have Jesus himself, in the Word, in the Eucharist, and where two or more are gathered in his name.

Neil Wack, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For the Church, that it may renew the hearts of the faithful and make new the face of the Earth. R
- For people everywhere that they may spend more time with God this Lenten season, preparing a place in their hearts for the Risen Jesus. R
- That God may place in our hearts the desire to make Christ the center of our lives, our families, and our home. R
- For our own intercessions. R

*The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

O God, as we continue our Lenten journey, we ask that you cleanse us of every distraction so that we may be single-minded in our wait for the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

**March 2, 2023 | Day 9**  
**Thursday, Week One**

*Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, help us to be patient in times when our requests seem to go unheard or when our needs seem to be ignored. It's not you who doesn't listen or respond, but us in our preoccupations and worry that we don't hear or see your message. Open our hearts and minds to know our true needs, to humbly ask, and to listen in the stillness of our hearts for your reply. Amen.

*Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)

Today Jesus tells his disciples to be persistent in prayer by using the simple example of a man asking his neighbor for bread late in the evening. Even if the neighbor doesn't want to do it out of kindness, eventually, he will get up and give him the bread because of his persistence. God is infinitely better than this, but we still need to ask. Why do we sometimes have to ask more than once if God can do anything in an instant? Well, like any good parent, God doesn't want us to get spoiled, and perhaps we are asking for something that isn't really what we need. Jesus asks, "What father would give a child a snake when he asks for a fish?" (Luke 11:11) His disciples must have laughed at such an absurd notion. And yet it proved his point — our heavenly Father will give us what we need when we ask for it. The challenge is that what we actually need may not be what we THINK we need, so we must trust in the will of God. "Ask, and you shall receive...seek, and you shall find...knock, and the door will be opened to you." Our merciful God is here, patiently, persistently, waiting at the door of our hearts to accept his mercy and to live in his love.

Neil Wack, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For the Church, may it be worthy of its holy calling. R
- For ears and hearts that open to the quiet whisper of God's voice within. R
- For those who walk in darkness, may God light the path that leads all to him. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

God of mercy and love, help us to lift our eyes so you are always in our sight. Help us to stay focused so you are always on our minds. Help us to pray constantly so you are always on our lips. Help us this Lenten season, O Lord, to place our hope in you. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 3, 2023 | Day 10

### Friday, Week One

#### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, we come to you as fallen people, struggling and broken by our sins and the sins of our world. Yet, through the Death and Resurrection of your Son, we are freed from this darkness and are invited to walk in the light of Christ. Help us, therefore, this Lenten season to commit ourselves to reconciliation and the cultivation of a forgiving heart that extends love and mercy to all. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Thus says the Lord God: If the wicked man turns away from all the sins he committed, if he keeps all my statutes and does what is right and just, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of the crimes he committed shall be remembered against him; he shall live because of the virtue he has practiced. (Ezekiel 18:21-22)

“Turn away from sin, and be faithful to the Gospel.” Perhaps you heard those words as you received the ashes on Ash Wednesday. Ezekiel prophesied that if a wicked man turns away from his evil ways, none of the crimes he committed will be remembered. The LORD does not derive pleasure from the death of the wicked. Instead, he rejoices when we turn from evil. God could mark our iniquities and condemn every one of us, but he wants us to be reconciled with him and to walk in the light of Christ. He does not want us mired in the darkness of sin. Jesus tells his listeners to reconcile with their neighbor on the way to the altar. We do this symbolically during Mass, at the Sign of Peace. We may not be next to those with whom we need to reconcile, but then again, often, we need to forgive those closest to us, like our family members. How joyous would the Eucharist be, and how much better would our lives be, if we sought reconciliation? Lent affords us many opportunities to be reconciled to God through Confession and to cultivate a forgiving heart. Let us pray for the grace to settle our differences, to turn away from our sins, and be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who showered his mercy from the Cross onto the world.

Neil Wack, C.S.C.

#### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

#### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That those in need of forgiveness may experience God’s infinite mercy. R
- For those in need of forgiveness from another, may they have the courage to take the first step towards reconciliation. R
- That we may always be quick to forgive those who have sinned against us. R
- For our own intentions. R

#### *The Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

#### *Closing Prayer*

O God, forgive us our indifference. Forgive us for our selfishness. Forgive us for our cruelty. Forgive us our hatred. Forgive us for our unkind judgment of others. For you so loved the world, you gave us your only Son for our salvation. Help us to remember this gift as a sign of your love and mercy and the good we can become. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 4, 2023 | Day 11

### Saturday, Week One

#### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, let us always remember that you have called us to be a source of your love here on Earth. Help us to bring your infinite compassion and goodness to all we encounter this day, especially those who make it difficult for us to love them. We ask for courage, strength, and grace as we seek to love and pray for them most of all. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:44-45)

Jesus never asks us to do something that he wouldn’t do. If we are to be his disciples, then we have to pick up our crosses and follow in his footsteps. That leads to Calvary, where the Cross stood as the pulpit of love and forgiveness. In the Gospel, Jesus tells us to love our enemies and to do good to those who hate us. That is challenging teaching! It’s no wonder that some people left Jesus after hearing his message. To love our enemies means praying for them, being kind to them, and, hardest of all, forgiving them. To give mercy, we must first accept the mercy that God freely gives us, regularly asking him for forgiveness for our sins. Wonderfully, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is readily available during this Lenten season. Maybe you’ve done something too big to be forgiven, but God’s mercy is much bigger than any sin we have committed. Through that sacrament, the Lord frees our hearts of the darkness of anger and grudges so that we can follow his example of mercy and love, joining our hearts to his merciful Sacred Heart. We seek to be perfect like our heavenly Father to be with him in heaven. His mercy and love endure forever!

Neil Wack, C.S.C.

## *Capture Your Own Reflection*

### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For those who are being persecuted that they may find hope, comfort, and strength in a good and gracious God. R
- For persecutors, that God may rescue them from their dark ways so that their hardened hearts may once again be open to God's great love. R
- For those who make it difficult for us to love them, that we may remember to love and pray for them most of all. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

O God, you tell us that we must love all, including those who are challenging to love and even those who persecute or have sinned against us. Help us to take your love to heart so that we may always see the face of your Son, Jesus Christ, in all we meet. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## **Sunday, March 5, 2023 Second Sunday of Lent**

Fifth Station: Simon helps Jesus carry his Cross

Sixth Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Presented by Rev. Fred Jenga, C.S.C.



Fr. Fred is a Holy Cross priest from Uganda. He made his final vows in the Congregation in 2005 and was ordained a priest the same year. He has a doctorate in communication from the University of Texas at Austin, and has worked in parish ministry, seminary formation, and higher education. He serves as president of Holy Cross Family Ministries – a ministry that was founded by “Rosary Priest” Venerable Patrick Peyton, who was known for the message “The Family that Prays Together Stays Together.”

*The retreat conference takes place live at 7:00 p.m. Eastern. Please login to Zoom 5 to 10 minutes before the retreat webinar begins – [lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org](https://lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org)*



## March 6, 2023 | Day 13

### Monday, Week Two

#### *Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

God of love and forgiveness, when we are hurt and find forgiveness difficult, help us to embrace the words of your Son, “if you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you.” We realize, God, that our strength isn’t sufficient, and we need your help. As your mercy is so graciously bestowed upon us, may we offer it to those who offend us. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Forgive and you will be forgiven. (Luke 6:36-38)

A catechist I know in Kampala, Uganda, tells a story of how he was arrested and spent more than 18 years in jail for a crime he never committed. His troubles started with a land ownership-related dispute with another family. Somehow he ended up being accused by that same family of murder. In 1981 the catechist was arrested and tried, and in 1982 the court proved “beyond reasonable doubt” that he was responsible. He received a death sentence.

For more than 18 years, he knew he was innocent, but he had no way of proving his innocence. Day in and day out, he lived in fear of the hangman’s noose. He felt angry, betrayed, abandoned, and hopeless. While in prison, he joined the Catholic prison ministry that helped him process his anger and betrayal and also worked on forgiving those who falsely accused him.

One day word reached the catechist that the man he supposedly killed was still alive. He had moved and settled in a different part of Uganda. The catechist appealed the death sentence and won the appeal. He became one of the strongest voices against the death penalty.

Reflection: Is there someone who has hurt or betrayed you in life whom you have never forgiven?

African Proverb: He who forgives ends a quarrel.

Fred Jenga, C.S.C.

#### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

#### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That our Church and its leadership preach and practice the virtue of mercy. R
- For those whose hearts and spirits are broken by offense, that God’s mercy prevails. R
- For the love of justice and truth in our hearts and those in leadership positions. R
- For those that care for the forgotten, the imprisoned, the poor, the sick, and the dying. R
- For our own intentions. R

#### *The Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

#### *Closing Prayer*

Loving Father, cleanse our hearts and minds to see the path of forgiveness you have for each of us. Let us not be burdened by hurt, controlled by anger and disappointment, but free us to love as you love, act as you act, and witness the true liberation of forgiving. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 7, 2023 | Day 14

### Tuesday, Week Two

#### *Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

God our Father, you are the source of all goodness. Our efforts are sometimes a sad representation of what you call us to be. Our goodness can be motivated out of a desire for recognition or admiration and less out of a perfect love of our neighbor. Help us to be good as you are good, to love as you love, and to show compassion as you do, not just on occasion but always. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Learn to do good. (Isaiah 1:10, 16-20)

I was in grade school in the 1980s when neo-liberal economic reforms known as the Structural Adjustment Programs were imposed upon poor African countries by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The measures were supposed to turn around the countries’ failing economies. Governments were ordered to liberalize the economy, privatize public enterprises, and adopt austere economic measures.

All of a sudden many of our parents found themselves out of work. As a result, we, the children, found ourselves without the financial means to stay in school. While I passed Uganda’s Primary Leaving Examination with distinction, I had no financial support to continue on to high school.

An American Holy Cross priest, who had served for years in Uganda, heard my story and offered to help. He paid the tuition fees and bought the uniforms and supplies I needed throughout my high school career. The gesture turned my life around. I have been a priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross for 17 years.

Reflection: In what practical way have you thought about doing good this Lenten season?

African Proverb: Do not settle in a village where the harvest is plentiful. Settle in a village where people are kind.

Fred Jenga, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For the Church as it continues its Lenten journey, may the hope and peace of the Risen Christ inspire it to transform the world. R
- For nations everywhere that this Lenten season will be a time of peace. R
- That God may grant us humility and free us from pride and self-reliance so we may show his goodness to all we encounter. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

Good and gracious God, may our efforts to pray, fast, and give alms this Lent be motivated by a genuine desire to follow Christ and emulate his goodness. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

*Make the Sign of the Cross.*

**March 8, 2023 | Day 15**  
**Wednesday, Week Two**

*Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

God, give us the wisdom and perseverance to make this Lent one to elevate our souls to new heights in our devotion to you, your Church, and your people. Where we see injustice and hatred, let us witness truth and love. Embolden us to be your voice to speak the truth with charity, your feet to carry your good news, and your hands to hold the hands of others who need accompaniment. Amen.

*Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Come, let us strike him. (Jeremiah 18:18-20)

The prophet Jeremiah dared challenge sin and social injustices in the society where he lived. Unfortunately, it rubbed his audiences the wrong way. It put him on a collision course with his listeners. Those he made uncomfortable with his truth plotted to kill him. “Come on,” they said, “let us make plots against Jeremiah. Let us slander him and pay no attention what he says.”

Standing up for truth requires fortitude. Many people we celebrate the world over stood up for truth or justice and were willing to take risks for what they valued and considered morally correct. Some lost friends and family members. Some lost respect from close associates. Some even paid with their own lives. To stir the conscience of society, people such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, Saint Teresa of Calcutta, Abraham Lincoln, and Caesar Chavez needed a lot of courage to stay the course.

Reflection: In what ways can you courageously witness to the truth and work for social justice?

African Proverb: He who looks for honey in the forest must have the courage to face the bees.

Fred Jenga, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For saints, martyrs, and all those who seek God's justice through word and example. R
- For those who work for justice among the most disenfranchised of our world. R
- For those who die selflessly for the good of the Kingdom of God. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

God, our world needs voices who speak for truth and justice. May the examples of Martin Luther King Jr., Saint Teresa, and others we admire inspire our witness with complete abandonment of self. Let our voices and prayers join others to transform the world in your name. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 9, 2023 | Day 16

### Thursday, Week Two

#### *Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

God, open our eyes to see the needs of others who surround us and let us have the wisdom to be present, the patience to accept, and the courage to respond as you call us to do. Let us not be hurried, preoccupied, and self-centered at the expense of serving your children. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

At his gate there used to lie a poor man called Lazarus, who longed to fill himself with what fell from the rich man's table. (Luke 16:19-31)

In many African cultures, greetings are elaborate and can go on for a long time. But what is the purpose of the ritual of greeting in human societies? A greeting lets the other party know that you see, acknowledge, respect, love, and value them.

Our contemporary world is increasingly evolving into a world where people do not clearly see others, value them, or care about them. The sin of indifference led to the eternal damnation of the unnamed rich man in Jesus' parable of poor Lazarus. The rich man didn't see Lazarus. While the rich man had more than enough to eat daily, he overlooked the needs of Lazarus, who lived right next to his door.

Reflection: During this Lenten season, how can I practice better empathy for others?

African Proverb: A child who is not embraced by the village – some day will burn it down so as to feel its warmth.

Fred Jenga, C.S.C.

#### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

#### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For those who put their trust in God's Providence, even when it is difficult to do so. R
- For those who die daily to self in service of others and the Kingdom of God. R
- For those who lead by example and not only by word. R
- For our own intentions. R

#### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

#### *Closing Prayer*

God, how often have we turned our gaze away from the hurting, hungry, and homeless, knowing we could do something yet failing to act? Help us surrender our fears and apprehensions to you so we may be instruments of love and grace, building your kingdom here on Earth. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 10, 2023 | Day 17

### Friday, Week Two

#### *Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

God, in our frail human form, we tend to compare ourselves to others, wish for things we don't have, and hope for a seemingly better life or circumstances. We often fail to recognize you love us as we are and where we are – we need nothing more. Help us find contentment in the gift of love you have given us and be grateful daily for your many blessings. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Here comes this dreamer. Come, let us kill him. (Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a)

In several cultures, envy and jealousy are blurred and indistinguishable. However, the two are not the same. Envy is the desire to possess property that belongs to someone else, while jealousy is the desire to possess affection meant for someone else. Joseph was a son loved by his father, Jacob, who made Joseph a beautifully decorated coat. The brothers of Joseph were jealous of the love he got from their father, and they envied his decorated coat. So they plotted to kill him.

We have witnessed situations where jealousy and envy combined to destroy an innocent person. Divine Providence tends to redeem the victims in such cases. We have also seen jealousy and envy destroy local organizations, communities, and entire nations. As human tendencies, envy and jealousy are significant obstacles to spiritual growth because they stand in the way of the love of our neighbor.

Reflection: Have you ever been a victim or a perpetrator of jealousy or envy? Pray for your healing and personal growth in benevolence and contentedness.

African Proverb: Envy and greed grow on the same stalk.

Fred Jenga, C.S.C.

#### *Capture Your Own Reflection*



*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For all who have lost their way, may they always be shown the path back home to the infinite and merciful love of God. R
- For the Church, that she may continue to readily welcome back her people who have wandered astray and unite them to Christ through the sacrament of reconciliation. R
- For our children and other family members who have left the Church, may they find their way home to God and their parish community. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

God, with you all things are possible. Help us to surrender all our traits and foibles that keep us from undivided love for you and your people. Help us to be instruments of peace so that we sow seeds of kindness, compassion, and love that reflect all you give to us. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

**March 11, 2023 | Day 18**  
**Saturday, Week Two**

*Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

God, how is our Lent progressing? How do you think we are doing? If we are falling short in our commitments this Lent, God, help us regroup and get on the right path. There's still time to make this Lent impactful not just for us but also for all those with whom we encounter. Please help us be beacons, shining our Lenten promises to a world that needs what you offer. Amen.

*Scripture Quote For Reflection*

This your brother was dead, and he is alive. (Luke 15:1-3, 11-32)

I have an elder brother who, for years, struggled with alcohol addiction. He could not hold a job. He had a family, but he abandoned it. My sister-in-law shouldered the burden of taking care of the children. As a family, we tried everything to rehabilitate my brother, but we were frustrated. We counseled and prayed for him, but nothing seemed to work. He would stay sober for a few months and return to the bottle.

One person who did not seem to give up on my brother was his wife, my sister-in-law. She always welcomed him back and tried to support him through his recovery. Consistent and unconditional

love eventually paid off. My brother has been in sobriety for more than 12 years. He is active in our local Church and present in his family's life. A brother who was dead to us is now alive.

Reflection: The Prodigal Son's story is about God's unconditional love. No matter what we have done in life or how far we had gone away from him, God still loves us and deeply cares about us.

African Proverb: Love, like rain, does not choose the grass on which to fall.

Fred Jenga, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For those unable to find the deepest longing in their lives. R
- For those just beginning their journey to God. R
- For spiritual leaders who help others come to know God more fully. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

God, help us bring life to everyone we see today, through a smile or a kind word, with a hug, or a conversation. You have given us the right amount of time to make a difference, time we don't always use well, but with your grace we can make the time we have more meaningful by sharing it with others and giving honor and glory to your name. Help us use the time you've given us more wisely. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## Sunday, March 12, 2023 Third Sunday of Lent

Seventh Station: Jesus falls the second time

Eighth Station: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

Presented by Rev. John Donato, C.S.C.



Fr. John is the vice president for Student Affairs at the University of Portland. In his role, he oversees the Division of Student Affairs that includes the offices of Campus Ministry, Health & Counseling Center, Student Activities, Moreau Center for Service and Justice, Residence Life, and Campus Safety.

From 2007 to 2015, he served as the associate vice president for student development at the university. Additionally, Fr. John has served as the deputy Title IX coordinator for students, co-chair of the Early Alert Program, director and senior associate director of Campus Ministry, and has taught as an adjunct instructor in the theology department.

Along with his role at the University of Portland, Fr. John sits on the Association of Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities board and is a member of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. Additionally, he is a member of the honorary American Educational Research Associate.

During the first nine years of his priestly ministry, he served in parishes in California, Indiana, and Florida. Before beginning his role in university administration, Fr. John served as the director of human formation at Mount Angel Seminary. He is also currently the pastoral resident of Schoenfeldt Hall.

*The retreat conference takes place live at 7:00 p.m. Eastern. Please login to Zoom 5 to 10 minutes before the retreat webinar begins — [lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org](https://lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org)*

## March 13, 2023 | Day 20 Monday, Week Three

### *Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

God of simplicity and surprises, let us be open to this prayer time before you. Your Holy Spirit guides us along the way of our Lenten journey. As we search for you and our thirst for living waters grows, wash us clean of our sin and make us a new creation through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

### *Scripture Quotes For Reflection*

The prophet sent him the message, “Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will heal, and you will be clean.” But Naaman went away angry. (2 Kings 5:10-11)

Athirst is my soul for the Living God; when shall I go and behold the face of God? (Psalm 42:3)

Recall, too, the many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; yet none of them was cured except Naaman the Syrian. (Luke 4:27)

Serving my first Easter Vigil at 10 years old, I witnessed the first adult Baptism in my life. The congregation stretched their necks and stood on tippy toes to catch a glimpse of the transforming moment when the priest poured water over their heads and invoked the names of the Holy Trinity. As the server, I was standing close by, amazed at how the whole assembly focused on these specially called people and how beautiful the transformation on those newly baptized faces. The Church was electric with love and hope and gratitude. In a mysterious way, we all shared in the Sacrament that evening.

Yet normally we have a challenging time accepting God’s unconditional love, especially as it comes to us in such simple ways. Naaman’s washing in the Jordan reminds us that we do not need perfect faith, just the willingness to accept whatever God asks of us. When John baptized Jesus in the Jordan, he set the pattern for all Baptisms in the future. Blessed with God’s love since the moment we were conceived in the heart of God, we spend our lives searching again for this first love even when our human sinfulness tells us to give up.

As unpredictable as God can be, let’s open our hearts to the love of God that comes to us undeservedly, causing unseen but real changes within us, in our families, our communities, and the world. We have been washed fully clean in the Sacrament through simple signs of water and prayer. We can continue to be renewed in our adoption as God’s children.

John Donato, C.S.C.

### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

### **Intercessions**

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For our Church communities, all those preparing to be baptized at the Easter Vigil, and for their families. R
- For individual hearts that yearn to be made new and receive God's love again. R
- For our world that is in need of cleansing and renewal, lasting peace, and justice. R
- For the protection of Earth's many environments and clean water for all. R
- For our own intentions. R

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### **Closing Prayer**

Loving Father, whose love washes us clean and makes us new, thank you for loving us from the beginning. As your beloved children, let us make the world around us new. Open our hearts to your simple ways; open our eyes to your presence always around us; and let our hands be ready to assist others on their journeys toward discovering your love in their lives. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## **March 14, 2023 | Day 21 Tuesday, Week Three**

### **Opening Prayer** *Make the Sign of the Cross*

Father God, as we begin our prayer time with you, help us not to hide who we are, with faults and weaknesses you know so well. May we let go of all that keeps us from knowing and loving you so we can hear your Spirit stir our hearts. We give you even the injuries we still feel others have unjustly inflicted on us, the bitterness we might still have, so we can taste the sweetness of your fountain anew, welling up within us to new life. Amen

### **Scripture Quotes For Reflection**

Do not take away your mercy. (Daniel 3:35)

With contrite heart and humble spirit, let us be received. (Daniel 3:39)

Moved with compassion, the master of that servant let him go and forgave the loan. (Matthew 18:27)

Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you? (Matthew 18:33)

So will my heavenly Father do to each of you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35)

What does it mean to be forgiven and to be a forgiver? Maybe our hands were caught in some proverbial cookie jar, and we were resentful of being caught or scared of what might happen to us, to our plans. Did this lead us to be genuinely embarrassed? Humbled? Most certainly not. Yet did we ever feel the brokenness that made us fall on our knees and plead for forgiveness?

Forgiveness sets us free. Free to live without such an enormous burden and to leap with joy. Liberated by forgiveness, we have freedom again, a freedom that recognizes the enormity of the gift and one that frees us from our pettiness and self-centered stinginess. The source resides in the supreme value of relationships with people over things, of community over unbridled willfulness.

What does it take for us to internalize this gift of freedom? What can allow us not to grasp too tightly or lash out in anger at a fellow companion?

Being forgiven means we are set free to love ourselves for the goodness that is who we are at our God-created core. Self-acceptance born of forgiveness cuts the strings of all obligations to control another. We and others can be free to live as God fully wants us to. Let us cast aside our fair share so others can thrive and be free.

John Donato, C.S.C.

### **Capture Your Own Reflection**

### **Intercessions**

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For forgiveness, that we may always cherish the gift of freedom restored to us. R
- For those still unable to accept forgiveness because of their pride or emotional trauma. R
- That the Church, which has not always been an instrument of peace and healing, is forgiven the sins of the past by our leaders and community so that healing may begin. R
- For countries and peoples at war and for an end to all forms of violence and destruction. R
- For our own intentions. R

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.



### ***Closing Prayer***

Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with your love! Let the breath of your words of forgiveness make us new again. Set us free to be as you created us and enable us to love others as Jesus did. Let us lay down our lives, even for others who do not know what they are doing. May we follow the example of Jesus who set sinners free and trusted entirely in the love of Abba Father. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## **March 15, 2023 | Day 22 Wednesday, Week Three**

### ***Opening Prayer*** *Make the Sign of the Cross*

Loving God, we come before you with complete trust in you and your merciful love. We ask for your gentle guidance on our journey this day. Through your Son, you reveal the wisdom of your law of love and give us the eternal pledge of your presence in our lives. Grant us your grace as we meditate on your word. Amen.

### ***Scripture Quotes For Reflection***

Observe them (statues and decrees) carefully; for thus will you give evidence of your wisdom and intelligence to the nations. (Deuteronomy 4:6)

Do you think I have not come to abolish the law or the prophets? I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place. (Matthew 5:17-18)

As a guide for us to live and thrive, we are taught early on how to add or subtract, multiply, and divide so that we know the ways of the world. It ensures that we won't be cheated along the way. We learn how to avoid being cheated, and that some people are cheaters. We learn how to succeed in business matters and understand the value of money, possessions, and work itself. When we apply this to our personal or institutional budgets, our values are seen in our policies and practices.

Christian formation for many of us began when we were children. Eventually, we grow older and independent and have to make critical choices. I remember studying for my first driver's license test and thinking of some rules I would never need. Yet as I lived longer and moved around the country, I realized the value in them and the different types of roads I would encounter. Similarly, God's law of love guides us down the road of life and foreshadows the challenges we might find as we strive to live as a child of God. To be faithful sojourners with all those we meet and situations we may encounter, we need God's law.

Where is my life leading me through the choices I make? What values do I need along the way to keep me safe and serve my family well? Our home is not just an address but the holiest of lands, the eternal life in the presence of the Giver of the law of love.

John Donato, C.S.C.

### ***Capture Your Own Reflection***

### ***Intercessions***

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For the grace of receiving and understanding the wisdom shared with us. R
- For blessings upon our parents, teachers, coaches, and civil servants. R
- For the safety and mission of those who respond in crisis and times of war and unrest. R
- For wisdom and courage for all those who teach the law of love in our world today. R
- For our own intentions. R

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### ***Closing Prayer***

Christ, our Teacher, please be our guide and solace this day. May your holy light bring clarity and confidence as we navigate all the complexities that we face in our lives. May our family remain in your love, may we partner with those of goodwill, and finally come to build an earthly dwelling reflecting our heavenly homeland. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## **March 16, 2023 | Day 23 Thursday, Week Three**

### ***Opening Prayer*** *Make the Sign of the Cross*

Come, Holy Spirit, enlighten our minds and hearts during this time of prayer. Through the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ, we hear in the Sacred Scriptures, and we form our hearts to know you so that our lives are open to your grace. Amen.

### ***Scripture Quotes For Reflection***

This is what I commanded my people: Listen to my voice; then I will be your God, and you shall be my people. (Jeremiah 7:23)

If Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? ... If it is by the finger of God that I drive out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you. (Luke 11:18;20)

We are in constant dialogue with ourselves and our world. For example, the Internet allows us to hear so many voices, sometimes utterly contrary to who we are and who we want to be. Our inner voice helps us discern what to do, where to go, and how to respond. Yet, are we also listening for wisdom, a new insight, a better and holy way?

Jeremiah begs us to hear God’s commandments and listen to God’s voice. And when Jesus commanded the mute demon to leave, he silenced all the contrary voices in the man so he could speak. The healed man’s first words were praise and thanks. How glorious that is! This dispelled people’s doubts and negative thinking, even the other kinds of sin that suggest a demonic conspiracy. Those who live freely, hearts attuned to the voice of the Lord, will speak praise and thanks and show themselves as children of God.

As Pope Francis has invited the whole Church into an experience of syndonality and discernment of God’s will for the Church, we are blessed to listen to the Holy Spirit at work in our lives and share this with our communities. Together we learn to speak words of thanks and praise in a world so much in need of God’s wisdom. When we hear God’s voice in our hearts and see God’s presence active in our lives, we know we are his, and he is ours.

John Donato, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For Pope Francis and all leaders of our Church who are listening for the voice and work of the Holy Spirit in our community today. R
- For those who find it challenging to find a quiet place and time for listening to God because of their life circumstances, that peace may be theirs. R
- For the deaf community and all those with different disabilities who struggle to communicate with others for any reason, that they may have advocates and healers to assist them. R
- For families of origin, of choice, of churches, of schools and their needs this day. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

Good and gracious God, give us your Holy Spirit to guide us this day. May we come to declare our thanks and praise throughout the day and at the end of our days. Bless our families, places of work, and worship, and keep us safe on the roads we travel. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit God, for ever and ever. Amen.  
*Make the Sign of the Cross.*

**March 17, 2023 | Day 24**  
**Friday, Week Three**

*Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

Lord Jesus, you invite us to visit with you regularly, to take time aside to refresh ourselves from our labors in the fields of our lives. Grant this time of prayer be one of insight and wisdom, hope and renewal. Make our Lenten journey fruitful by your spirit. Amen.

*Scripture Quotes For Reflection*

I will heal their defection, says the Lord, and love them freely. (Hosea 14:5)

Hear, O Israel, the Lord is God alone. (Mark 12:29)

On Fridays of Lent, we are invited to meditate on the suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Saint Patrick, so convinced of the Trinitarian life we share, believed we are to keep Christ always before us. He would have appreciated that we mark his feast day on a Friday, remembering the Lord’s sacrifice, and all of us wearing green (or not). He would revel in our focus on God’s unconditional love for us, revealed in the mystery of the Cross.

The prophet Hosea declares God’s love freely heals our defection as God’s mercy has no limits and eternally seeks us, for we are his always. “The Lord is God alone,” echoed in both testaments, introduces the law of God in our hearts. Love of God and our neighbor as ourselves is our call and our challenge. We see this manifest in the sacrifice of frontline workers, in healthcare, and defense of freedom by members of the armed forces. Our love of the Lord is also in little, often unseen and unnoticed service: teachers assisting a struggling student, farm workers gathering our food, parents caring for their children, and sometimes children for their parents.

The cross we carry is for others. We have an opportunity to join our suffering with the redemptive work of Jesus on the Cross. The journey to heaven begins with the intention of the heart that frames love of our neighbor as an act of love for God. It is our mutual journey, bringing others along the way, that makes the journey toward heaven present to us even now.

John Donato, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

### **Intercessions**

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For all those suffering the burden of the cross in their lives today, that they may know they share in a holy and purifying gift by their union with the suffering Christ. R
- For all those celebrating St. Patrick's Day today, may they come to a deeper appreciation of the faith in the Trinity that so motivated the ministry of such a great saint. R
- For all those baptized in the Death and Resurrection of Jesus this Easter Vigil, that their call to follow their Master brings them hope and courage on their journey of faith. R
- For those suffering injustices around the world in so many ways, that they may know the love of God is always with them. R
- For our own intentions. R

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.l.

### **Closing Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you call us to follow you on the way to Calvary, to embrace our own cross this day and every day. Heal us of our defections from the path set out for us. Change our denials of the value of the cross in our lives to ones of grateful praise. We thank you for the challenges that ensure we trust in you alone. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## **March 18, 2023 | Day 25**

### **Saturday, Week Three**

### **Opening Prayer** *Make the Sign of the Cross*

Loving God, we thank you for this Lenten season and a time to pray and reflect on our lives and the call you have for us to be whole, healed, and reconciled. We entrust ourselves to you during this time of personal prayer and meditation. We ask for your blessings and peace. Amen.

### **Scripture Quotes For Reflection**

Come, let us return to the Lord; it is he who has rent, but he will heal us; he has struck us, but will bind our wounds. (Hosea 6:1)

He will revive us after two days; on the third day he will raise us up, to live in his presence. ...He will come to us like the rain, like spring rain that waters the earth. (Hosea 6:3)

For it is love that I desire, not sacrifice, and knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. (Hosea 5:6)

I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former, for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted. (Luke 18:14)

Hosea speaks eloquently about our Lenten journey to repent and revive our call as Christians. Lent means springtime, and at its core, the celebration points to finding new life hidden within the sin and suffering, pain and loss, the trials and deaths which come to us in so many forms. Lent is a time of healing because we are called to humbly accept our humanity, our incompleteness, our sins, and our frailty. In doing so, we can be made whole. The more we embrace failure and our discouraging limitations, we can discover new life being born of our hope and trust in God's work.

Whenever our hearts and minds are open to the truth of our lives, all the good and evil, the strivings and conniving, we remember we are dust, that we are nothing on our own. We need God for everything, for alone, we are nothing. And in others, we find our support and are called to humbly offer that support, too. True humility turns to the Lord in the act of loving desperation, a sigh that is satisfied only in being wholly (and thus holy) insufficient and reckoning that our glory is in that honest acknowledgment. The Spirit of God can justify and redeem us from the first moment we begin to accept that we are sinners and is fulfilling our divine call in the longing for the fruitfulness we hope for as we claim the gift of our Redeemer, God's love poured out for us.

John Donato, C.S.C.

### **Capture Your Own Reflection**

### **Intercessions**

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For leaders and those with responsibility, that they may humbly remember those struggling this day. R
- For those aware of their own sinfulness, that they may trust in God's love and mercy. R
- For the healing needed in our world, especially between peoples and nations at war. R
- For the courage and strength to be faithful to you and compassionate to others as you are with us. R
- For our own intentions. R

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### **Closing Prayer**

Loving God, you chose to redeem us sinners through your eternal plan of salvation. We have always been in your heart, the center of your Being, of Life and Light itself. Call us into a deeper union with you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*



**Sunday, March 19, 2023**  
**Fourth Sunday of Lent**

Ninth Station: Jesus falls a third time

Tenth Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments

Presented by Rev. Daniel J. Issing, C.S.C.



Fr. Daniel was ordained in 1990 and has taught theology and ethics at King's College since 2007. He is the theology department chair and serves on many campus committees. He is an elected member of the provincial council of the U.S. Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross and chairs its higher education commission. Fr. Daniel is a weekend assistant at St. Ignatius Church in Kingston, Pennsylvania.

Fr. Daniel earned a doctorate in ethics and social theory from the Graduate Theological Union and a licentiate in sacred theology from the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, California. He received his M.Div. from the University of Notre Dame, and his bachelor's degree from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. His scholarship focuses on the justice of

Catholic higher education and pedagogies of Catholic Social Teaching.

At Stonehill College, Fr. Daniel developed a student-led, engagement model of campus ministry which was recognized in 1999 by the Templeton Foundation for its success as a character-building program. He pioneered a new service program for the college that included national and international service experiences.

At King's, Fr. Daniel is a professor of moral theology and social ethics. He is known for his highly dialogical classes and innovative local and global justice projects. In addition, he mentors many students in Christian beatitude. Known for his linkage of faith, contemplation, and action, Fr. Daniel preaches retreats, offers spiritual direction, and lectures on matters of church life in parish, diocesan, and religious life contexts.

*The retreat conference takes place live at 7:00 p.m. Eastern. Please login to Zoom 5 to 10 minutes before the retreat webinar begins — [lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org](https://lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org)*

**March 20, 2023 | Day 27**  
**Monday, Week Four**

**Opening Prayer** *Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, give us the grace this Lenten season to follow the example of Saint Joseph, who put all of his trust in you even in the midst of uncertainty, fear, and darkness. Help us to be more faithful in seeking and trusting in your Divine Providence. Amen.

**Scripture Quote For Reflection**

Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. (Matthew 1:20)

What is the road I must travel? Upon learning of Mary's pregnancy without his input, the just Joseph calculates a path that honors his personal integrity and the love he has for Mary. Confusion and hurt do not steer him from righteousness. But God needs more from Joseph than respect and reasonability. By the end of today's gospel, Joseph is a mystic, that is, a man compelled by a divine experience. Saint John of the Cross once said, "If a man wishes to be sure of the road he travels on, he must close his eyes and walk in the dark." Joseph literally closes his eyes and determines to walk by the message of an angel he received in the dark – the dark of a dream and the dark of a situation that confused him. Thus does Joseph incarnate living faith for he will take Mary into his home as if commanded by God and thus walk through this precarious situation according to a higher love; that is, a love born of God's plan of salvation for all humanity. Belief in the Incarnation is one thing. Joseph models how to live the Incarnation as if life depended on it. What road must you travel?

Daniel Issing, C.S.C.

**Capture Your Own Reflection**

**Intercessions**

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That as a Church we may have the courage to walk in the dark to better hear and discern God's plan for us. R
- That those facing challenges and uncertainties will find inspiration in Saint Joseph. R
- That we may learn to live the Incarnation as if life depended on it. R
- For our own intentions. R

**The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

God, you offer Saint Joseph to us as a model. This quiet and faithful servant has inspired many, including the Brothers of Holy Cross who witness his example through their vows and faithful service. We humbly ask for Saint Joseph’s intercession as we seek to emulate his life. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

**March 21, 2023 | Day 28**  
**Tuesday, Week Four**

*Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, you invite all who are burdened to place their trust in you. You invite those with heavy hearts to find comfort in your great love for us and those with broken bodies to be healed in your life-giving water. As we continue on our Lenten journey, have compassion and heal us of all that keeps us from you. Amen.

*Scripture Quote For Reflection*

When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be well?” (John 5:6)

What a kind and wonderful question from Jesus – “Do you want to be well?” Who doesn’t? Yet sometimes, the path to wellness is right in front of us, and we can’t quite get there. As today’s gospel character, crippled for 38 years, we have our excuses: “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool.” (John 5:7) Providentially, Jesus now stands before him and with a command, gives this man new life. “Immediately, the man became well, took up his mat, and walked.” (John 5:9) What a stunning encounter. I beg you not to allow this to be a story of past healing by the grace of God. Instead, bring your own long sufferings to the wide Heart of Jesus. Maybe this is the year of your healing from some longstanding fear, ailment, loss, sorrow, or struggle. Maybe you’ve been fooled before and almost stepped into the pool of healing only to find the suffering quite alive. Maybe you’ve never ventured out! Long suffering invites us to reflect on God, especially why he would allow us to suffer for 38 years or fall again as we are just about to reach the pool of healing. Jesus himself was stripped down to nakedness. God’s ways are not always our ways. Maybe God wants to talk to you today about your long and hidden suffering.

Daniel Issing, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflections*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For those who feel lost and struggle to find their way home to God and the Church. R
- That nations everywhere may come to see this world as the splendor of God’s creation and do all they can to protect and care for it. R
- For those times we find our lives overcome with fear, anger, or sorrow, may we find strength and courage knowing that God’s transformative grace is always within our reach. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

O God, in this holy season of Lent, help us to remember that even in our darkest days you are always with us and that your healing grace is always within our reach. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

**March 22, 2023 | Day 29**  
**Wednesday, Week Four**

*Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, help us to see and embrace Christ as the fulfillment of your promises. Please help us to open our hearts to his saving grace so we may be propelled into service of others and be a light for the world. Amen.

*Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you. (Isaiah 49:15)

What a tender image of God as a never-forgetting and always-caring mother! A mother who is wholly mindful of the child whom once she carried within! Thank you, prophet Isaiah, for describing the reality of God in such wholesome images as today’s prophecy from chapter 49. Prisoners, come out! Those hiding in the darkness, show yourselves! No more hunger. No more thirst. No more harm from the sun or wind! Can you see the road that God has cut through those mountains of hate and fear? If we, who are people of faith, forget – if we despair and don’t see the loving maternity of God – how will the world have hope? How will nations at war make peace? How will divisions within nations and families find an end? Either Jesus is the fulfillment of the promises of God or we are liars! Today’s Scriptures call us to return to our belief in Jesus as the Messiah. Even more, they summon us to a lively faith in nativity, the new thing God is doing in

our time and place. Dare we have the sensitivity and tenderness of “Mother God” to do the work of redeeming the world from sin, reconciling enemies, and restoring the saving bonds of justice and love – as if the life of the universe depended on our maternal love.

Daniel Issing, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That the Church may continually strive to serve the afflicted, set captives free, and bring consolation to those who mourn. R
- That this Easter, our troubled world may finally find peace. R
- That individuals and families will set aside their differences so they may celebrate the joy of Easter together this year. R
- For own intentions. R

*The Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

O God, as Saint Francis prayed – make me a channel of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; and where there is darkness, light. Help us live this prayer each day and conduct our lives so that our words and actions might lead others to you. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

**March 23, 2023 | Day 30**  
**Thursday, Week Four**

*Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

Help us, O God, to reflect deeply on the victory of the Cross this Lenten season so that our hearts and eyes will always be set on things above and not on this world. Free us from the trappings of temporal power, wealth, prestige, and all that hinders us from receiving Christ with open and joyful hearts. Amen.

*Scripture Quote For Reflection*

How can you believe, when you accept praise from one another and do not seek the praise that comes from the only God? (John 5:44)

God will call Moses a friend, and today’s reading from Exodus 32 reflects a conversation between friends. God is downright angry at the Israelites. “I see how stiff-necked these people are. Let me alone, then,” God says to Moses, “that my wrath may blaze up against them to consume them.” (Exodus 32:9-10) In other words, without you in the room, I can act in unconscionable and punishing ways. Moses, however, does not leave God’s presence but implores God with his own logic. Moses reminds God of the story of salvation. “Let your blazing wrath die down,” he says. Cool down and “remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Israel.” (Exodus 32:12-13) It works. God relents, which is to say that God can be convinced by great friends. Jesus has taught us how to become a friend of God. A friend of God stands at the precipices of human sin, feels God’s sorrow and anger, compassionately dies to self, and preaches mercy and new life – both to God and fellow humans. A friend of God is a reconciler. If we are consumed by needing the praise of others we will lack the courage of persecution for the sake of righteousness. We also refuse the praise that comes from God. How is your friendship with God? What courageous action is he asking of you?

Daniel Issing, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That all those who serve the Church see with the eyes of Christ. R
- That those who long for deep fulfillment will discover and embrace the true and living Christ. R
- That this Lenten season we will seek to identify the worldly distractions in our lives so we will not fall into the trap of putting our hope and trust in false gods. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

O God, help us to be true to you this Lenten season. Free us from the pursuit of false gods and worldly idols, and help us to seek the fulfillment and peace that comes only from you. May we wait upon the resurrection of your Son with expectant and longing hearts. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 24, 2023 | Day 31

### Friday, Week Four

#### *Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, today we dwell upon the realization that Christ's call to discipleship is truly a radical one. This can be unsettling as it calls for a complete surrender of self and a total embrace of his compelling truth. Be with us, therefore, and give us the grace, courage, and strength to respond fully and wholeheartedly to him this Lenten season and beyond. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

And look, he is speaking openly and they say nothing about him. Could the authorities have realized that he is the Christ? (John 7:26)

Jesus was controversial. People had to decide about him. It was easy to accept him as a prophet and miracle worker sent from heaven. But was he the Christ and Messiah? The Book of Wisdom lays out the experience of the wicked when it comes to Jesus. "He is obnoxious to us," they say, and why? "Because he sets himself against our doings, reproaches us for our transgressions of the law, and charges us with violations of our training." (Wisdom 2:12) Jesus did not hesitate to call the religious leaders on their misuse of the law. But Jesus was not just another prophet, and there were people in his day who came to see the truth of wisdom. There was something about him that caused in them a censuring of their convictions. "Merely to see him is a hardship for us," they said because there is a compelling truth in his person. And when they did finally revile and torture him, and condemn him to a shameful death, Jesus proved his gentleness and patience inside of God's plan. And God took care of him. Lent reminds us that Jesus should be "obnoxious to us" because he unsettles the way we want the world to be and how we've come to understand it as a matter of religion and culture. He unsettles who and how we want God to be! He disturbs the way we package his message. Right in the places of our own integrity and righteousness, Jesus walks in, speaks openly, and disrupts our security. Yes, "you know me and also know where I am from. Yet I did not come on my own, but the one who sent me, whom you do not know, is true. I know him because I am from him, and he sent me." (John 7:28) May the compelling truth of the person of Jesus Christ save you this Lent.

Daniel Issing, C.S.C.

#### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

#### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That the Church may always embrace the compelling truth of the person of Jesus Christ in all that it does. R
- That as people of faith, we may never lose sight of our world's great need for Christ's saving power. R

- That we will have the wisdom, humility, and courage to hear and live out Christ's truths in our lives. R
- For our own intentions. R

#### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

#### *Closing Prayer*

O God, we pray today in thanksgiving for prophets and other holy men and women who unsettle us by speaking your truth. May their words find fertile soil within our hearts so we will be awakened to our complacency and blindness. Help us repent and prepare a place deep within ourselves to welcome and embrace the Risen Christ. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 25, 2023 | Day 32

### Saturday, Week Four

### Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

#### *Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, today, as we celebrate the Annunciation and approach the final weeks of our Lenten journey, help us to become more like Mary, who emptied herself fully to make room for the Word of God. May we, too, empty ourselves of all that prevents us from loving you and others as we should. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

The angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)

This week of our Lenten journey is bookended with Christmas gospels focusing on Joseph on Monday and Mary today. Incarnation is redemption! Redemption is Incarnation. Christmas and Easter are the single mystery of our faith, the two sides of faith's coin. God became human to save humanity from sin and death. We are invited, as Mary and Joseph, to say yes, to sing with Mary with all that we are and have: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38) So consider yourself this day invited, on the cusp of week five of Lent, to live no longer with yourself at the center but to leave space for God through prayer and service of neighbor. As Pope Benedict XVI once said of Mary, "She is lowly. She knows that she will only contribute to the salvation of the world if, rather than carrying out her own projects, she places herself completely at the disposal of God's initiatives." ("Deus Caritas Est", December 25, 2005) This sounds like good spiritual advice as we conclude this fourth week of Lent, the week of



Laetare, on the feast of the Annunciation. May you be completely imbued with the Word of God so as to become Mary, the loving mother, or Joseph, the loving father of the Word Incarnate. What do you need to clear away from the center of your being to make room for the Word of God? May your whole being, from the inside out, magnify the Lord this rest of Lent!

Daniel Issing, C.S.C.

### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For the Church, that devotion to our Blessed Mother increases as a means to learn how to love Christ more fully. R
- Through Our Lady's intercession, help us to restore peace and solidarity in our unforgiving world. R
- For those who struggle to give themselves fully to God, that the example of perseverance we see in the Virgin Mary guide them. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

Hail Holy Queen, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. We ask for your assistance so that we, too, may put all of our trust in God and his Divine Providence. Turn your eyes of mercy towards us, O Holy Mother, so we may be true to our calling as people of faith. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## **Sunday, March 26, 2023**

### **Fifth Sunday of Lent**

Eleventh Station: Jesus is nailed to the Cross

Twelfth Station: Jesus dies on the Cross

Presented by Rev. Bruce K. Cecil, C.S.C.



Fr. Bruce is a theology and history teacher and chaplain at Moreau Catholic High School in Hayward, California. He has worked in high school ministry for 12 years. Before that, Fr. Bruce served in several Holy Cross parishes in the United States that minister to Hispanic Catholics. He started as a deacon and then as associate pastor at St. Stephen's Parish, which ministered to a community of Latinos and Hungarians in South Bend, Indiana. Next he served as pastor at a predominantly Hispanic parish in Phoenix, Arizona. Before he began high school ministry, Fr. Bruce served as pastor of a Hispanic parish in Coachella, California.

Fr. Bruce was born in Louisville, Kentucky. He grew up in northern Kentucky and southern Indiana. He completed undergraduate studies in journalism, political science, and secondary education at Indiana University in Bloomington, then worked as a newspaper reporter and editor for "The Indianapolis Star" for five years. Following that, he studied at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, where he earned a degree in mechanical engineering. He worked briefly for General Motors Corp. in Detroit, Michigan, and Lockheed Aerospace Co. in Sunnyvale, California. After that, Fr. Bruce completed his master's degree in theology at the University of Notre Dame and took final vows as a member of the Congregation of Holy Cross. He also spent a year working at a Holy Cross parish in Monterrey, Mexico, where he learned to communicate in Spanish.

*The retreat conference takes place live at 7:00 p.m. Eastern. Please login to Zoom 5 to 10 minutes before the retreat webinar begins — [lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org](https://lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org)*

## March 27, 2023 | Day 34

### Monday, Week Five

#### **Opening Prayer** *Make the Sign of the Cross*

God, we have all experienced the pain of the Cross. It's not always easy to be a Christian, but Christ revealed to us the Cross is our only hope. In Christ, we find liberation and joy that comes from being his disciple. Help us to put our sufferings and hardships at the feet of his Cross and look to the promise of his Resurrection. Amen

#### **Scripture Quote For Reflection**

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning, he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him. Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore." (John 8:1-11)

Today's famous story of Jesus' encounter with the woman caught in adultery zooms in on God's mercy and forgiveness. As a child, I was taught not to point a finger at someone because three fingers would point back at me. The enemies of Jesus point a finger at the woman, but Jesus reminds them that they, too, are sinners. The good news in today's Gospel is that God loves us, no matter the circumstances, no matter how we have sinned, and even when we point fingers critically at someone else. Psalm 103 tells us that God throws our sins "as far as the east is from the west." In other words, God loves us unconditionally in spite of our sins, just like parents love their children even when their children disappoint or do something wrong. Jesus refuses to condemn the woman. The story reminds us to imitate Jesus, forgiving others instead of condemning them. The story also puts into stark contrast the difference in Jesus' attitude compared to that of the scribes and Pharisees. It reminds me of how often I can be like those scribes and Pharisees instead of Jesus. As a friend once quipped, reminding me of our tendency to judge, "Jesus tells us to turn the other cheek, but the problem is that most of us would rather turn the other guy's cheek."

I once heard a story of a man on the New York subway who was letting his children run wild on the train. Needless to say, it irritated all the passengers. Then the man explained that he was bone tired and distracted because he and the kids were just leaving the hospital, where their mother

was dying of cancer. Whenever I get angry or irritated at someone, I try to remind myself that I do not know their whole story, otherwise I might be more empathetic and understanding and less critical and judgmental of them. Maybe I should try to walk in that other person's shoes! Ironically, the scribes and Pharisees in today's story aren't even interested in the woman (or her sin). They are just using the woman as their pawn to trick and test Jesus. Am I also guilty of using others or belittling them because of my own jealousy, pettiness, or insecurity? At the end of today's story, Jesus never condones the sin itself, and he even challenges the woman to go and sin no more. We, too, are challenged to fess up to our own sinfulness and to strive to sin no more. But because we are weak human beings who will continue to sin, this story is truly good news. It reminds us that even amid our own sinfulness, God will never stop loving us.

Bruce Cecil, C.S.C.

#### **Capture Your Own Reflection**

#### **Intercessions**

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For those who experience conflict that challenges their faith. R
- For those who feel disgraced, unworthy of the love of God. R
- For those who feel lost and struggle to find their way home to God and the Church. R
- For our own intentions. R

#### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

#### **Closing Prayer**

God, do our judgments of others demean or lift those we judge? Are they sources of aggrandizement or do they inspire us to do better? When we look at others, God, help us to look with the eyes of your Son, with compassion and love, not through a lens tainted by our prejudices. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 28, 2023 | Day 35

### Tuesday, Week Five

#### **Opening Prayer** *Make the Sign of the Cross*

God, we lift our hearts to you, hearts that have the capacity for greatness but are burdened by our sins. Cleanse our hearts, O God, so they are filled with your grace and, with your grace, able to serve others in love and charity. Amen.

### **Scripture Quote For Reflection**

“The one who sent me is true, and what I heard from him I tell the world.” They did not realize that he was speaking to them of the Father. So Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I AM, and that I do nothing on my own, but I say only what the Father taught me. The one who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to him.” (John 8:26-29)

Of all four Gospels, John’s Gospel gives us the most exalted portrayal of Jesus in his divinity. From the very start of John’s Gospel, we learn the great Christian mystery that Jesus is the “Word made flesh,” and in our passage today, Jesus identifies himself as God by calling himself I AM, which in Hebrew is the divine name for God, Yahweh. In today’s Gospel passage, we see Jesus as he again confronts his enemies, the Pharisees, telling them that “I am going away,” in anticipation of his Death and Resurrection, which will reveal once and for all his true identity as God. This “going away” is what we celebrate during these days of Lent, and as we prepare to celebrate Easter. Alongside John’s exalted portrayal of Jesus as divine, as a God who is transcendent, we also see the other side of the coin. He reveals the mystery of “God as Trinity,” in which there is a deep, intimate, tender relationship between God, the Father, and Jesus, the Son: “I do nothing on my own ... The one who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone ... I always do what is pleasing to him.” We humans are the result of God’s intimacy and love, the fruit of that love that holds the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together. God’s love makes us children of God. And as God’s children, we too are not “left alone.” Jesus becomes the face of God to us, the face of a God who is no longer only transcendent and distant but also near and intimate and immanent. God who accompanies us in our hearts and our joys and struggles. Jesus is lifted up for us to see and experience God more personally and tenderly so we too can be lifted into a tender relationship with God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The challenge for us is to embrace a relationship with God instead of following in the footsteps of the Pharisees, who reject God by their rejection of Jesus. Like Jesus, we are called to “belong to what is above,” not “to what is below.” Our psalmist today (Psalm 102:2-3) reminds us to cry out to God, especially in times of distress, not to block or obstruct God’s presence, and not to let God’s face become hidden from us.

Bruce Cecil, C.S.C.

### **Capture Your Own Reflection**

#### **Intercessions**

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For all those who have asked us to pray for them. R
- For those who do not have anyone to pray for them here on Earth. R
- For the canonization of Blessed Basil Moreau. R
- For our own intentions. R.

### **The Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### **Closing Prayer**

God, in the hours and days that follow, help us to keep our sights focused on Jesus’ Death and Resurrection and the tremendous power of his Cross. This is not a time for complacency but a sincere examination of our lives in Christ. Help us to be honest in our assessment and courageous in change. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## **March 29, 2023 | Day 36** **Wednesday, Week Five**

### **Opening Prayer** *Make the Sign of the Cross*

God, open our hearts to your message for us today. In the silence of these moments of prayer, we listen quietly and calmly for your still, small voice, your gentle whisper. Help us put aside distractions to hear the truth as only you proclaim, the truth that will guide us the remainder of these Lenten days. Amen.

### **Scripture Quote For Reflection**

Jesus said to those Jews who believed in him, “If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:31-32)

Many years ago, before I joined Holy Cross, the newspaper where I worked as a journalist always prominently displayed the Bible quote from our reading today, “the truth will set you free.” Our culture bombards us with a tidal wave of information that can cause us to feel like we are drowning in information overload. It then confronts us with the herculean task of sifting out fact from fiction, truth from lies, from amid this flood. Today’s Gospel reminds us that Jesus is our anchor, safe harbor, and center amid so much confusion, chaos, stress, and overload. In him, we find truth, strength, and peace. But Jesus also gives us two challenges today: we must “remain” in God’s truth, which is God’s Word, and we must become “true disciples.” Those challenges are interconnected. “Remaining” reminds me of Jesus’ parable of the vine and the branches (John 15:1-12), where Jesus comforts and reassures us that we have already been grafted into him who is the vine. He will sustain us if we remain connected. But God the Father cares for the vine, and that process of growth and caring will inevitably require pruning, struggle, and some pain. The end purpose is crystal clear – to be true disciples by producing abundant, good fruit. At the high school – where I now teach – we often remind ourselves (and our students) of this divine call to true discipleship when we sing, “Go make a difference, go make a difference, go make a difference in the world.” This “remaining” and this “true discipleship” are dynamic and ongoing. It is not a one-time triumphant hurrah but a continual journey. It is an ever-growing and ever-deepening relationship and friendship with the Lord. The food that sustains us is God’s Word – written

(in the Bible), spoken (through other people), and taught through the ages (in our Church’s rich tradition). To stay strong and connected, we must vigilantly and consciously choose to soak ourselves in God’s word on a regular, ongoing basis. The enemies of Jesus in our Gospel today think they are free. They think they are safe spiritually because of their status as children of Abraham. But they are enslaved, locked, and tethered to their static past. They look backward, not forward, and close themselves off from a future of ongoing growth and connectedness to the living vine, who is Jesus. “If God were your Father, you would love me,” Jesus reminds them, “for I came from God and am here... [H]e sent me.”

Bruce Cecil, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That the Church will always be a channel for God’s grace. R.
- For nations everywhere that this Lenten season will be a time of peace. R.
- That God may grant us humility and free us from pride and self-reliance. R.
- For our own intentions. R.

*The Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

God, help us to become your true disciples and to live our lives in ways that honor you and bring your Kingdom to fulfillment. Should we stumble, God, give us the strength to pick ourselves up and the perseverance to resume our journey home. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

**March 30, 2023 | Day 37**  
**Thursday, Week Five**

*Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, hear our voices raised in prayer. Let the light of the Resurrection of your Son free us from the darkness of sin and protect us from all evil. Please help us to put our trust in you, knowing that you are with us always and will give us the strength and zeal to do your will. Amen.

*Scripture Quote For Reflection*

When Abram prostrated himself, God spoke to him: “My covenant with you is this: you are to become the father of a host of nations. No longer shall you be called Abram; your name shall be Abraham, for I am making you the father of a host of nations. (Genesis 17:3-5)

Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad.” So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?” Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM.” So they picked up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid and went out of the temple area. (John 8:56-59)

As in our Gospel readings earlier this week, Jesus continues to confront his enemies, reminding them that he is I AM, which is the Hebrew name for God, Yahweh. Before going further, note that John’s Gospel identifies the enemies of Jesus as the Jews – but that phrase is meant only as shorthand for Jews who opposed Jesus, not as an anti-Semitic swipe at all Jews. We must never forget that Jesus himself was a Jew, as were the first Christians! There is a clear linkage between today’s Gospel and our Old Testament reading from the Book of Genesis, where God makes a covenant (or sacred agreement) with Abram, promising that “I am making you the father of a host of nations.”

This is the start (the genesis) of the Jewish people. But the enemies of Jesus in the Gospel fail to see that this is only the start and not the end of the story, which will reach its fulfillment in Jesus as messiah, or savior. The “old covenant” through Abraham is being fulfilled and completed in a “new covenant” in Jesus. In this new covenant, salvation will be extended not only to the Jewish people but also to all humanity. God sends his Son as a beacon of hope to the world. John’s Gospel affirms this universality of God’s love with even greater clarity in that most famous of verses, John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son ...”

In Jesus, we see God’s plan to restore and re-create all the world as it existed before the first human sin, before the fall, and before death ever entered the world. Jesus is the eternal “Alpha and Omega,” the one who lived before Abraham and the one who continues to live, even today. Jesus is on a mission to restore the world to life. That is precisely what we celebrate in Lent and Easter, the great Paschal Mystery that through the Cross and Resurrection, Jesus brings death to a screeching halt. No wonder Jesus tells us that Abraham “rejoiced to see my day.”

Bruce Cecil, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For priests and consecrated religious and youth discerning religious life, especially in the Congregation of Holy Cross. R
- For those who are faithful to God’s Holy Covenant. R



- For those retired and infirmed Holy Cross religious who have given a lifetime of service to God and the Church. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

God of mercy and consolation, help us in our weakness and free us from sin. Please give us the grace to remember always that our hope is in the Cross. Strengthen us, O God, and make light our burden as we seek to do likewise for others. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## March 31, 2023 | Day 38 Friday, Week Five

### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, as we open our eyes to you this Lenten season, help us be a hope-filled people. Please help us to see and hear you more clearly and to recognize your presence in every facet of our lives. Bless us this day, O God, and help us to be faithful as we prepare for the Resurrection of your Son. Amen.

### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

I hear the whisperings of many: “Terror on every side! Denounce! Let us denounce him!” All those who were my friends are on the watch for any misstep of mine. “Perhaps he will be trapped; then we can prevail, and take our vengeance on him.” But the LORD is with me, like a mighty champion: my persecutors will stumble, they will not triumph. In their failure they will be put to utter shame, to lasting, unforgettable confusion. O LORD of hosts, you who test the just, who probe mind and heart, Let me witness the vengeance you take on them, for to you I have entrusted my cause. Sing to the LORD, praise the LORD, For he has rescued the life of the poor from the power of the wicked! (Jeremiah 20:10-13)

The Jews picked up rocks to stone Jesus. Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from my Father.” (John 10:31-32)

Jeremiah, a prophet in the Old Testament, is surrounded by enemies who want to denounce and trap him, much as Jesus faces enemies in today’s Gospel (and in all of our Gospel readings this week). Maybe we glimpse a bit of Jeremiah’s frustration in our own experience if we have ever felt betrayed by a friend or loved one or if we have ever been targeted by an enemy of some sort, such as a boss who doesn’t like a co-worker who resents us. Jeremiah reminds us that suffering is an

inevitable part of life, that good people (“the just”) are sometimes tested, and that even those close to us (“friends”) may disappoint. The challenge, at least for me, is how to respond to adversity, especially if another person causes it. Jeremiah seems to relish and hope for God’s vengeance against his enemies, that they be “put to utter shame.” But Jesus seems to respond differently, pointing to his good works when his enemies want to stone him instead of seeking retribution. “Love of enemy” is a foundational Christian principle, but it also is one of the hardest of the good works that our faith demands of us. Jesus demonstrates the principle concretely when he is dying on the Cross and prays for his enemies, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34) How are we to put the good work of love and forgiveness into concrete action in our own life? In our humanness, when we are angry or hurt, the task may seem impossible. We need supernatural help from God. We get that supernatural help through prayer and spending time with God. In our Gospel today, Jesus sets the example, retreating to the desert to “the place where John first baptized,” to seek spiritual refreshment from his Father. Jeremiah reminds us to trust in God, not rely on our strength, when he announces that “the LORD is with me, like a mighty champion.”

Bruce Cecil, C.S.C.

### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For our Church, founded upon Christ, and a beacon of love for the world. R
- For all nations to know the love and peace that comes only from the Lord. R
- For missionaries and others who risk their health and lives as they work in the name of Jesus to bring hope to the poor and oppressed. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

Fill our hearts with your zeal, O God, so that we may aid those who are rejected, despised, and persecuted. Not just as servants, but as neighbors to be with them and of them. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## April 1, 2023 | Day 39

### Saturday, Week Five

#### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

O God, we come to you living in a broken and tarnished world, a world where we often find ourselves wandering off on paths that lead us astray. Help us remember, however, that no matter how many steps we may take away from you, it will only take one step for us to return back home again. Despite all our imperfections, your great love will always be waiting to embrace us. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

My dwelling shall be with them; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Thus the nations shall know that it is I, the LORD, who make Israel holy, when my sanctuary shall be set up among them forever. (Ezekiel 37:27-28)

In the beautiful passage from our first reading today from the Prophet Ezekiel, God promises to dwell with his people. “My sanctuary shall be set up among them forever.” (Ezekiel 37:28) This prophecy reaches fulfillment when Jesus dies on the Cross, and the curtain of the Jewish Temple is torn asunder. For Jews, the powerful God atop Mount Sinai, from whence Yahweh had given Moses the tablets of the Ten Commandments, had descended and lived among them. He first lived in a tent because the Jews at that time were nomads wandering through the desert, and then he lived in the temple in Jerusalem, in the far rear of the building behind a curtain in the Holy of Holies. But now, with Jesus’ Death and Resurrection, a new age – the Age of the Spirit – is inaugurated as God rips the curtain and departs from the Holy of Holies and begins to dwell in a new temple of people’s hearts. As a Holy Cross priest, I’ve been gifted by seeing the Spirit of God alive and at work in the lives and hearts of many, many people. I remember, for example, a young man incarcerated in juvenile hall who wrote me a letter begging for a priest to visit him and his companions. From that letter and from that young man’s faith, our parish’s ministry to prisoners began, and I was able to witness how the Spirit of God was transforming that young man’s life. I also remember another young man who showed up on the doorstep of our parish, near death from thirst after having crossed the desert from Mexico into California as an immigrant. He became one of our parish’s most active youth leaders and later returned to Mexico where he became a Holy Cross postulant in our formation program. How have you seen God dwelling in the hearts of others? And how have you experienced God dwelling in your own heart? That ongoing friendship with Jesus keeps me smiling, full of energy and joy, no matter outward circumstances, even in the midst of struggle, as I strive to live the admonition of one of my favorite saints, Saint Irenaeus, “The glory of God is a human being fully alive.” (“Against Heresies,” 4:20:7)

Bruce Cecil, C.S.C.

#### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

#### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For those who love and honor God above all, even in circumstances that are very challenging. R
- For those who struggle daily to meet their most basic needs. R
- That we may recognize the dignity of every human being as God’s cherished child. R
- For our intentions. R

#### *The Lord’s Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

#### *Closing Prayer*

O God, as we prepare for the Crucifixion of your Son, we commend our hearts, our lives, and our souls into your hands. Please help us to surrender ourselves more fully and without reserve to your Divine and loving Providence. Let every moment of our lives, every thought, word, and action, honor you. May we, in our own way, be an incarnation of your love and goodness. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## Palm Sunday, April 2, 2023 Sixth Sunday of Lent

Thirteenth Station: The body of Jesus is taken down from the Cross  
Fourteenth Station: Jesus is laid in the tomb

Presented by Rev. James Phalan, C.S.C.



Fr. Jim was ordained a priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1992 in a parish high in the Andes Mountains of Peru. Since then, he has been a missionary in Latin America and other parts of the world and served as the director of the Congregation's International House of Formation in Santiago, Chile.

Fr. Phalan previously served as the international director of Family Rosary for six years and the national director of Family Rosary for three years, carrying on the work of promoting family prayer begun by famed Holy Cross "Rosary Priest" Venerable Patrick Peyton, who coined the phrase "The family that prays together stays together." Fr. Jim's great desire is that families and all people come to know and love Jesus with the

help of Holy Mother Mary. While at Family Rosary, he also served as a pastoral assistant at Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine in Lourdes, France.

Fr. Jim has a bachelors degree in psychology and history from Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts, and a master of divinity and a master of theology from the Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Massachusetts. In addition to his native English, Fr. Jim is fluent in Spanish, Portuguese, and French.

*The retreat conference takes place live at 7:00 p.m. Eastern. Please login to Zoom 5 to 10 minutes before the retreat webinar begins — [lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org](https://lentenretreat.holycrossusa.org)*

## April 3, 2023 | Day 41 Monday of Holy Week

### *Opening Prayer* *Make the Sign of the Cross*

Lord, as we enter this Holy Week, we ask to stay by the side of Our Sorrowful Mother, Our Lady of the Cross, and to be united to your Sacred Heart as you make all things new through your Death and Resurrection. Amen.

### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

I, the LORD, have called you for the victory of justice, I have grasped you by the hand; I formed you, and set you as a covenant of the people, a light for the nations, To open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement, and from the dungeon, those who live in darkness. (Isaiah 42: 6-7)

Though the film is already 20 years old, I always go back to Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" during Holy Week. (I realize that its graphic depictions are difficult for some to watch, so it may not be advisable for all to see it.) One brilliant piece of the film occurs right at the mid-point. Jesus, already tortured and exhausted, persists in carrying the Cross while the soldiers continue to berate and beat him mercilessly. Finally, he falls and is crushed by the weight of the wood again. At that moment, his mother runs to him and, as she would when he fell as a child, and says, "I am here." You sense such profound love between them, and compassion for all as he then looks at her and says, "See! I make all things new!" The mid-point and central point of the film is when Jesus announces what he is doing to the one human being capable at that moment of understanding, his Holy Mother. See! I make all things new!

As we begin Holy Week, what is going on in your life now? What struggles and concerns for life around you do you need help understanding or carrying? Let Our Sorrowful Mother help you bring them into view and take them to the Cross this week as Jesus makes all things new.

James Phelan, C.S.C.

### *Capture your reflection*

### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- Through prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and acts of penance, may Christians everywhere strive this Holy Week to unite themselves more closely to the saving mystery that is the Cross. R
- For those who live in fear or suffer from self-doubt, that they be led into the light and love of the saving Christ. R
- For those who die daily to self in service of others and the Kingdom of God. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

Father, having prepared our hearts, minds, and bodies by our Lenten practices, we now begin this Holy Week. With the help of Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, may we understand more the truth we contemplate, walk the way to the salvation we celebrate, and receive the new life you desire to give us this Easter. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## April 4, 2023 | Day 42 Tuesday of Holy Week

### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

Lord, on this Tuesday of Holy Week, help us to prepare our hearts and our homes to receive the peace and the wisdom you give us as we celebrate the Paschal Mystery with the help of our Sorrowful Mother. Amen.

### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

The Lord called me from birth, from my mother's womb he gave me my name. You are my servant, he said to me, Israel, through whom I show my glory. (Isaiah 49: 1, 3)

The Lord invited his Mother Mary to journey with him on the Way of the Cross. She was called to share with him the Paschal Mystery: His passage through suffering and death to the Resurrection. Yet Mary's journey with Jesus had begun when the Angel Gabriel appeared to her and asked her to be the mother of the Messiah. She was guided, as "the Lord did great things" for her.

He calls us to join him in symbolically reliving this Paschal Mystery this Holy Week so that we can understand that we, too, can share in this journey, passing through our problems and sufferings with him to new life in simple, concrete ways. During this first part of Holy Week, it can help greatly to remember how the Lord has loved us and guided us in so many ways! As the Angel says to Mary, "Hail, full of grace," the Lord says, "You, child of Mary, are so loved and blessed too!" He is guiding you and so wants to do great things in your life, too!

Please take some time today slowly repeating the Hail Mary. Trusting that as a child of Mary, the angel's words are being addressed to you, too, and remember moments and ways that the Lord has loved and guided you.

James Phalan, C.S.C.

### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That those in need of forgiveness may experience God's infinite mercy. R
- For those in need of forgiveness from another, may they have the courage to take the first step toward reconciliation. R
- That we may always be quick to follow Mary's example of saying yes to God. R
- For our own intentions. R

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

Father, the Virgin Mary shows us how to open our hearts and ponder how you have led us to this moment through both joys and sorrows. Like her, may we say yes to where you lead us now. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## April 5, 2023 | Day 43 Wednesday of Holy Week

### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

Lord, on this Wednesday of Holy Week, help us continue to prepare to walk the way of Calvary with you with trust, confidence, courage, and love. Amen.

### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

One of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" (Matthew 26:14-15)

When Mary and Joseph presented the infant Jesus in the Temple, Simeon predicted he would be a sign of contradiction, and that Mary's heart would be pierced by sorrows. Yet the promise of this Child is precisely that pain and death are not the victors! The Lord tells us that we need to journey with him through death to life, and our Mother Mary is with us as she was with Jesus. So we can have hope and courage as we face whatever we need to face in this life with Jesus and Mary.

Tomorrow we begin the Holy Triduum, the three days when we will journey with the Lord through his Passion to his Resurrection.



Today, please continue to prepare. Trusting in Jesus with our Mother Mary at your side, in gentleness, confidence, and trust please gather in your heart those people whose suffering you wish to offer to Christ on the Cross and those challenges in your life you hope to see transformed by grace.

James Phalan, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That we may always have the hope and courage needed to face whatever comes our way, knowing that Jesus and Mary are with us always. R
- That families everywhere may set aside their differences so they can come together to share in the joy of Easter. R
- That we may always have time for those in need. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

Father, strengthen our faith and enlighten our minds to know, as did Our Lady of Sorrows, that particularly in moments of challenge and difficulty, you have been at our side, leading and guiding. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

**April 6, 2023 | Day 44**  
**Holy Thursday**

*Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

Holy Spirit, open our minds and hearts as we contemplate the wonder of our salvation in Christ during these Holy Days! Amen.

*Scripture Quote For Reflection*

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” (Matthew 26: 26-28)

The Scripture does not say where Our Lady was during the Last Supper. Being the quintessential Jewish Mother, I like to think that she was there preparing the food and taking care of everyone! Mothers often know when great difficulties are about to befall their children – this mother most certainly did. Yet she did not shrink into fear or self-pity. Instead, she knew that it was for this moment that her Son had come. She was asked to stand by him and to share in it, heart to heart as love triumphs over hatred and death.

At the side of Christ, she teaches us how to face and transform whatever difficulty life may bring. Like Mary and with Mary, we are to unite ourselves with Christ, to say yes to him, to trust and to act, guided by him, as he always leads to new and greater life.

How is the Lord asking you now to say yes to him, even though it may be hard to trust in him and to be guided into something new?

James Phalan, C.S.C.

*Capture Your Own Reflection*

*Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That our Blessed Mother may serve as an example of what it means to stand by others and be truly present to those suffering, sick, or being unfairly persecuted. R
- That, like Mary, we can unite ourselves more fully with Christ and allow him to lead us to a new and greater life. R
- That we will identify those relationships in our lives that need to be healed and then do all in our power to make them right. R
- For our own intentions. R

*The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

*Closing Prayer*

As a Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, let us pray: O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament have left us a memorial of your Passion, grant us, we pray, so to revere the Sacred Mysteries of your body and blood that we may always experience in ourselves the fruits of your redemption. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## April 7, 2023 | Day 45

### Good Friday

#### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

Lord, it is Good Friday, 2023. Help all our loved ones to pay attention today and to know that you give your life so we may live! Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled. (John 19:33-34, 36)

The symbolism, particularly in Saint John's Gospel, may not at first be obvious, but paying attention, it's really amazing! Please take some time to ponder this and let it sink in. From the altar of the Cross, the Christ ("the Anointed One") is the High Priest of an Eternal Covenant with God, offering himself as the sacrificial victim. Mary, "the Woman" – the new Eve – and the beloved disciple who Jesus has made her son (that's us!) witness how this sacrificial death leads to this outpouring of water and blood: new life in the Church through Baptism and the Eucharist.

It is not some fantastical story. The images are so dense with meaning that they may seem abstract. They are not. Instead there are so many levels of meaning echoing together so that we are brought to the heart of reality, the central moment of all human history. Because that is so, it pierces the heart of each of our lives. We have been reconciled by infinite love! All things are being made new! A new creation has begun! Human history will never be the same.

Will we receive the great gift or stay in the darkness? What will we choose personally? What will our world now choose? What difference will it make in your life?

James Phalan, C.S.C.

#### *Capture Your Own Reflection*

#### *Intercessions*

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- That we come to see the crosses in our lives not as burdens but as gifts that will lead us closer to Christ. R
- That we may surrender all to God so that we may become a hope-filled people. R
- For those who find it difficult to believe that Christ would die for them. R
- For our own intentions. R

#### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

#### *Closing Prayer*

We invite you to pray this beautiful prayer from the closing of the Good Friday Liturgy: May abundant blessing, O Lord, we pray, descend upon your people, who have honored the Death of your Son in the hope of their resurrection: may pardon come, comfort given, holy faith increase, and everlasting redemption be made secure. Through Christ our Lord. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## April 8, 2023 | Day 46

### Holy Saturday

#### *Opening Prayer Make the Sign of the Cross*

Lord, on this Holy Saturday, may our hearts and our home be at peace, open to receive the joy and the new life you shower on us through your Resurrection. Amen.

#### *Scripture Quote For Reflection*

Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. (John 19:41-42)



It can be an awesome experience to stand before Michelangelo's sculpture, the Pieta (left), which is enshrined in Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. Please take some time contemplating it today, by yourself or with people you love.

While other works often depict our Sorrowful Mother in tears, the apparent tranquility of Michelangelo's masterpiece opens to an even greater depth of emotion and meaning. The Holy Virgin has united herself so totally with her Son and so poured herself out in love that her exhausted figure seems to mirror his now lifeless corpse. "It is finished": and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (John 19:30) The work of salvation is done. She has

offered him in sacrifice to the Father – yet now she holds his body for us to see. Behold what you have done – yet behold what he has done. "Behold, I make all things new."

After the burial of Jesus, the Holy Virgin waits: Friday evening, Saturday ... Tradition presents her with the apostles in the upper room. They needed to keep out of sight to avoid reprisals. We imagine the Mother, although the one with the most cause for grief, consoling the Apostles. Perhaps she didn't talk much. She knew the disciples weren't capable even of imagining what was really happening. Soon they will know!

She believes. Her heart remains united to his. She trusts. This has never happened before so she doesn't know exactly what it will look like, yet she believes. She does not doubt.

Whatever may be going on, our Holy Mother is with you to help you to trust and to see how the Lord wants to lead you to new and greater life now.

James Phalan, C.S.C.

## Capture Your Own Reflection

## Intercessions

The response is, Lord, hear our prayer.

- For Church leaders and their faithful, may they prepare themselves this day to proclaim Christ alive to all the earth. R
- That our world may finally come to know the peace of the Risen Christ. R
- That as Christians we may commit ourselves to being light and hope for others. R
- For our own intentions. R

## *The Lord's Prayer*

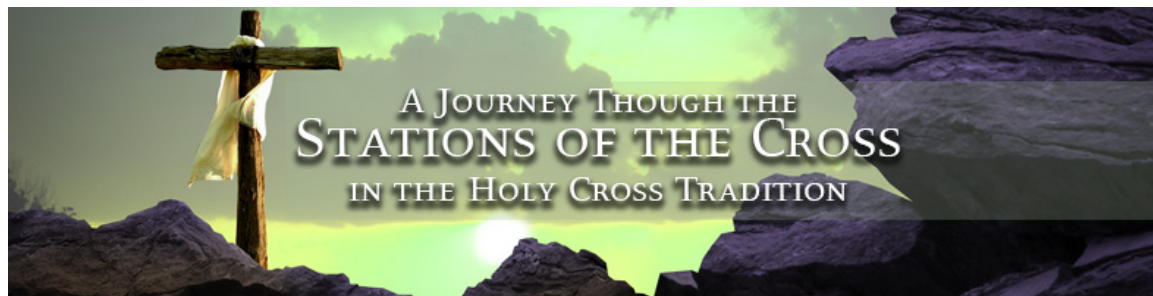
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

### *Closing Prayer*

Lord Jesus, standing with our Mother Mary and with her help, we pray today that we may be filled with the new life you want to give us through your Resurrection so that those who meet us may be touched by that hope and that peace our world so very much needs this Easter, 2023. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen. *Make the Sign of the Cross.*

## Notes

[illegible]



**Opening Prayer:** Act of Contrition

**First Station:** Jesus is condemned to die

**Second Station:** Jesus takes up his Cross

**Third Station:** Jesus falls the first time

**Fourth Station:** Jesus meets his sorrowful Mother

**Fifth Station:** Simon helps Jesus carry his Cross

**Sixth Station:** Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

**Seventh Station:** Jesus falls the second time

**Eighth Station:** Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

**Ninth Station:** Jesus falls a third time

**Tenth Station:** Jesus is stripped of his garments

**Eleventh Station:** Jesus is nailed to the Cross

**Twelfth Station:** Jesus dies on the Cross

**Thirteenth Station:** The body of Jesus is taken down from the Cross

**Fourteenth Station:** Jesus is laid in the tomb

To download a copy of the Stations of the Cross, visit  
[LentenRetreat.HolyCrossUSA.org](http://LentenRetreat.HolyCrossUSA.org)



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