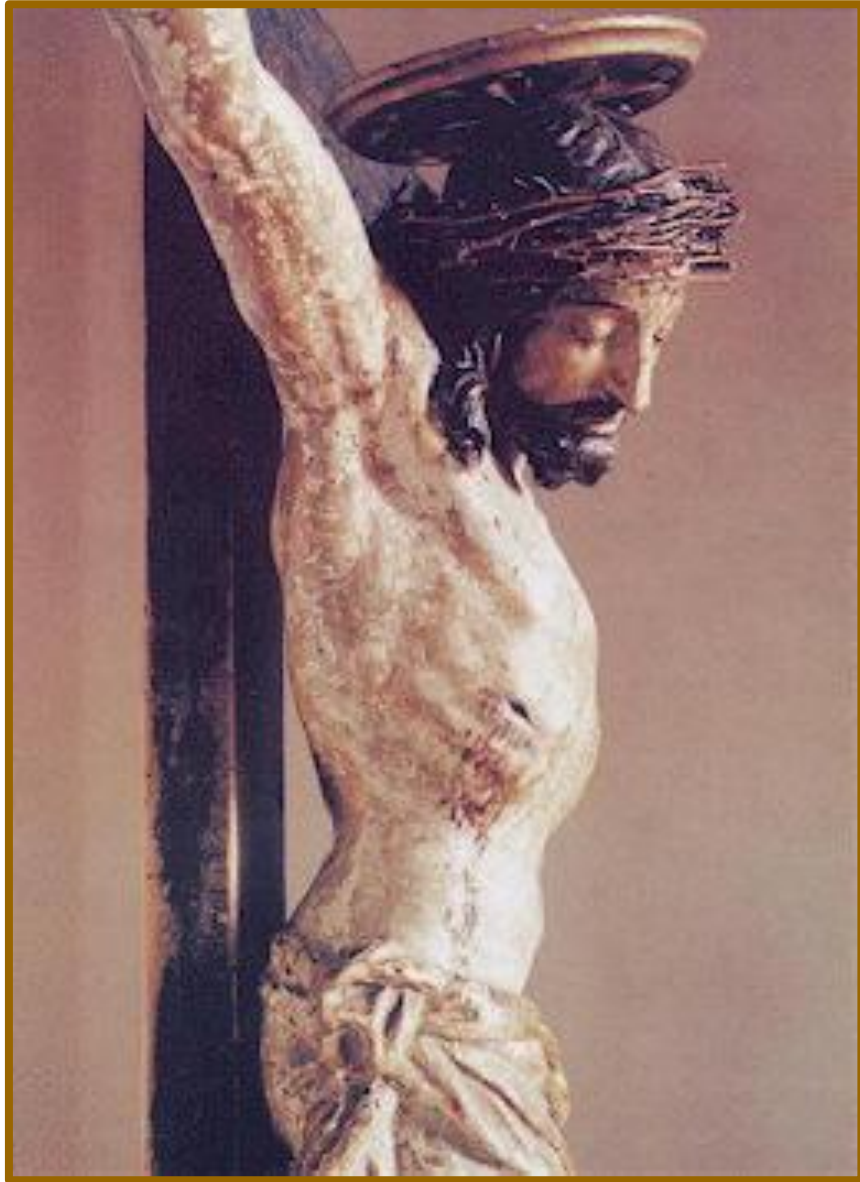


The Way of the Cross

with the Fathers of the Church and Saints



Texts: Monastery "Saint Veronica Giuliani" Citta' di Castello Italian version
Translation by Fr. John Aurilia, OFM. Cap.

In the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

First station: Jesus is condemned to death

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

Even the one who is led to martyrdom is actually the victor when bound, scourged and killed. What constitutes defeat in wars, is victory for us. We never win by doing evil, but enduring evil. In this way the victory becomes splendid when we, by suffering, overcome those who hurt us. From this it follows that the victory belongs to God (St. John Chrysostom).

This morning, during the holy Communion, there was a rapture with the vision of our Lord, when he was shown to the people. O God! I felt so much pain! He said to me: *I let you know that, when everybody was shouting: Crucify him, crucify him! And they reviled and beat me, I was suffering terrible pains; but my internal suffering was even greater, when I saw the stubbornness of all. I was ready to forgive them, to pay with my own blood; but I could not find anyone who would accept my love* (Diary of Saint Veronica II, 168)

Let us pray: Lord, in your mercy, you loved us so much that you sent your Son as redeemer, and to share with us our human condition in everything, except sin. Be glory to You!

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory to the Father

Second station: Jesus takes up his cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

When the Lord was carrying the wood of the cross, which it would change for him to power scepter, to the eyes of sinners it was an object of great shame, to the eyes of the faithful instead it revealed a great mystery. The most glorious victor of the devil was bearing a beautiful symbol of his triumph and with beckoned patience was showing on his shoulders the sign of salvation (Saint Leo the Great).

This night, the Lord did me the favor of making me feel the pain, which he endured when he was carrying the cross and, at the same time, he made me penetrate his infinite love for us. I felt consumed by the great anxiety I had to love him back with pure love. I was praying that he would remove all obstacles, so I could be all His (D II, 444).

Let us pray: You redeemed us from the curse of the law with your precious blood; nailed to the cross and pierced the side with the lance, immortality for all gushed forth, O beloved Savior; thank you!

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory to the Father

Third station: Jesus falls the third time

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

The cross is the sign of Christ's love and in it we find the dimensions of which the apostle speaks: width, length, height, depth. It is wide on the beam on which the arms of the Crucified are stretched and it means the good works performed on the width of charity; It is vertically long, and it means perseverance for the time being till the end. It is high on the top and it means the supernatural purpose, to which every action is ordered, because whatever we do with love and perseverance, must be directed to the height of divine reward. It is deep to say that our good works spring from the depths of God's grace (Saint Augustine).

The most holy Mary put in my mind the first fall of Jesus while carrying the cross. It seems that the Passion of Jesus is intimately connected with my soul; and I feel that the special result of this is the firm resolution to be detached from everything. It seems that this journey to the Calvary is an opportunity to separate me from myself, and to eliminate any other impediment between God and my soul (D III, 1178).

Let us pray: You went up on the cross, O Jesus, you who came down from heaven; You came to die, being immortal life. You, true light, came for those who live in darkness, you, resurrection for all, came for those who fell, O beloved Savior; Glory be to You!

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory to the Father

Fourth station: Jesus meets his Mother

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

The Virgin, while the apostles fled, did not fear torments, rather she offered herself spontaneously to the dangers and remaining strong and courageous. She was contemplating with maternal eye Christ's wounds from which the salvation of the world would come. Mary meets and follows her Son to die with Him in the certainty of resurrecting with him also, knowing well that she welcomed into her bosom and begotten the Lord of the Resurrection and of glory (Saint Ambrose).

When Mary accompanied Jesus to Calvary, she felt the pains and sorrows, which Jesus suffered; and all the virtues which were in the Son, in the same way were in the most holy Virgin. Those two hearts were so united, that they were only one heart! Both offered themselves for us, ungrateful creatures. At the mere thought of this great work of charity, we should all give ourselves to God (D III, 373).

Let us pray: You are temple, door, palace, and throne of the King, most august Virgin. Therefore, O Mother, pray to Him incessantly, so we can learn to receive Him and to do his will, as you did.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory to the Father

Fifth station: Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

The cross was carried first by the Lord, and then Simon was forced to carry it. Simon, as was coming from the country and met the soldiers on his way. He was not from Jerusalem, but from Cyrene; In him we identify the pagans, who were foreign to the Covenant and now became citizens and family members of God, heirs and coheirs of Christ (Saint Bede the Venerable)

This morning, I had the vision of Jesus when he was going to the Calvary. He had a huge cross on his shoulder and signaled to me to pick it up. At once he placed it on my shoulders and said: *This is the sign of my love, and I give to you as a gift.* While he was saying these words, I fell on the ground for such a heavy weight; and He lifted me up (D II, 39)

Let us pray: O Christ, with your Passion, you made the sun go dark and with the light of your resurrection you made the universe shine; receive our hymn of praise, o lover of humanity.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory to the Father

Sixth station: Veronica wipes Jesus' face

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

Many will be disturbed, so inglorious will his appearance look in the sight of men.

What outrage compares to this? This face, which the sea watched with fearful respect and the sun will not be able to contemplate on the cross without withdrawing its rays, this face is covered with spit from the enemies, who slap and beat Him (Saint John Chrysostom).

Jesus with a benign and loving face, said to me: *Well, what do you say? For whom did I pour out this blood? For whom did I give my life if not for you and for all?* It seemed that he took that blood in his hands to wash this soul of mine. All of sudden, it formed like a source; and my soul was in the middle of it. Here He made me understand that I participate in this washing, every time I go to Confession (D III,440).

Let us pray: O giver of life, while your side was pierced, you brought forth sources of forgiveness, life, and salvation. Have mercy on us and purify us from our sins.

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory to the Father

Seventh station: Jesus falls the second time

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

Mount Calvary is the mountain of lovers. Any love that does not originate from the Passion of our Savior is frivolous and dangerous. Unhappy is the death without our Savior's love. On the Calvary it is not possible to live without love, nor love can live without the death of the Savior. Come, Holy Spirit, and inflame our hearts, so that we may die to every other love and to live in the love of Jesus. (Saint Francis De Sales).

While the Lord was carrying the cross, said to me: *I want to give this cross to you.* I had a great desire of that cross. But, when the Lord was approaching me, I started shaking so badly that the whole place seemed to be shaking, Then the Lord said: *What are you afraid of? I am with you.* Having said that, the fear disappeared. Anxiously I longed for that cross. The Lord placed it on my shoulder and said: *This is the pledge of my love.* (D II, 242).

Let us pray: Appearing, O Christ, nailed on the cross, you changed the beauty of creation. Look at humanity exhausted by its mortal weakness and make it come back to life by the strength of your Passion.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father

Eighth station: Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

Peter cried lovingly to atone for his triple denial when Jesus looked at him. The tears of the women of Jerusalem were beneficial when Christ stopped and addressed them. Look at me also, O Lord, so I can cry on my faults and atone for my sins. Weeping gets forgiveness. Therefore, if you wish to be forgiven, dissolve the hardness of your sins with the tears of repentance. In that moment, Jesus' gaze is fixed on you (Saint Ambrose).

Jesus appeared to me and said: *You are my spouse; therefore, be tranquil because I will never abandon you. I am all yours. Here I am consoling you.* While he was speaking, he called me to get closer to Him. Immediately, I felt that he took my heart and understood his omnipotence. I understood a little more how precious are our souls. He, with ardent love, wishes to have them all. (D I, 261).

Let us pray: Receive the fountains of my tears, Lord, you who feed the water of the sea with the clouds. Bend over and listen to my moans of my heart, you who made the heavens lower for your ineffable humiliation.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father

Ninth station: Jesus falls the third time

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

Ineffable bowels of divine mercy! He gives us light and graciously teaches us the way of humility, love, and every virtue. He was captured to free us from the yoke of slavery. He was

taken prisoner, to snatch us prisoners from the enemy's hand. He was sold for money, to buy us with his blood. He was humiliated to exalt us. I give you thanks, O Lord, for all these things, and I praise your name! (John of Fecamp).

O God! How many and how many betrayals have I done to God, with my great sins committed and with all sorts of ingratitude without number! It seemed to me that by running through the Passion of Jesus in my heart and experiencing it a little in myself, I felt new strength to begin a true life of perfection (D III, 849).

Let us pray: We praise you, Virgin Mother of God,, who have been the mediator for the salvation of our lineage, since you Son and our God, by accepting the Passion of the cross in the flesh you assumed, redeemed us from corruption and made us enter into true life.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory to the Father

Tenth station: Jesus is stripped of his garments

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

Think of the poverty of Christ and you will become rich; think of his infirmity and you will become healthy; think of his cross and will not have to blush; look at his wounds and you will heal yours. Come, therefore, Lord Jesus; strip yourself of the garments you wore for me. Be naked, so that I may be clothed in your mercy (Saint Ambrose).

The Lord gave me a light above my nothingness and let me learn how much profit it was to the soul to truly penetrate this nothingness of ours. I understood that all the good and virtuous soul possesses, belongs to God. Oh! Happy stripping! Oh! Happy that soul who manages to realize this nothingness. The soul, then, understands that all goodness belongs to God alone, everything proceeds from Him and returns to Him (D II, 144).

Let us pray: Lord, by mounting the cross, you canceled our original curse; by descending into hell, you freed those who had been held captive there for centuries. Therefore, we magnify your life-giving and wholesome resurrection with hymns.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory to the Father

Eleventh station: Jesus is crucified

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

What do I see through the wound? The nail has its voice, the wound cries out that God is really present in Christ to reconcile the world to himself. The sword pierced his soul, and his heart became closer to us, so that it became compassionate to my weaknesses. Through the wounds of his body, the divine charity of his heart is clearly shown, the great mystery of love becomes evident, and the bowels of God's mercy are shown (Saint Bernard of Charavalle).

The Lord said to me: *I grant you this grace through these wounds of mine. And as a sign of this, I will now place these seals in you too.* In an instant, I saw coming out from his wounds five luminous rays; and all of them pierced me. And I saw those rays become like little flames. In four of them there were nails; and in the fifth there was a golden flaming spear: it passed my heart from band to band; the nails went through my hands and feet. I felt great pain, but, at the same time, I saw and felt myself completely transformed in God. The Lord said to me: *I am all yours; ask for the grace you wish, and I will give it to you.* I answered: *I ask to be never separated from you!* In an instant, everything disappeared (D I, 897).

Let us pray: May creation rejoice and the heavens rejoice, the people applaud joyfully. In fact, Jesus Christ nailed our faults to the cross.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father

Twelfth station: Jesus dies on the cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you

Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

The inscrutable riches of your glory, Lord, were hidden in the sky of your secret, until the soldier's spear opened your Son's side on the cross, our Lord and Redeemer, and the Sacraments of our redemption gushed forth. In your side we will put not only our finger and our hand, like Thomas, but through the open door we will enter, O Jesus, in the heart, a safe place of mercy, and into your holy soul, filled with God's riches, full of grace and truth, font of salvation and consolation for us (Saint William of Saint Thierry).

It look like the Lord made me well understand each point of his most holy Passion...as if he told me: *Veronica, I am the one who has done so much for your redemption. I redeemed you with my most precious blood; I lifted your afflictions with deadly pains and agony, as was the one that, for your ransom, I accepted on the cross and in the bitter chalice of my Passion; and I suffered all for your love.* It is true: What he did for all, he did for each one of us in particular. (D II, 1208).

Let us pray: How could He who is the life of all be able to experience death? Since you wanted to light up the world, it exclaims to you and says: Praise to you, Lord, who were risen from the dead.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory to the Father

Thirteenth station: Jesus taken down from the cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

A Joseph protected you when you were a child. Another Joseph gently removes you from the cross. In his hands you are more abandoned than a child in the mother's hands. He lays in the bosom of the rock your immaculate body (Bartholomew I).

I saw Jesus with his holy stigmata. It seemed that he was inviting me to enter into his most divine heart, which was wide open. Jesus was pointing his finger to me, encouraging me to enter, because his heart was the sepulcher where I had to stay (D I, 290-291).

Let us pray: O Mother of God, do not disdain the pleas that your servants raise up to you; You carry the Merciful in your arms; have pity and intercede for our salvation.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father

Fourteenth station: Jesus is laid in the tomb

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
Because of your holy cross, you have redeemed the world

Great silence, great silence and solitude. Great silence because the King is sleeping: the earth was amazed and is silent because God who became flesh is asleep and woke up those who were sleeping for centuries. God died in the flesh and came down to shake the kingdom of hell. He wants to go down to visit those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death and shouts at them: come out, rise again, I am the life of the dead! (Ancient homily on Holy Saturday).

There is nothing in the world but ambition and interest. Wordily superiority and honors are sought, and not the glory and honor of God. Daughter, I made you understand these things because they are for you as a rule to live detached and stripped of everything. Live always in humility, with God, with all creatures, and with yourself; learn from me and from my most holy Son, be always with me, and I will guide you, help you, and I will do everything (Our Lady to Saint Veronica, D IV, 356)

Let us pray: Suspended on a tree, Powerful alone, you have shaken all creation; laid in a tomb, you have raised up those who were in the tomb, giving incorruptibility and resurrection to all.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory to the Father