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Mass of the presanctified.
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MASS OF THE PRESANCTIFIED

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS

*Devotion to the Three Hours Agony of our Lord
For Congregational Use*





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— *Tre-Ore Devotion* —

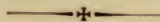
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A Form of Devotion To The
THREE HOURS AGONY OF OUR LORD



ADAPTED FROM APPROVED SOURCES BY
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Imprimi Potest—

Francis J. Fagen, C. Ss. R.,
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— INDULGENCES —

ON GOOD FRIDAY—PLENARY INDULGENCE

To all the faithful meditating, for three consecutive hours either publicly or privately, on Good Friday, each according to his own ability, on the great sufferings which the Saviour then endured on the cross and on the most sacred words He uttered, when dying; or also reciting psalms, hymns and other prayers; there is granted A PLENARY INDULGENCE, if, after a sincere confession and reception of Holy Communion on Holy Thursday or during Easter Week, they shall pray for the intention of the Holy Father

ON ANY OTHER FRIDAY

SEVEN YEARS INDULGENCE, on any other Friday in the year, to the faithful, who, in remembrance of the divine Agony of the Redeemer, shall spend at least a quarter of an hour in prayer, as above.

A PLENARY INDULGENCE, under the usual conditions, once every month, on the last Friday of the month, to every one who has meditated and prayed every previous Friday in the month, in the way just mentioned.

—(Preces et Pia Opera, No. 165)

— DIRECTIONS —

1. Determine beforehand on some special grace for yourself or others, to be asked for during this devotion.
2. Stand while singing the hymns.
3. Kneel while reciting the prayers in a loud voice. Pause at the commas, making a slightly longer pause at the *.
4. Sit while the priest reads the meditations.

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Mass of the Presanctified

Today, Good Friday, Holy Mother Church does not offer up the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass, but directs our attention exclusively to the bloody Sacrifice of our Saviour on the Cross. The Mass of the Presanctified is in reality a Communion Service carried over from Maundy Thursday on which day the Sacred Host was consecrated and today is consumed.

The ceremonies of Good Friday come under four headings:—

- 1) The Mass of the Catechumens which consists of two prophetic lessons of the Old Testament taken from the Prophet Osee and from the Book of Exodus. These prophecies are followed by a description of the Passion and Death of the Saviour by St. John, the lesson of Osee foretelling the Passion and the lesson of Exodus pre-figuring Christ's death in the slaying of the Paschal Lamb.
- 2) Solemn supplications are made to God in behalf of all groups in the human race.
- 3) The Cross is venerated in a most impressive manner.
- 4) The Mass of the Presanctified concludes the service.

I. THE MASS OF THE CATECHUMENS

Clothed in black vestments of mourning, the celebrant and his ministers come forth from the sacristy and prostrate themselves in prayer before the bare altar. Meanwhile an acolyte covers the table of the altar with a linen cloth and places the missal on the Epistle side. The priests rise, the celebrant ascends to the altar and the first lesson is read, followed by the other prayers.

THE FIRST LESSON

PROPHECY OF MERCY FOR ALL WHO DO PENANCE
(OSEE, VI. 1-6.)

THUS saith the Lord: In their affliction they will rise early to Me: Come, and let us return to the Lord, for He hath taken us, and He will heal us, He will strike us, and He will cure us. He will revive us after two days: on the third day He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight. We shall know and we shall follow on, that we may know the Lord. His going forth is prepared as the morning light and He will come to us as the early and the latter rain to the earth. What shall I do to Thee, O Ephraim? What shall I do to Thee, O Juda? Your mercy in as a morning cloud and as the dew that goeth away in the morning. For this reason have I hewed them by the Prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgements shall go forth as the

light. For I desired mercy and not sacrifice: and the knowledge of God more than holocausts.

THE TRACT

(Habacue III.)

G LORD, I have heard Thy hearing and was afraid: I have considered Thy works and trembled. *V.* In the midst of two animals Thou shalt be manifested. *V.* When my soul shall be in trouble, Thou wilt remember mercy, even in Thy wrath. *V.* God will come from Libanus, and the Holy One from the shady and thickly covered mountain. *V.* His majesty covered the heavens: and the earth is full of His praise.

LET US PRAY. LET US KNEEL. ARISE.

THE COLLECT

G GOD, from whom Judas received the punishment of his guilt, and the thief the reward of his confession: grant unto us the full fruit of Thy clemency; that even as in His Passion, our Lord Jesus Christ gave to each a retribution according to his merits, so having taken away our old sins, He may bestow on us the grace of His Resurrection. Who with Thee liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, forever and ever. Amen.

THE SECOND LESSON

**PASCHAL LAMB OF THE JEWS PREFIGURES
CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST, THE LAMB OF GOD**

(EXODUS, XII. 1-11.)

IN those days the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall be to you the beginning of months: it shall be the first in the months of the year. Speak ye to the children of Israel, and say to them: On the tenth day of this month let every man take a lamb by their families and houses. But if the number be less than may suffice to eat the lamb, he shall take unto him his neighbor that joineth to his house, according to the number of souls which may be enough to eat the lamb without blemish, a male, of one year: according to which rite also you shall take a kid. And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month: and the whole multitude of the children of Israel shall sacrifice it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood thereof, and put it upon both the side posts, and on the upper door posts of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh that night roasted at the fire: and unleavened bread with wild lettuce. You shall not eat thereof any thing raw, nor boiled in water, but only roasted at the fire. You shall eat the head with the feet and entrails thereof. Neither shall there remain any thing of it until morning. If there be any thing

left, you shall burn it with fire. And thus you shall eat it: You shall gird your reins, and you shall have shoes on your feet, holding staves in your hands, and you shall eat in haste; for it is the Phase (that is the Passage) of the Lord.

THE TRACT

(Ps. CXXXIX. 2-10, 14)

DELIVER me, O Lord, from the evil man: rescue me from the unjust man. *Y.* Who have devised iniquities in their hearts: all the day long they designed battles. *Y.* They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; the venom of asps is under their lips. *Y.* Keep me, O Lord, from the hand of the wicked: and from unjust men deliver me. *Y.* Who have proposed to supplant my steps. The proud have hidden a net for me. *Y.* And they have stretched out cords for a snare for my feet; they have laid for me a stumbling-block by the wayside. *Y.* I said to the Lord: Thou art my God. Hear, O Lord, the voice of my supplication. *Y.* O Lord, Lord, the strength of my salvation: overshadow my head in the day of battle. *Y.* Give me not up from my desire to the wicked: they have plotted against me. Do not Thou forsake me, lest at any time they should triumph. *Y.* The head of them compassing me about: the labor of their lips shall overwhelm them. *Y.* But the just shall give glory to Thy Name: and the upright shall dwell with Thy countenance.

THE PASSION AND DEATH OF JESUS ACCORDING TO THE LATEST VERSION

(JOHN, XVIII. 1-40; XIX. 1-42.)

Jesus Arrested **A**FTER SAYING THESE THINGS, Jesus went forth with his disciples beyond the torrent of Cedron, where there was a garden into which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, since Jesus had often met there together with his disciples. Judas, then, taking the cohort, and attendants from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.

Jesus therefore knowing all that was to come upon him, went forth and said to them. "Whom do you seek?" They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am he." Now Judas, who betrayed him, was also standing with them. When therefore, he said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. So he asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am he. If, therefore, you seek me, let these go their way." That the word which he said might be

fulfilled, "Of those whom thou hast given me, I have not lost one."

Simon Peter, therefore, having a sword, drew it and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. Now the servant's name was Malchus.

Jesus therefore said to Peter, "Put up thy sword into thy scabbard. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

Peter's Denial The cohort therefore and the tribune and the attendants of the Jews seized Jesus and bound him. And they brought him to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiphas who was the high priest that year. Now it was Caiphas who had given the counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

But Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. But Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the portress, and brought Peter in.

The maid who was portress, said therefore to Peter, "Art thou also one of this man's disciples?" He said, "I am not." Now the servants and attendants were standing at a coal fire and warming themselves, for it was cold. And Peter also was with them standing and warming himself.

The high priest therefore questioned Jesus concerning his disciples, and concerning his teaching. Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, where all the Jews gather, and in secret I have said nothing. Why dost thou question me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; behold, these know what I have said."

Now when he had said these things, one of the attendants who was standing by struck Jesus a blow, saying, "Is that the way thou dost answer the high priest?" Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken ill, bear witness to the evil; but if well, why dost thou strike me?"

And Annas sent him bound to Caiphas, the high priest.

But Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They therefore said to him, "Art thou also one of his disciples?" He denied it, and said, "I am not."

One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Did I not see thee in the garden with him?" Again, there-

fore, Peter denied it; and at that moment a cock crowed.

Jesus before Pilate They therefore led Jesus from Cai-phas to the praetorium. Now it was early morning, and they themselves did not enter the praetorium, that they might not be defiled, but might eat the passover.

Pilate therefore went outside to them, and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They said to him in answer, "If he were not a criminal we should not have handed him to thee." Pilate therefore said to them, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law." The Jews, then, said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." That the word of Jesus might be fulfilled which he said, signifying by what death he was to die.

Pilate therefore again entered into the praetorium, and he summoned Jesus, and said to him, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Dost thou say this of thyself, or have others told thee of me?" Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Thy own people and the chief priests have delivered thee to me. What hast thou done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my followers would have fought that I might not be delivered to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not of here." Pilate therefore said to him, "Thou art then a king?" Jesus answered, "Thou sayest it; I am a king. This is why I was born, and why I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice." Pilate said to him. "What is truth?"

And when he had said this, he went outside to the Jews again, and said to them, "I find no guilt in him. But you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you wish, therefore, that I release to you the king of the Jews?" They all therefore cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.

The Scourging and Crowning Pilate, then, took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers, plaiting a crown of thorns, put it upon his head, and arrayed him in a purple cloak. And they kept coming to him and saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him.

Pilate therefore again went outside and said to them, "Behold, I bring him out to you, that you may know that I find no guilt in him." Jesus therefore came forth, wearing the crown of thorns and

the purple cloak. And he said to them, "Behold the man!" When, therefore, the chief priests and the attendants saw him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." The Jews answered him, "We have a Law, and according to that Law he must die, because he has made himself Son of God."

Now when Pilate heard this statement, he feared the more. And he again went back into the praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where art thou from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Dost thou not speak to me? Dost thou not know that I have power to crucify thee, and that I have power to release thee?" Jesus answered, "Thou wouldst have no power at all over me were it not given thee from above. Therefore, he who betrayed me to thee has the greater sin."

And from then on Pilate was looking for a way to release him. But the Jews cried out, saying, "If thou release this man, thou art no friend of Caesar; for everyone who makes himself king sets himself against Caesar."

Pilate therefore, when he heard these words, brought Jesus outside, and sat down on the judgment seat, at a place called Lithostrotos, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the Preparation Day for the Passover, about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your king!" But they cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered. "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. And so they took Jesus and led him away.

The Crucifixion And bearing the cross for himself, he went forth to the place called the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him, and with him two others, one on each side and Jesus in the center.

And Pilate also wrote an inscription and had it put on the cross. And there was written,

"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

Many of the Jews therefore read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Greek and in Latin. The chief priests of the Jews said therefore to Pilate, "Do not write, The King of the Jews," but, 'He said, I am the King of the Jews.' " Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

The soldiers therefore, when they crucified him,

took his garments and made of them four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven in one piece from the top. They therefore said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots for it, to see whose it shall be." That the Scripture might be fulfilled which says,

"They divided my garments among them;
and for my vesture they cast lots."

These things therefore the soldiers did.

The Death of Jesus Now there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus, therefore, saw his mother and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he said to His mother, "Woman, behold thy son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold thy mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

After this Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst." Now there was standing there a vessel full of common wine; and having put a sponge soaked with the wine on a stalk of hyssop, they put it to his mouth. Therefore, when Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "It is consummated!" And bowing his head, he gave up his spirit.

DURING A BRIEF PAUSE ALL KNEEL

The Burial The Jews therefore, since it was the Preparation Day, in order that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a solemn day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other, who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs; but one of the soldiers opened his side with a lance, and immediately there came out blood and water.

And he who saw it has borne witness, and his witness is true; and he knows that he tells the truth, that you also may believe. For these things came to pass that the Scripture might be fulfilled,

"Not a bone of him shall you break."

And again another Scripture says,

"They shall look upon him whom they
have pierced."

SILENT PRAYER BEFORE THE GOSPEL

CLEANSE my heart and my lips, O almighty God, who didst cleanse the lips of the Prophet Isaias with a burning coal, and vouchsafe, through Thy gracious mercy, so to purify me, that I may worthily announce Thy holy Gospel. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE PASSION CONTINUED

THE FOLLOWING IS SUNG IN THE GOSPEL TONE

NOW after these things Joseph of Arimathea, because he was a disciple of Jesus (although for fear of the Jews a secret one), besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave permission. He came, therefore, and took away the body of Jesus. And there also came Nicodemus (who at first had come to Jesus by night), bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, in weight about a hundred pounds. They therefore took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices, after the Jewish manner of preparing for burial. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. There, accordingly, because of the Preparation Day of the Jews, for the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus.

II. THE SUPPLICATIONS

Standing at the Epistle side the Priest sings the following orations for the needs of the Church, the faithful and all other classes of people.

FOR THE CHURCH

Let us pray, dearly beloved, for the holy Church of God: that our Lord and God may deign to give it peace, keep it in unity, and guard it throughout the world, subjecting to it principalities and powers and may grant unto us that, leading a peaceful and quiet life we may glorify God, the Father almighty.

LET US PRAY. LET US KNEEL. ARISE.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who in Christ hast revealed Thy glory to all nations: guard the works of Thy mercy; that Thy Church, spread over the whole world, may with steadfast faith persevere in the confession of Thy Name. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God forever and ever. Amen.

FOR THE POPE

Let us pray also for our most holy Father Pope N.: that our Lord and God, who chose him to the order of the Episcopate, may keep him in health and safety for His holy Church to govern the holy people of God.

LET US PRAY. LET US KNEEL. ARISE.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, by whose judgment all things are established, mercifully regard our prayers, and in Thy goodness preserve the Bishop chosen for us: that the Christian people who are ruled by Thine authority, may under so great a Pontiff, be increased in the merits of their faith. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God forever and ever. Amen.

FOR ORDERS OF PERSONS

Let us pray for all Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Subdeacons, Acolytes, Exorcists, Readers, Porters, Confessors, Virgins, Widows, and for all the holy people of God.

LET US PRAY. LET US KNEEL. ARISE.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is sanctified and ruled, hear our humble pleading for all the orders thereof; that by the gift of Thy grace all in their several degrees may faithfully serve Thee. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God forever and ever. Amen.

FOR CATECHUMENS

Let us pray also for our Catechumens: that our Lord and God would open the ears of their hearts, and the gate of mercy; that, having received, by the font of regeneration the remission of all their sins, they also may be found in Christ Jesus our Lord.

LET US PRAY. LET US KNEEL. ARISE.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who dost ever make Thy Church fruitful with new offspring: increase the faith and understanding of our Catechumens; that being born again in the font of Baptism, they may be associated with the children of Thine adoption. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God forever and ever. Amen.

FOR THE AFFLICTED

Let us pray, dearly beloved, to God the Father almighty, that He would cleanse the world of all errors: take away diseases, drive away famine, open prisons, break chains, grant a sure return to travelers, health to the sick, and a safe haven to those at sea.

LET US PRAY. LET US KNEEL. ARISE.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, the comfort of the sorrowful, and the strength of those that labor: let the prayers of those that call upon Thee in any trouble reach Thee; that all may rejoice that in their necessities Thy mercy has helped them. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

FOR HERETICS

Let us pray also for heretics and schismatics: that our Lord God would be pleased to rescue them from all their errors; and recall them to our holy mother the Catholic and Apostolic Church.

LET US PRAY. LET US KNEEL. ARISE.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who savest all, and wouldst that no one should perish: look on the souls that are led astray by the deceit of the devil: that having set aside all heretical evil, the hearts of those that err may repent, and return to the unity of Thy truth. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God forever and ever. Amen.

FOR THE JEWS

Let us pray also for the perfidious Jews: that our God and Lord would remove the veil from their hearts: that they also may acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ.

The genuflection in the prayer for the Jews is omitted to signify their refusal to believe in the Divinity of Christ.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who drivest not away from Thy mercy even the perfidious Jews: hear our prayers, which we offer for the blindness of that people: that acknowledging the light of Thy truth, which is Christ, they may be rescued from their darkness. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God forever and ever. Amen.

FOR PAGANS

Let us pray also for the pagans: that almighty God would remove iniquity from their hearts: that, putting aside their idols, they may be converted to the true and living God, and His only Son, Jesus Christ our God and Lord.

LET US PRAY. . . LET US KNEEL. . . ARISE.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who ever seekest not the death, but the life of sinners: mercifully hear our prayer, and deliver them from the worship of idols: and join them to Thy holy Church for the praise and glory of Thy Name. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God forever and ever. Amen.

III. THE VENERATION OF THE CROSS

Removing his Black Chasuble, the Celebrant unveils the upper portion of the Crucifix as he stands at the Epistle side, facing the people, and sings:

Celebrant. Behold the wood of the Cross, on which hung the Savior of the world.

The Choir Answers:

Choir. Come, let us adore.

When the Choir sings these words, all kneel, except the Celebrant. The priest then advances to the front corner, and uncovers the right arm; elevating the Crucifix a little, he sings in a higher tone than before:

Celebrant. Behold the wood of the Cross, on which hung the Savior of the world.

The choir answers, while all kneel:

Choir. Come, let us adore.

Then at the middle of the Altar the Celebrant uncovers the whole Cross, and, lifting it up, sings in a still higher tone:

Celebrant. Behold the wood of the Cross, on which hung the Savior of the world.

Choir. Come, let us adore.

The Celebrant carries the Cross to the place prepared for it in front of the Altar, and kneeling, lays it on a cushion. Taking off his shoes, he kneels three times before the cross and kisses it. The clergy and laity then approach two by two, and also kneel to venerate the cross. During this solemn veneration, the Celebrant, Deacon and Subdeacon recite alternately the following versicles and responses.

THE REPROACHES

RECOUNTING GOD'S GREAT BENEFITS TO HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE AND THEIR SHAMEFUL INGRATITUDE

Celebrant. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me. Because I led thee out of the land of Egypt, thou hast prepared a cross for thy Savior.

Deacon. O holy God! **Sub-deacon.** O holy God!

Deacon. O holy strong One!

Sub-deacon. O holy strong One!

Deacon. O holy immortal One, have mercy on us.

Sub-deacon. O holy immortal One, have mercy on us.

Celebrant. Because I led thee out through the desert forty years: and brought thee into a land exceeding good, thou hast prepared a Cross for thy Savior.

Deacon and Sub-deacon. O holy God! (as before)

Celebrant. What more ought I to have done for thee, that I have not done? I planted thee, indeed, My most beautiful vineyard: and thou hast become exceedingly bitter to Me: for in My thirst thou gavest Me vinegar to drink: and with a lance thou hast pierced the side of thy Savior.

Deacon and Sub-deacon. O holy God! (as before)

Celebrant. For thy sake I scourged Egypt with its first born: and thou hast scourged Me and delivered Me up.

Deacon and Sub-deacon. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me.

Cel. I led thee out of Egypt having drowned Pharaoh in the Red Sea: and thou hast delivered Me to the chief priests.

D. and S. D. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me.

Cel. I opened the sea before thee: and thou with a spear hast opened My side.

D. and S. D. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me.

Cel. I went before thee in a pillar of cloud: and thou hast led Me to the judgement hall of Pilate.

D. and S. D. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me.

Cel. I fed thee with manna in the desert; and thou hast beaten Me with blows and scourges.

D. and S. D. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me.

Cel. I gave thee the water of salvation from the rock to drink: and thou hast given Me gall and vinegar.

D. and S. D. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me.

Cel. For thy sake I struck the kings of the Canaanites: and thou hast struck My head with a reed.

D. and S. D. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me.

Cel. I gave thee a royal sceptre: and thou hast given to My head a crown of thorns.

D. and S. D. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me.

Cel. I exalted thee with great strength: and thou hast hanged Me on the gibbet of the Cross.

D. and S. D. O my people, what have I done to thee? or wherein have I afflicted thee? Answer me.

The following Anthem is then sung:

Cel. We adore Thy Cross, O Lord: and we praise and glorify Thy holy Resurrection: for behold by the wood of the Cross joy has come into the whole world.

D. and S. D. (Ps. 1 xvi. 2) May God have mercy on us, and bless us.

Cel. May he cause the light of His countenance to shine upon us, and have mercy on us. We adore Thy Cross, O Lord: and we praise and glorify Thy holy Resurrection: for behold by the wood of the Cross joy has come into the whole world.

D. and S. D. May God have mercy on us, and bless us.



IV. THE PROCESSION AND THE MASS OF THE PRESANCTIFIED

As the Veneration draws to a close, the Candles on the Altars are lighted and the Cross is placed before the tabernacle. Then the Blessed Sacrament is carried, from the Repository to the high Altar, in procession, during which the Hymn *Vexilla Regis* is sung:

THE PROCESSION

HYMN "VEXILLA REGIS"

The royal banners forward go,
The Cross shines forth in mystic glow,
Where Life Himself our death endured,
And by His death our life procured.

Where deep for us the spear was dyed,
Life's torrent rushing from His side,
To wash us in that precious flood,
Where mingled water flowed, and blood.

Fulfilled is all that David told
In true prophetic song of old
To all the nations: "God", saith he,
"Hath reigned and triumphed from the Tree."

O Tree of beauty, Tree of light,
O Tree with royal purple dight,
Elect on whose triumphal breast
Those holy limbs should find their rest;

On whose dear arms, so widely flung,
The weight of this world's ransom hung;
The price of human kind to pay,
And spoil the spoiler of his prey.

O Cross, our one reliance, hail!
This holy Passiontide avail
To give new virtue to the saint,
And pardon to the penitent.

To Thee, eternal Three in One,
Let homage meet by all be done;
As by the Cross Thou dost restore,
So rule and guide us evermore. Amen.



THE MASS OF THE PRESANCTIFIED

The procession ended, the Celebrant ascends the altar, places the Blessed Sacrament on it and pours wine and water into the chalice. Next he incenses the Offering, the Cross and the Altar, saying:

MAY this incense, which Thou hast blessed, O Lord, ascend to Thee, and may Thy mercy descend upon us.

INCENSING THE ALTAR

LET my prayer, O Lord, be directed as incense in Thy sight: the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a door round about my lips.

May my heart not incline to evil words, to make excuses for sins.

Giving the censer to the Deacon, he says:

MAY the Lord enkindle within us the fire of His love, and the flame of everlasting charity.
Amen.

Washing his hands at the Epistle side, he returns to the middle of the altar, bows and says:

ACCCEPT us, O Lord, in the spirit of humility and contrition of heart, and grant that the sacrifice which we offer this day in Thy sight may be pleasing to Thee, O Lord God.

Facing the people, he extends his hands and says:

BRETHREN, pray that my Sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

THE OUR FATHER

LET US PRAY.
Instructed by Thy saving precepts, and following Thy divine institution, we are bold to say:

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.

Amen.

DELIVER us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, from all evils, past, present, and to come; and by the intercession of the blessed and glorious ever Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and of the holy Apostles,

Peter and Paul, and of Andrew, and of all the Saints, mercifully grant peace in our days, that through the assistance of Thy mercy we may be always free from sin, and secure from all disturbance.

Amen.

Genuflecting, the Celebrant elevates the Sacred Host that all may see and adore it. The Agnus Dei is omitted and the following prayer is said:

LET not the partaking of The Body, O Lord Jesus Christ, which I, though unworthy, presume to receive, turn to my judgement and condemnation; but let it through Thy mercy, become a safeguard and remedy, both for soul and body; Who with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Taking the paten with the Sacred Host lying on it, he says:

I WILL take the Bread of heaven, and will call upon the Name of the Lord.

Striking his breast, he repeats three times:

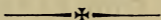
LORD, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed.

He makes the Sign of the Cross with Consecrated Host and says:

THE Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting. Amen.

Receiving the Sacrament, he consumes the wine in the chalice, purifies it and says:

GRANT, O Lord, that what we have taken with our mouth, we may receive with a pure mind; and from a temporal gift may it become to us an eternal remedy.



NO ONE, EXCEPT THOSE IN DANGER OF DEATH, MAY RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION ON GOOD FRIDAY



After the Mass of the Presanctified the altars are again stripped bare of all furnishings.



*Meditations and Prayers on the
Seven Last Words*

of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on the Cross

A FORM OF DEVOTION IN HONOR OF THE
THREE HOURS OF AGONY
FOR GOOD FRIDAY AFTER MID-DAY

STAND—All Sing —

FAITHFUL CROSS

Faithful Cross; above all other,
One and only noble Tree!
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be:
Sweetest Wood, and sweetest Iron,
Sweetest Weight is hung on thee.

Sing my tongue, the glorious battle!
With completed victory rife:
And above the Cross's trophy
Tell the triumph of the strife:
How the world's Redeemer conquer'd
By the offering of His life.

Faithful Cross! above all other,
One and only noble Tree!
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be:

— OR —

S T A B A T M A T E R

At the cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last:
Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword had passed.

The Prophecy in the Old Law

PRIEST —

— ALL KNEEL —

I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of Grace and Prayer, and they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for an only Son, and they shall grieve over Him as the manner is to grieve for the death of the First-born. And they shall say to Him: "What are those wounds in the midst of Thy hands?" And He shall say: "With these I was wounded in the house of them that loved Me."
(Zach. XIII-6).

People—Redeemer of the world, * have mercy on us.

Priest—We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

People—Because by Thy holy cross * Thou hast redeemed the world. *

The Fulfillment in the New Law

PRIEST —

— ALL KNEEL —

Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. And so they took Jesus and led Him away.

And bearing the cross for himself, he went forth to the place called the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified him, and with him two others, one on each side and Jesus in the center.

And Pilate also wrote an inscription and had it put on the cross. And there was written,

"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

Many of the Jews therefore read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Greek and in Latin.
(John XIX. 16-20.)

People—Redeemer of the world, * have mercy on us.

Priest—We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

People—Because by Thy holy cross * Thou hast redeemed the world. *

Priest—LET US PRAY:—

Priest and People—Look upon me, * good and gentle Jesus, * while before Thy face I humbly kneel, * and with burning soul pray and beseech Thee, * to fix deep in my heart * lively sentiments of faith, hope

and charity, * true contrition for my sins, * and a firm purpose of amendment, * the while I contemplate with great love * and tender-pity Thy five wounds, * pondering upon them within me, * while I call to mind the words which David * Thy Prophet said of Thee, my Saviour: * "They have pierced my hands and feet, * they have numbered all my bones." *

Introductory Meditation

PRIEST —

— ALL SIT —

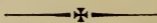
"And when they had come to the place called the Skull, they crucified Him there". (Lk. 23. 33.) With profound reverence and sincere contrition of heart, we gather here to meditate on the seven last words of our Saviour on the cross. That we may better dispose ourselves to derive choicest graces from this meditation, let us go back in spirit to the first Good Friday and in spirit take our position on the hill of Calvary, called the Skull. Here we become spectators of the world's supreme drama—the crucifixion of our Lord. We are not alone. A large congregation has assembled, not to pray and worship, but to blaspheme and persecute. The trial of Jesus had come to an end. Pontius Pilate, the cowardly Roman governor, had pronounced the death-sentence: "Take Him away and crucify Him". No time was lost. In anticipation of His certain doom, a ponderous cross had been selected for Him. Its crushing weight—symbol of the world's guilt—now bears heavily on His bruised shoulders, and we see a dismal procession now winding its cruel tortuous way up the steep and rocky road to the summit of the hill. No death-march ever had its equal. Crowned with thorns, covered with wounds, streaming with blood, and staggering under His burden, comes the Saviour, followed by the two condemned thieves, all three tightly bound and closely guarded. Pressing close upon them are the numerous enemies of Jesus, a jostling mob, rending the air with frightful yells, curses and blasphemies.

The procession comes to a halt. It has reached its appointed destination. A scene of unsurpassed brutality unfolds before our eyes. Spurred on by the gloating Scribes, Pharisees and high priests, the Roman soldiers lay hold of the cross and drop it to the ground. Shamelessly, they strip Jesus of His clothing and with it they tear the flesh that clings to

His inner garments. Ghastly wounds are re-opened and streams of blood flow afresh. Thus denuded, He is thrown upon the cross and made secure. One of the executioners places a large spike upon His right hand. The heavy hammer rises and falls with horrible precision and the iron nail crashes through flesh and bone, sinews and nerves. The left hand and then the feet of the sacred Victim undergo the same excruciating torture. Behold the innocent Lamb of God upon the altar of the cross! With no little effort, the unwieldy frame bearing its precious treasure is lifted on high. The lower beam is dropped with a dull thud into the hole prepared for it and fixed firmly in the ground. Thereupon, the two thieves are crucified: one on the cross to His right, and the other on a cross to His left.

It is midday. Jesus commences His appalling agony. Through Him surge all the throes of death ever experienced by mankind. For three seemingly interminable hours He endures inexpressible tortures of body and soul. Meanwhile with savage triumph, His enemies close in on Him to watch Him suffer and die. There too, beneath the cross are Mary of Cleophas. Mary Magdalen, John the beloved disciple and—Mary, the Mother of Jesus. With Mary as our guide and monitor, we also shall draw close to Jesus and lay our docile hearts at His feet, to consider some details of those last hours of His sacred agony and to carry home with us the lessons He teaches from His pulpit of pain and from the blood-stained altar of His undying love.

He speaks seven times. The words are few, the sermons are short. But the sweet strains of those divine utterances, like music from heaven, will echo and re-echo in grateful hearts until time will be no more. 1. He preaches and exemplifies the sublime duty of forgiving our enemies. 2. He promises paradise to the penitent thief and to all repentant sinners. 3. He commissions Mary to be our spiritual Mother. 4. He shows us the frightfulness of being deprived of the Beatific Vision. 5. He reveals His infinite thirst for our salvation. 6. He proclaims the consummation of the world's redemption. 7. He instructs us to commend our souls to His heavenly Father as we pass from this world into eternity.—May He grant us light and grace to learn and put into practice these great lessons of His infinite love. Let us now pray and dispose our hearts to derive all possible graces from the consideration of the last words of our Saviour on the Cross.



PRAYER TO KNOW AND LOVE JESUS CRUCIFIED

PEOPLE —

— ALL KNEEL —

① My Crucified Saviour, * perfect Model and gentle Instructor * in the difficult art of suffering, * teach me to know the wise folly of the cross * and the foolish wisdom of the world. * Hitherto I have shunned Thy invitation * to mourn with Thee * and Thy sorrowful Mother. * I dreaded the road to Calvary. * I feared to follow in Thy footsteps. * But where I sought comfort, * I found only bitterness and vexation of spirit. * Where I looked for light, * I was plunged into darkness. * Where I hoped to find the fulness of joy, * I experienced most painful emptiness. * And now when I see Thee, * crucified and overwhelmed with sufferings * out of love for me, * my heart is filled with the most tender compassion for Thee * and with the most lively hatred of sin. * Because of my transgressions, * Thy heavenly Father did not spare Thee, * although Thou art His beloved Son. * He demanded Thy sufferings and death * to satisfy His offended justice and holiness. * Sin, then, * in the eyes of Thy heavenly Father, * O my Jesus, * is a greater evil * than Thy Passion and death. * With most profound and heartfelt sorrow, * therefore, * I repent of the sins of my whole life * because they have caused Thee * Thy so bitter sufferings and so painful death. * I weep over those sins * because I have repaid Thy infinite love * with heinous ingratitude. * I weep over them * because they have so grievously offended Thee, * the Supreme Good, * who art so deserving of all my love. * I firmly resolve to die * rather than offend Thee again. *

Nevertheless, * O my Jesus, * I tremble at my great weakness. * My wicked passions and evil inclinations * tempt me violently to sin. * I am fearful of the future; * yet firmly do I hope for every good * when I reflect on Thy holy Passion * and place my confidence in Thy infinite merits. * Henceforth, * the constant memory of Thy Passion and Death * will be the unfailing source of power * to free me more and more * from the fatal dominion of my evil inclinations. * O Crucified Jesus, * grant me the grace to make every sacrifice * to please Thee * and to imitate the virtues * I see Thee prac-

tice on the cross. * Grant * that as I advance in age, * I may also grow in wisdom and virtue and grace * before God and man. * Grant that I may submit my will to Thy holy will, * in all I do and suffer. * That I may know no other freedom, * no other joy, no greater good, * than to live and die in union with Thy holy will. * In the past I have had so little time for Thee. * I repent of it. * I now resolve with Thy help * often to meditate with grateful heart, * on the wonders of Thy divine love, * manifested in the mysteries of Thy sacred Passion. * O Mary, Mother of Sorrows, my Mother, * obtain for me this grace, * that meditating on the sufferings of Thy divine Son * I may be ever more closely united with Him and Thee. Amen. *



STAND—All Sing —

God, his Maker, sorely gieving,
That the first-made Adam fell,
When he ate the fruit of sorrow,
Whose reward was death and hell,
Noted then this Wood, the ruin
Of the ancient wood to quell.

Sweetest Wood, and sweetest Iron,
Sweetest Weight is hung on thee.

— O R —

Oh, how sad and sore distressed
Was that Mother, highly blessed,
Of the sole begotten One!

Christ above in torment hangs:
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying glorious Son.



The First Word on the Cross

“FATHER FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO”.



PRIEST —

— ALL SIT —

The love of our enemies and the full pardon of their offences is the supreme test of Christian charity. It is so essential for salvation and so indispensable for fellowship with Christ that He exemplifies it most perfectly and makes it the subject of His First Word on the cross. Surrounding Him on all sides were

His enemies gloating over His humiliation and triumphing over His apparent defeat and destruction. They come forward to the cross and vomit forth the most hideous blasphemy and defiance: “If Thou art the King of the Jews”, they say, “save Thyself”. “Thou that destroyest the temple and in three days buildest it up again; come down from the cross and save Thyself”. “He saved others, if He be the Christ, let Him save Himself”. How does Jesus accept their challenge? Does He call upon the earth to open wide its chasms to engulf them? Does he command the mountains to leap from their foundations to annihilate them? No! He utters no reproach. He seems not to hear their horrible execrations. He raises His compassionate eyes to heaven and says: “Father, forgive them”. As supreme Judge He forbears all judgment and becomes their all-powerful Advocate.

“Father forgive them”. “Forgive, I beseech you all my enemies and all their offences without exception. Forgive Pilate who condemned Me that he might retain the friendship of Caesar. Forgive Herod who treated Me as a fool. Forgive the Scribes and Pharisees and high priests who instigated Thy people to turn against Me, who plotted to destroy the work of my Redemption. Forgive the executioners who scourged and tortured Me and nailed Me to the cross. Forgive, oh Father, forgive all who ever committed a grievous sin and thereby took part in shedding My Blood and transfixing Me to this cross of infamy and pain.”

Not only does Jesus plead for the unreserved pardon of His enemies, but He directs attention solely to the extenuating circumstances of their guilt. “Father”, He says, “forgive them, for they know not what they do.” “They know, indeed, that I am suf-

fering and dying innocently; but they do not know that they are crucifying their Redeemer and the Lord of glory." In this sublime prayer of Christ, we find not only the spoken word of pardon and the alleged reason for a merciful judgment in behalf of His sworn enemies, but we also clearly perceive in that cry for pardon a solemn avowal of His infinite love for them—the all impelling motive why the heavenly Father should withhold no blessings from them. "It is true", our Lord seems to say, "they are offering Thee a monstrous insult; but is not my love for Thee and for them infinitely greater than their immeasurable guilt? Therefore, punish Me in their stead and accept My Sacrifice of atonement that they may be reconciled with Thee. Convert their heart from filthy dens of satan into holy temples of the sanctifying Spirit. Snatch them from the road of perdition and lead them to the path of repentance and salvation. They have been created to Our Image; through My Redemption let them once more be partakers of Our divine Nature and regard them as Thy children and My beloved brethren". What infinite generosity in this noble appeal of Jesus for His enemies!

Dear Christian, we cannot pretend that it is an easy matter to love our enemies according to the teaching and example of our Lord. But what the saints and all true followers of Christ have done, you also can do. Jesus forbids us to follow the ways of the world in seeking revenge, and demanding an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. He emphatically says: "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that persecute and calumniate you: that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, who makes the sun to rise on the good and the evil, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. You therefore are to be perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect". Would you be a worthy child of your heavenly Father? Would you wish to have a sure pledge of your predelection to salvation? Then follow this high standard of perfection. Forgive, love and do good to your enemies.

No small reward is attached to the fulfillment of this command. Faith tells you that the evils which you suffer at the hands of your fellowmen are blessings in disguise, pearls of priceless worth, redeemable in eternity. Faith assures you that you need fear no punishment from God if you heed these words of our Lord who clearly says: "If you forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences". How consoling for us who have so often offended! Charity covers a multitude of sins.

No Christian can credit himself with having

reached the perfection of fraternal charity unless he is considerate and lenient in judging his enemies. Therefore let your sentiments be conformable to the generous sentiments of Jesus Christ. If you cannot excuse the evil action of your neighbor, excuse at least his intention. And if his intention cannot be looked upon as entirely free from blame, excuse him on the plea of violence of his temptation. And if you find absolutely nothing in him that speaks in his favor, then say to yourself: Though there seems to be nothing but evil in him, no doubt there is much good in him that I do not perceive. Who knows, he may one day be a great saint? To God alone belongs final judgment. "Do not judge, that you may not be judged. For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged; and with what measure you measure, it shall be measured to you." Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do! Henceforth may we merit full pardon of all our sins when we recite the Lord's prayer and say: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive all who trespass against us! Amen.

PRAYER TO OBTAIN PARDON FOR OURSELVES AND ENEMIES

PEOPLE —

— ALL KNEEL —

① MOST amiable and merciful Jesus, * when Thou wast dying on the cross* amidst incredible sufferings; * when thou wast mocked, * derided and blasphemed, * Thou didst say: * "Father forgive them, * for they know not what they do". * This prayer, I know, was intended * not only for Thy contemptible enemies * who despised and tortured Thee, * but was intended * for all poor sinners. * Who has grieved Thee more than myself? * What would have been my fate * hadst Thou judged me * with all the rigor of Thy divine justice? * I deserved to be cast from Thee forever. * But in Thy infinite mercy. * Thou didst plead * and obtain pardon for me, * from Thy heavenly Father. * Would that I had the voice of an angel * that I might gratefully sing Thy praises * for all time and eternity. * O Lord Jesus, * do Thou in Thy boundless clemency, * continue to show me * Thy divine consideration and mercy, * until I am inseparably united with Thee in heaven. * In my weakness, * surrounded as I am * by so many temptations and dangers to salvation, * I turn to Thee who art my only strength, * my only hope. * my only security. * With Thy help I know I shall be victorious * and gain the crown of

eternal life. * Grant me this help I beseech Thee *
despite my great unworthiness. *

It is indeed just and proper, * O Lord, * that while
I hope and beg for pardon for my sins, * I also ap-
peal to Thee * to pardon my enemies. * Most un-
grateful should I be, * if I should be unwilling * to
forgive, from my heart, * all the offences of my fellow-
men. * I should be like the unmerciful servant *
mentioned in the Gospel, * to whom his lord * gener-
ously forgave a whole debt * of incredible size, *
and then, * unmindful of the great goodness of his
lord, * refused to forgive * even a trifling debt of his
fellow-servant. * By such conduct * I should be self-
condemned to judgment without mercy * I should
thus renounce * the great blessing and high honor *
of being Thy disciple. * I should fail to imitate Thy
example and follow Thy Command. * Let no such
misfortune befall me, * O merciful Saviour. * Hence-
forth * I will forgive from my heart * all who offend me.
* I will strive to forget all injuries, * great or small. *
In my thoughts and in my words and in my actions, *
and in all my judgments * no matter how difficult it
may seem to me, * I will endeavor to show * that I
love my enemies. * I know that of myself, * I cannot
succeed. * But with Thy ready grace, I know * that I
can do this perfectly and joyfully. * Through Thy all-
powerful intercession, * O my beloved Mother, Mary, *
with thy help I will bring this firm resolve * to a happy
conclusion. * Obtain this grace for me. Amen. *

STAND—All Sing —

For this work of our salvation
Needs must have its order so,
And the manifold deceiver's
Art by art would overthrow,
And from thence would bring the healing,
Whence the insult of the foe.
Faithful Cross! above all other,
One and only noble Tree!
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be:

— O R —

Is there one who would not weep,
Whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold?
Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?

The Second Word on the Cross

“AMEN, I SAY TO THEE, THIS DAY THOU SHALT BE WITH ME IN PARADISE”.



PRIEST —

— ALL SIT —

Consider the Second Word of Jesus on the cross. It is replete with hope and consolation for all truly repentant sinners. Two thieves were crucified with our Saviour; one to the right and the other to the left. Both were guilty of many heinous crimes; both deserving of capital punishment. Yet we designate the one a good thief and the other a bad thief, the one a saint and the other a reprobate. A striking example of the co-operation with grace, on the one hand, and, the stubborn rejection of grace on the other.

Embittered over his unhappy lot, the bad thief fumed and cursed, and defied Jesus to prove His Divinity by working a miracle: “If Thou art the Christ”, he blasphemed, “save Thyself and us”. Jesus remained silent. It would have been of no avail to answer the wretched sinner. He had placed himself beyond the pale of redemption. But, Dismas, the good thief, rebuked him saying: “Dost thou not even fear God, seeing that thou art under the same sentence? And we indeed guilty, for we are receiving what our deeds deserved, but this man has done nothing wrong”. Then addressing himself to Jesus, he says: “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom”. Turning His thorn-crowned head to the converted robber, the Saviour answers: “Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise”. The first fruits of the Redemption are accomplished! Dismas, the life-long sinner is now a saint. He was canonized by Christ himself. His feast is celebrated by the Church, annually, April 24.

Grace is God’s transcendent gift to man. It surpasses all other gifts we receive from our Creator. He lavishes it upon us in super-abundance. Daily, in countless ways, it knocks at the door of our heart, seeking entrance. It is present to us when we are moved by an impulse to do good; it is offered to us in prayer, sermons, Holy Mass, Holy Communion, and in the good example of our neighbor. It is the unseen treasure concealed in sickness, poverty, death of a beloved one; in every trial sent us

by an all-wise Providence. Like the good thief we can correspond with it and permit it to work great wonders in our soul.

How the first efficacious grace of conversion came to the good thief, we do not know. It may have been a single glance bestowed on him by our Saviour. But we do know that he placed no obstacle in its way. Once grace gained entrance into his soul, it worked a marvelous transformation within him and was succeeded by a host of added graces. We now see the one-time criminal exercise the most heroic virtues under the most trying conditions. He believes with the invincible faith of the martyrs. We see him recognizing Christ, confessing Christ, defending Christ. Although he beholds Christ crucified as a malefactor, he acknowledges Him to be the King of heaven. Hope is there: for with unshaken confidence he asks his Redeemer to remember him in His Kingdom. Love is there: for he reproaches his former companion because of his blasphemies and thus proclaims the innocence of Jesus before the Jews and His hostile executioners. He espouses the cause of Christ bravely and fearlessly when all others desert or rise up against the Lord. He becomes a model of deep humility and sincere contrition; for he says: "We are receiving the just punishment for our misdeeds". Truly his is a miraculous conversion! What was his reward? Paradise! Possession of the Beatific Vision! When? Not on the day of judgment to come. Not in the distant future. Not after spending a long time in purgatory. But this very day! This very first Good Friday, he will enjoy the bliss of paradise with his Saviour! O blessed effects of grace! O blessed mercy and liberality of the compassionate Heart of Jesus!

When you study the image of our Saviour on the cross, you will observe that His sacred thorn-crowned head is turned away from the impenitent thief on His left and is inclined towards the repentant thief, Dismas, on His right. What an inspiration and encouragement in this gesture of our Lord for all who desire to abandon sin and the maxims and practices of the world! He seems so say: "In this penitent thief, O Christian soul, you have a powerful patron, an ideal model. Should the memory of your sins haunt and discourage you, learn from him how to trust in My infinite mercy. Invoke him with confidence and he who prized My boundless mercy so highly, will obtain mercy for you also. Endeavor earnestly to imitate his fearless faith, his unwavering confidence, his deep humility, his ardent love, his generous profession of My Divinity, his sublime patience in suffering.

"In one point only you must not imitate him. You

must not delay your conversion until the hour of death. In this respect the good thief can be excused—his life was spent amidst most unfavorable surroundings. You can have no such excuse. Do not postpone to a later date what your eternal welfare demands now. Do you perhaps feel the need of a general confession? Are certain restitutions to be made? Are there dangerous occasions of sin to be given up? Are you enslaved by some shameful habit of unchastity, immoderate indulgence in drink, undue frequentation of taverns, theaters and other indecent places of amusement? Are you unwilling to forgive injuries fully and with your whole heart? Are scandals to be repaired? Examine your conscience carefully to see if there be anything seriously wrong in your conduct. If so, repent now most sincerely and resolve this moment, here at the foot of the cross, to change your manner of life! Do so without delay! It is not within your power to choose the hour of your death. God alone is Creator of life and sole Master of death. Will your last hour come when you least expect it? Will you turn a deaf ear to My loving appeal, with the feeble excuse of numerous worldly cares and occupations? Only one thing is necessary—save your soul! “For what does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul?”

PRAYER FOR TRUE CONVERSION AND HIGH ESTEEM OF GRACE

PEOPLE —

— ALL KNEEL —

O MY SAVIOUR, * Thou art truly the Good Shepherd * who goes in search of the lost sheep. * As I kneel before the cross and reflect * upon the wonderful conversion of the good thief, * I begin to understand the consoling words * which Thou didst speak in Thy public life: * “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, * will draw all things to myself”. * From the earth and its sinful ways * Thou didst lift up the wayward criminal * to suffer and die with Thee upon the cross * and hast chosen him * to be the first fruits of Thy Redemption. * No sooner does he return to Thee, * by corresponding with Thy grace, * than Thou receivest him again, * as a loving Father * opening Thy arms to Thy prodigal son. * Neither dost Thou remember any more * the multitude or grievousness of his sins * when Thou seest in him * the good will and sincere desire to amend his life. * This repentant thief, * once an abominable example of evil to so many, * becomes through his wonderful conver-

sion, * a most shining example for all. * What joy and happiness must now be his in paradise, * as he praises the boundless goodness of Thy Sacred Heart, * in union with all the heavenly court! *

Alas! * How this poor converted thief puts me to shame * when I recall Thy many graces * which I have boldly resisted or corresponded with so feebly. * Daily, hourly, Thou hast lavished them upon me. * Never on earth shall I know * their number, greatness and variety. * They should have made me a great saint. * Yet I see myself guilty of many sins * and ruled by unmortified passion. * Had the hapless thief been illumined * with an equal number of graces from his youth, * what glorious fruits of holiness * would he not have brought forth? * But no sinner, be he ever so abandoned * need be discouraged, * when he turns to Thee with contrite heart * and reflects upon Thy infinite mercy. * Neither will I be disheartened. * But trusting in Thy mercy * and in the powerful intercession of the good thief, * I resolve to make up for my mistakes in the past. * O my Crucified Saviour, * do Thou grant me, a miserable sinner, * a grace like to that * which Thou didst grant him. * Cast upon me but one of those gracious looks * which will convert me thoroughly! * Speak but one of those words of mercy and pardon! * Say but the word and my soul shall be healed! * Remember not the sins of my youth, * but wash them out, in Thy precious blood! * With my whole heart and soul I am sorry * for having offended Thee! * Create a new heart within me! * Give me strength, * nevermore, * to neglect or abuse Thy graces; * but in Thy liberality * continue to favor me with their riches. * I firmly resolve, * henceforth, * to use them most faithfully. * O Mary, * filled with the plentitude of grace; * assist me with thy powerful intercession. * Thou alone art worthy to be heard by the divine Son. Amen. *



STAND—All Sing —

Wherefore when the appointed fulness
Of the holy time was come,
He was sent who maketh all things
From the eternal Father's home,
And proceedeth, God Incarnate,
Offspring of the Virgin's womb.

Sweetest Wood, and sweetest Iron,
Sweetest Weight is hung on thee.

— O R —

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with bloody scourges rent:

For the sins of His own nation,
Saw Him hang in desolation
Till His spirit forth He sent.

— † —

The Third Word on the Cross

“WOMAN, BEHOLD THY SON”. THEN HE SAID TO THE DISCIPLE: “BEHOLD THY MOTHER”.



PRIEST —

— ALL SIT —

Not for an instant did Jesus lose consciousness of the fact that His devoted Mother stood hard by the cross overwhelmed by an ocean of sorrow. The words of the prophet Jeremias applied to her centuries before, no doubt were in His mind:—

“To what shall I compare thee, or to what shall I liken thee,

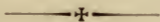
O daughter of Jerusalem; for great as the sea is thy desolation”. Gladly would He have spared her the awful anguish of bearing witness to His barbarous execution. But such was not the decree of Providence. She was to be the co-Redemptrix to atone for the sins of the world and like the Redeemer she must go down into the deepest and darkest valley of pain, grief and sorrow. We need only bear in mind that love is the measure of grief, and, as no mutual love was more intense than the love of Jesus and Mary for each other, so never was there a sorrow so immense to afflict two hearts so intimately one. Jesus is truly the Man of Sorrows; Mary, the Queen of Martyrs.

Of this world's goods He has nothing to bequeath. But His grateful Heart overflows at the memory of her solicitude for Him in the stable of Bethlehem, in their exile of Egypt, in their poverty of Nazareth, in their privations during His public life. Ignoring the ravages of His own tortures, He wishes now to provide for the remainder of her earthly life and confides her to the tender care of His favorite apostle. “Woman” He says, “behold thy son. Son, behold thy Mother”. And from that hour the disciple took her to his home.—Sons and daughters, learn from your dying Saviour how to love, honor and obey your parents! After God you owe all to them. Bring joy to their hearts. Comfort them in sickness and affliction. Aid them in poverty and distress. Cheer them in the loneliness of their declining years. Pray for them during life. Be ever mindful of them in Mass and Communion when they sleep the last long sleep. And you, fathers and mothers, never lose sight of your parental obligations in this world and your reward in the next.

When Jesus said “Woman, behold thy son”, He

referred to John not only as an individual but as the representative of the entire human race. It was as if Jesus said "Thou art My true earthly Mother, I am thy true earthly Son. My life is drawing to a close. Thy work for Me is done. As I have received from thee My sacred Humanity, so do thou now receive from Me another humanity—every individual in the human race represented in the person of My most beloved disciple John. As I am King of heaven and earth, Father of all the faithful, so shalt thou be the Queen of heaven and earth and Mother of all the faithful. I am the Good Shepherd, the Fountain-head of all mercy, but I am also Judge. If My children hesitate to throw themselves on My mercy, they cannot hesitate to abandon themselves to thy maternal and all compassionate heart. Be their true Mother. Let no one call upon thee in vain.

"Through thy hands, I will pour out all the treasures of My grace. 'Woman, behold thy children'. To you dear Christian, Jesus addresses the words: 'My son, My child, behold your Mother'. What an ineffable consolation for us to know that just as Jesus Christ is by nature the eternal Son of God and the earthly Son of Mary, so we by adoption are the children of God and spiritual sons and daughters of Mary. Have you always been a devoted child of this good Mother? Have you always endeavored to love, to invoke and to imitate her? Have you counted that day lost in which you have not honored her? When you felt forsaken by all, depressed by mental and physical sufferings, assaulted by the devil, have you surrendered yourself unreservedly to her maternal care? If not, from this hour, here at the foot of the cross, be resolved to take her into your heart and to your home, now and always. Let your unceasing prayer be: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Amen".



PRAYER TO BE WORTHY CHILDREN OF MARY

PEOPLE —

— ALL KNEEL —

① MY dying Jesus, * what untold generosity hast Thou not shown * towards us, poor sinners! * Thy excessive love for us knows no bounds. * It was not enough for Thee, * to have offered Thyself for us on the cross * in the midst of unspeakable torments, * but Thou hast also wished to give us * Thy own dearly-beloved Mother. * How wondrously wise, *

how sweetly tender, * is this invention of Thy holy love! * What sinner, * though his sins be as numerous as the sands of the sea; * what criminal, * though his crime be as great as that of Judas, * can now become dejected or disheartened * when he reflects * that he has so merciful a Saviour * and so loving a Mother in heaven? * My Jesus, * I thank Thee for so great bounty. * But here on earth, * where I have so many miseries to encounter, * so much weakness to overcome, * I can thank Thee but feebly and imperfectly. * But when I reach heaven, * as I confidently hope to do, * through Thy infinite mercy * and the all-powerful intercession of Mary, * it will be my joy and happiness, * to love Thee as much as I am able, * and, with my dear Mother Mary and all the Angels and Saints, * to praise and thank Thee for all eternity. Amen. *

Remember, * O most sorrowful Mother, Mary * that in His dying moments * thy divine Son has devised * that thou shouldst be my Mother. * Unmindful of thy own martyrdom at the foot of the cross, * thou didst accept me, * a great sinner, * as thy child. * Truly, * He that is mighty, * has done great things to thee, * not only in designing thee * to be the Mother of His divine Son * but also in making thee * the Mother of all men. * The mercy of the Lord is from generation to generation, * since in thee we have gained * so kind a mediatrix and intercessor. * All generations call thee blessed, * because all owe to thee * the life of grace and eternal salvation. * With most loving and grateful heart, * do I take thee for my Mother. * To thee I consecrate myself, * with all that I am and all that I have. * I love thee with my whole heart * and I hope to love thee for all eternity. * But my enemies are so strong and I am so weak. * Thou knowest how often I have sinned and deserved hell. * Thou must obtain for me the grace * of sharing in the merits of the death of Jesus, * thy beloved Son, * whom thou didst see bow His head * and die on Calvary before thy eyes. * O Queen of Martyrs, * O powerful Advocate of sinners, * help me always * and help me especially in the hour of my death. * And when I am in my last agony, * and the demons strive to make me despair * at the remembrance of my sins, * abandon me not in that dread hour. * But

be near me * and speak words of confidence in my
soul * and obtain for me the grace of final persever-
ance. * And should my speech and senses fail me then
* and I be unable to invoke thy name, * I call upon
thee now: * Jesus and Mary * I recommend my
soul to you. Amen. *



STAND—All Sing —

Weeps the Infant in the manger
That in Bethlehem's stable stands:
And His limbs the Virgin Mother
Doth compose in swaddling bands,
Meetly thus in linen folding
Of her God the feet and hands.

Fathful Cross! above all other,
One and only noble Tree!
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be:



O thou Mother: fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with thine accord:
Make me feel as thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my Lord.



The Fourth Word on the Cross

“MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU
FORSAKEN ME?”



PRIEST —

— ALL SIT —

For the three hours during which our Saviour was on the cross, the sun failed to give its light and a mysterious darkness enshrouded the whole earth. Thus did the powers of nature proclaim the identity of the Redeemer, symbolize His unearthly sufferings, and protest His innocence to the world. The ninth hour, three o'clock in the afternoon, was fast approaching. The death of Jesus was now imminent. But He has yet to endure the most agonizing of all the dreadful sufferings of His sacred Passion. For a brief spell, it seemed that the tender mercy of God—which is above all His works—must step aside and give full sway to the impartial demands of justice. The all-holy Creator must reject His sinful creatures forever, or, in some way visit that penalty upon the guiltless head of His own beloved Son. Mercy prevailed. And the loving Saviour met the full demands of divine justice when it reached its appalling climax in His endurance of the most awful sense of absolute loneliness and abandonment. How the very angels in heaven must have shuddered to witness it! No human being ever experienced its like. It beggars all description. Mary alone, came closest to it when Jesus was lost for three days in the temple. Yet that agonizing loss, which must be reckoned as her greatest dolor, was tempered with an abiding assurance that He had not gone out of her life entirely. But when Jesus, in His inferior nature, was totally abandoned by His heavenly Father, He sustained the full measure of His Passion without the slightest mitigation of any kind. His all-holy, most amiable Heart was plunged into a most horrible abyss of the blackest darkness, immersed in the extremest anguish of the most bitter desolation. It was then that He cried out in a loud voice: “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Let us meditate upon the causes and reasons which wrung this frightful cry from the dying lips of our Saviour.

Jesus suffered the awful pain of abandonment to free us from sin and its consequence of everlasting separation from God: to profess to the world in a most striking manner how greatly He loves us and

desires to be loved by us; to prove His infinite mercy by fully atoning for all our sins; to give us a perfect example of how we are to accept and bear our crosses.

Jesus cried out with a loud voice to prove His Divinity and at the same time to prove that He was human and undergoing the most excruciating tortures of body and soul. When other men are dying or suffering extreme pain, they lose consciousness or the senses are dulled. Not so our Saviour. His perfect mental faculties remained unimpaired and His sensitiveness to pain increased with each approaching instant of death. Who can conceive the ever increasing torments of that throbbing, thorn crowned head; of those nail-pierced hands and feet, of that racking lever, of those countless gaping bleeding wounds exposed to the raw smarting air? Who but God himself could make us apprehend the torturing anguish of His soul, made desolate with abysmal desolation. He is alone in unspeakable sorrow; betrayed by Judas, deserted by His Apostles, rejected by His people, spurned by the Scribes and Pharisees and high priests. He looks into the future and finds himself crucified anew by each and every mortal sin of all generations yet to come. He looks to His sorrowing Mother but her anguish only serves to increase His own. He looks to heaven for comfort and there is none. For a brief frightful space of time which seems like an eternity, He is also abandoned by His heavenly Father. Not even for Him with His infinite capacity for suffering can there be greater agony. No wonder, then, that He cries out with a loud and agonizing voice: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

All devout souls who strive to serve God faithfully must be prepared to drink deeply from this bitter chalice of desolation suffered by the Saviour on the cross. Observing the ten commandments most conscientiously, practicing the Christian virtues under all circumstances, actuated at all times by the purest of motives—these good Christians will often find themselves alone, bereft of all sympathetic understanding, on the verge of utter hopelessness and despair. They are misunderstood by their closest relatives, they are deserted by their most intimate friends, they are persecuted by most relentless enemies, they are afflicted with chronic ailments, they are assailed by violent temptations and become a prey to mental tortures. They look to their heavenly Father for a sign of approval, for a word of consolation, but the heavens are seemingly obscured by the black clouds of despair and utter abandonment. No sign is given. No word is spoken.

In such trying moments they must not yield, but stand firmly with Mary at the foot of the cross and unite their desolation of spirit with that of Jesus. Even though you be spared such acid tests of holier souls, dear Christian, you will not escape the final test of desolation of spirit as you go down to the dark valley of death. In that dread hour, no human power can help you. The riches, pleasures and honors of this world—which, alas! we prize too highly, will mock you as they vanish from your fading sight and pass into the hands of others. With renewed assaults the evil spirits will make a final effort to win your soul and suggest thoughts of hopelessness and despair. But at your bedside will be One to aid and console you—Jesus, who taught us how to die, Jesus Crucified who suffered the uttermost abandonment of spirit that we might not be alone in our death-struggle, Jesus who died that we might have life eternal. Oh, let us not forsake Him in the good day, that He may not forsake us in the evil day. Let this be our constant prayer: O good Jesus be near me when I close my eyes in death. O good Jesus, do not forsake me when I draw my parting breath. Amen.

PRAYER FOR SELF-RENUNCIATION AND RESIGNATION

PEOPLE —

— ALL KNEEL —

① JESUS, my beloved Saviour, * I am filled with confusion * when I see Thee so abandoned on the hard bed of the cross. * I know not what to say. * Fear and terror overwhelm me * when I reflect upon the multitude of my sins * for which I have deserved * to be rejected by Thee for ever. * But in Thy Infinite goodness, * Thou hast spared me * and by Thy grace * I can now love Thee. * I do love Thee with my whole heart * and I desire to love Thee for all eternity. *

O most amiable Jesus, * who can look upon Thee * in Thy bitter abandonment * and refrain from shedding copious tears of sorrow and sympathy? * Who can resist the overpowering language of Thy divine Love? * By the merits of Thy abandonment, * I am firmly resolved * to abandon all self-love * that I may love only Thee; * to renounce all creatures * that I may serve only Thee; * to die to myself * that I may live only for Thee. * O Lord * Thou art the Way, * keep me in the path of salvation. * Thou

art the Truth, * preserve me from all error, * and, ignorance of Thee. * Thou art the Life, * give me the life of divine grace, * lest Thy precious Blood be shed for me in vain. * Thou hast suffered and died for me, * a poor sinner, * that through Thy poverty * I may share in the treasure of Thy infinite riches. * Thy grace is never wanting. * I beseech Thee therefore, * through Thy Mother and my Mother, Mary, * to grant me Thy grace at all times * that I may so renounce myself * that I may be transformed entirely * in conformity with Thy own divine image. *

I will no longer complain * over any suffering * which Thou in Thy wisdom and goodness * art pleased to send me. * But I will grieve over the many sins * which I have committed * and which caused Thee such fearful torments. * I will deplore the precious time * I have lost in the service of the world, * and in the shameful indulgence * of sensuality and self-love. * I will weep over the priceless graces I have squandered, * the loss of which * has caused me to know Thee * so little and so late. * No, dear Jesus, * I will no longer complain of the cross Thou sendest me, * so insignificant * in comparison with Thine. * In future * I will look upon all the trials, adversities, and misfortunes of this life, * not as evils * but as blessings in disguise, * as a merited chastisement for my sins, * as a pledge of Thy divine grace and Thy special love. * Do Thou, O Lord, help me * to be most faithful to this resolution. * Do Thou, O Lord, * by Thy all-powerful grace * strengthen me in my weakness * and sustain me in my misery. * O Mary, * most loving Mother * Mediatrix of all graces, * do thou by thy intercession * obtain for me the fullness of divine grace * that I may remain always united with Jesus in life * and escape the dreadful punishment * of being abandoned by Him, * in death and eternity. Amen. *



STAND—All Sing —

Thirty years among us dwelling,
His appointed time fulfilled,
Born for this, He meets His passion,
For that this He freely willed:
On the Cross the Lamb is lifted,
Where His life-blood shall be spilled.

Sweetest Wood, and Sweetest Iron,
Sweetest Weight is hung on thee.

————— O R —————

Holy Mother, pierce me through;
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified;

Let me share with thee His pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torment died.

————— † —————

The Fifth Word on the Cross

“I T H I R S T”



PRIEST —

— ALL SIT —

The Fifth Word, spoken by Jesus on the Cross, in the midst of unutterable torments, is found in the Gospel of St. John. It consists of a single word, “Sitio”, “I thirst”. The Evangelist writes: “Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said: “I thirst”.

Hearing this, the executioners soaked a sponge with vinegar and gall, fixed it to the point of a spear and put it to His mouth. The dying request of the Saviour is met with barbarous cruelty! With all due reverence let us consider the wholesome lessons to be derived from this painful and mysterious thirst of our Divine Savior. It was twofold; a physical or bodily thirst, and, a spiritual thirst.

It is a well admitted fact that dying of thirst is far more painful and tormenting than dying of starvation. The hardest travellers in the desert and the most robust sailors at sea have been known to go stark mad from the frightful torture experienced from lack of water to quench their thirst. Nevertheless, the sufferings of these men are not to be compared with the extremely torturing thirst endured by our Saviour on the Cross. It was augmented immeasurably by His weakened physical condition and fast ebbing strength. He had passed the preceding night without sleep. He had lost a great quantity of blood in the Garden of Olives and in the brutal scourging. Blood now streamed from His pierced hands and feet. A consuming fever raged and burned within Him. Well, indeed, could He cry out, “I thirst”. “The pores of My body are closed. My veins are parched up, My tongue is parched, My throat is parched, all My members are parched. Have pity on Me! Relieve Me, and give Me to drink!”

There are various reasons why our amiable Saviour wished to undergo so grievous a torture. He did so, in the first place, in obedience to His heavenly Father, as St. John remarks, “that the Scriptures might be fulfilled”. Centuries previously, King David prophesied this thirst as one of the most terrible sufferings to be undergone by the Crucified Saviour: “In my thirst they gave me vin-

egar to drink". Here we find our Lord giving us a powerful example and incentive to bear all our sufferings in obedience to divine Providence. Mark well, dear Christian soul, that no trial or adversity comes to you which God has not appointed for you from all eternity. Will you rebel against them or bear them reluctantly? Or will you accept them with Christ-like patience and resignation, to atone for sin and acquire surpassing merits for heaven? Take up your cross without complaint and follow Jesus and often say with holy Job: "If we have received good things from the hand of God, why should we not receive evil?"

Furthermore, Jesus endured this extremely painful thirst to manifest to us His ardent longing to take upon Himself any suffering for the accomplishment of our salvation. He spared Himself in nothing. He desired that every member of His sacred Body, not excluding His tongue, was to experience every imaginable torture.—By this thirst Jesus also wished to make the most ample satisfaction to His heavenly Father for the many terrible sins which men commit by intemperance in eating and drinking, and from which so many detestable sins arise. Who can think of the awful thirst of Jesus on the cross and yet over-indulge the appetite for food and harmful drink?

"Terrible, indeed", says St. Alphonsus, "was the bodily thirst which our Saviour suffered in His Passion; but far greater was His spiritual thirst, namely, His consuming desire for the Redemption of all men". Yes, with ineffable longing our blessed Redeemer thirsts for the redemption and reconciliation of the human race, for the conversion of sinners, for the good works and the perseverance of the just. Most perfectly clear to Him is the supreme loveliness of His heavenly Father and the woeful condition of the children of Adam. "He thirsted", says St. Gregory of Nazianzen, "in order that men might thirst after God, that is, that all men might love God with an insatiable love, and yearn with boundless yearning for Him who is the Supreme Good". It fills Him with unspeakable sorrow to see men thirst instead for the perishable things of this life which lead to perdition in the next. In most ample atonement for this dreadful aversion to God, he offers to His heavenly Father the sacredness and merits of His spiritual thirst.

Dear Christian, is your love for the Crucified Saviour such that you would have promptly offered Him a refreshing drink to quench His thirst on the cross that first Good Friday? If so, you will not hesitate to quench the all-consuming thirst He now has in heaven for the salvation and sanctification

of your soul and the souls of mankind. For His sake you will cultivate a spiritual thirst for the lasting treasures of eternity and you will shun every inordinate desire for the vain and fleeting things of this life. "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill". If you are laden with sin, you will offer Him the refreshing drink of a sincere repentance and amendment of life. If you habitually dread sin as the greatest of all evils, you will sanctify your soul, more and more, by the performance of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. For what you do to the least of your brethren you do to the Person of Christ. If you are earnestly striving after Christian perfection, you will offer Him joy and refreshment by your spirit of prayer and self-renunciation, by your sincere love and the faithful imitation of all His virtues. To you he appeals and says: "I thirst". Will you offer Him the bitter mixture of vinegar and gall, or will you quench His thirst for time and eternity by surrendering yourself to Him unreservedly, with all that you are and all that you have? Surely you will do the latter! By the infinite merits of His Holy thirst may He inflame you with an unquenchable thirst for Him. Amen.

PRAYER FOR UNION WITH CHRIST CRUCIFIED

PEOPLE —

— ALL KNEEL —

① MY JESUS, * how little I understand * the eternal yearning Thou hast for the salvation of my soul. * Thou hast loved me with an everlasting love. * To win my love Thou hast humbled Thyself * taking the form of a servant. * Thou hast been obedient to Thy heavenly Father * in all things, even to Thy death on the cross. * Were I to sacrifice my life * a thousand times for Thee, * I should still be unable * to make a fitting return for Thy love * which impelled Thee * to drain the last drop of precious blood from Thy Sacred Heart * and to endure for me * such an agonizing thirst upon the cross. * By the infinite merits of Thy holy thirst, * create in me an insatiable thirst * to become conformable to Thee in all things. * Teach me, * O loving Redeemer, * to know the value of the cross, * to love the cross and not shun it; * for if there had been a shorter or-easier road * to eternal glory and union with Thee, * Thou wouldst not have chosen the way to Calvary * and given us the command * to take up our cross and follow Thee. * With the help of Thy divine grace, * I am resolved to walk

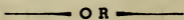
this way, * cost what it may. * I beseech Thee, most
loving Saviour, * by the merits of Thy painful thirst,
* quench within my soul * every taste and thirst *
for the fleeting goods and pleasures of this life * and
keep from my heart * every love that is not for Thee.
* O Mary, * thou art my hope in life and in death; *
obtain for me the grace * to have no other thought, *
no other desire, * than to be united always with Jesus
thy Son, * in time and in eternity. Amen. *



STAND—All Sing —

He endured the nails, the spitting,
Vinegar, and spear, and reed,
From that holy Body broken
Blood and water forth proceed:
Earth, and stars, and sky, and ocean,
By that flood from stain are freed.

Faithful Cross! above all other,
One and only noble Tree!
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be:



Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live:

By the cross with thee to stay;
There with thee to weep and pray
Is all I ask of thee to give.



The Sixth Word on the Cross

“IT IS CONSUMMATED”



PRIEST —

— ALL SIT —

The supreme moment in the life of our Lord had come. The three hours of dreadful agony were about to end. Jesus speaks the sixth time. Having tasted the bitter mixture of vinegar and gall, he said, “It is consummated”: In these second last words of the Saviour on the cross, we listen to a cry of great joy and glorious triumph. They express the grand finale of the most useful life that has ever been lived. They tell of a most perfect career that has measured up, in every detail, to the sole purpose of man’s existence on earth—the service of God and the service of one’s neighbor. Jesus looks back over the thirty-three years of His earthly life and on the sixth day, in His sixth word on the cross, proclaims that the work of Redemption is now consummated; just as His heavenly Father, the Creator, completed the work of Creation in six days and at the close of the sixth day say that all that He called into being from non-existence was perfect.

Well indeed could the Saviour come to the end of His life in an ecstasy of peace and joy. Back of Him stretched the years of His earthly pilgrimage: years of poverty and humiliation, years of labor and suffering; years of perfect obedience to the will of His heavenly Father; years of the most heroic and unselfish sacrifice in behalf of others. It was a record of the sublimest achievements, despite its continuous martyrdom of heart - rending misunderstanding and ungrateful opposition on the part of those He came to save. But there were no regrets, no disappointments. He had failed in nothing. In Him the scriptures had their perfect fulfillment from the instant of His all-holy Conception by the Virgin Mary, to the instant that He tasted the nauseating drink of vinegar and gall. All had come to pass: His Nativity at Bethlehem; the apparition of the miraculous star; the adoration of the Magi; the preaching of the Gospel; the countless miracles He wrought in behalf of the blind, the deaf, the lame, the speechless; His exultant entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday; the graphic details of the Passion so clearly described by the prophets of old. His mission on earth is accomplished. The sins of the world are expiated; the

barriers of heaven are removed; the powers of hell are conquered; the Redemption of the human race is achieved. Well, indeed, could He cry out in joyful triumph: "It is consummated!" "Father, I have glorified Thee on earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do".

So, too, dear Christian, the hour will strike for you and for me when we shall be stretched out on a bed of suffering and death; when our hands, cold and trembling at the approach of dissolution, will be no longer able to clasp the crucifix; when our countenance will take on an ashy hue, our eyes grow dim and troubled, our lips fail to move in speech; when our ears will be closed forever to the discourses of men and the vain promises of earth; when friends and relatives and the mighty ones of this world will be impotent to help us. Yes, our life will then have run its full course. Our probation on earth will be ended. Oh, then, when we hover on the brink of eternity, when all else fades before our glassy eyes, we shall look back through the vista of years and read what has been written in our imperishable book of life!

How will the record read? What will have been accomplished? Looking back, will you have to admit that your life was a wretched failure? A record of virtues neglected, duties unfulfilled, obligations violated, sins multiplied and never repented of? And as you look back with horrified gaze across the wreckage of a mis-spent career, what will it profit you then, in that dread hour, to know that you have shared abundantly in the world's achievements, and have gained its coveted prizes? O what will it profit you, if you have gathered all the treasures of earth, if you have been its most ardent advocate, if you have been its most honored citizen, if you have been its most admired and most feted idol? What will it profit you, if from the great waste of years, you can salvage no good deeds for the kingdom of heaven and to the eternal credit of your soul? With what a feeling of despair must not such sinners cry out: "It is consummated!" It is now the end and to no avail! Too late, then will the warning of the just Judge have a meaning for their ears: "Woe to you rich, for you have had your consolation! Woe to you that have had your fill of earthly things, for you shall hunger! Woe to you that have laughed in the unholy indulgence of passion, for you shall mourn and weep!"

Or, looking back over the span of life allotted to you, will you be able to say in the same peaceful, joyful, triumphant sense in which Christ did: "It is consummated!" Will you be able to say that you have been a true disciple of Him who is the

Way, the Truth and the Life? Will you be able to say that you have most faithfully executed all His wishes and commands? That you have trodden under foot the poisoned pleasures of depraved passion; that you have never wandered from the narrow and rocky path that led to the heights of your own calvary; that you have mastered the Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity; that you loved justice, exercised prudence, observed temperance and practiced fortitude? Will you be able to say that you took firm hold of the standard of Christ and held it ever aloft in the unceasing struggle against the world, the flesh and the devil? If so, with what ecstasy you will cry out: "It is consummated!" With what supreme satisfaction you will recall to mind the promises of the Saviour: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek and humble of heart, the patient followers of the cross; blessed are they that mourn, blessed are they that suffer persecution and all manner of injustice for my sake—for theirs is the kingdom of heaven! Well done thou good and faithful servant, receive the crown of everlasting life and enter into everlasting joys!

May this, dear Christian, be your happy lot! May the Crucified Saviour lead you on to such a victory! May His precious blood trickling down upon the cross and lightening the burden of your cross, fill your heart with love and loyalty for him! May His sacrificial blood instill into your soul, a most intense sorrow for sin and a thirst for all justice. May that precious blood be your hope, your strength, your nourishment in life; your joy, your consolation, your reward in death! Then when the world, with its false show and fleeting pleasures will part from you forever, may you cry out, as Christ did: "It is consummated!" Jesus, for Thee I have lived, Jesus for Thee I die, Jesus, I am Thine in life and in death. Amen.

PRAYER FOR FIDELITY TO VOCATION

PEOPLE —

— ALL KNEEL —

① MY Crucified Saviour, * what peace, what joy, what consolation * filled Thy Sacred Heart, * when looking back * over the thirty-three years of Thy earthly pilgrimage, * Thou didst exultingly cry out: * "It is consummated!" * Thine has been a life * of perfect obedience to Thy heavenly Father; * a life of heroic service to Thy human brothers. * How justly thou couldst say: * "Father, * I have glorified Thee on earth, * I have finished the work Thou gavest me

to do." * "Father, * I have fully restored Thy honor and glory; * I have atoned for all the sins of mankind; * I have accomplished the redemption of the world." * All is now happily consummated! *

O merciful Lord, * were I to be summoned before Thy judgement seat today, * how different would be the verdict * I should have to render on my past life * so sadly mis-spent. * But, with all my heart I thank Thee, * for giving me time to amend. * It is now my ardent desire, * to be able to say, * on my deathbed, * in perfect truth: * "It is consummated!" * When my last hour comes, * may I be able to look back to this day of my conversion, * and with peaceful conscience * be able to say: * "I have done everything * that the divine Will required of me * here on earth. * I have fulfilled faithfully * all the duties proper to my state in life. * I have corresponded with all divine graces * according to my ability". * When this passing world fades from my sight, * may it be my happy lot * to repeat with St. Paul, * these consoling words: * "I have fought the good fight, * I have finished my course, * I have kept the faith. * As for the rest, * there is laid up for me a crown of justice, * which the Lord, * the just Judge, * will give to me in that day, * yet not to me only, * but also to those who love His coming." * O divine Saviour, * may these sublime words of Thy faithful disciple * find their consummation in me. * Henceforth, with the help of Thy abundant grace, * I am resolved * to oppose all the deceits of the world, * all the demands of the flesh, * all the assaults of the devil. * Henceforth * I will make the teachings of Thy Gospel * the sole rule of my life. * I will arm myself with the sword of prayer. * In Thy sacrament of reconciliation, * I will cleanse my soul more and more, * I will daily strengthen my weakness * in the divine power of Thy sacred flesh and blood. * Each day, I will so strive to live * as if I were to render * my final account to Thee. * And when I stand at the threshold of eternity * and breathe my last sigh, * may I say with holy joy and happy heart: * "It is consummated!" * Consummated is the work * which Thy heavenly Father has given me to do. * Consummated is the sacrifice * which has been assigned to me. * Consummated are the days of labor, * gone are the days of sorrow, * tribulation, and temp-

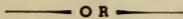
tation. * Nothing now remains for me * but to receive
the glorious crown of justice. * Jesus, * be Thou my
never-failing help in life, * be Thou my most consol-
ing hope in death. * O most holy Mary, * my Mother,
* thou who didst stand at the foot of the cross and
see thy Son and thy God expire * amidst so great an-
guish, * yet didst never waver in the firm hope of His
resurrection; * I entreat Thee, * make me entirely His
own, * that I may live for Him, * die for Him * and
be with Him forever more. Amen. *



STAND—All Sing —

Bend thy boughs, O Tree of glory!
Thy relaxing sinews bend;
For awhile the ancient rigour,
That thy birth bestowed, suspend;
And the King of heavenly beauty
On thy bosom gently tend!

Sweetest Wood, and sweetest Iron,
Sweetest Weight is hung on thee.



Virgin of all Virgins best,
Listen to my fond request:
Let me share thy grief divine;

Let me to my latest breath
In my body bear the death
Of that dying Son of thine.



The Seventh Word on the Cross

“FATHER, INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT”



PRIEST —

— ALL SIT —

In His magnificent farewell address, at the last supper, our Saviour reminded His disciples of His divine origin and His divine destiny. Most solemnly He declared: “I came forth from the Father and have come into this world. Again I leave the world and go forth to the Father”. The time of His “going forth” is now at hand. It is the ninth hour, or, according to our reckoning of time, three o’clock in the afternoon. Jesus is on the point of expiring. As He lifts His thorn-crowned head to heaven a violent throb of fearful agony convulses His tormented body, and, with a loud voice, He cries out: “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit”. Having said this, He breathed forth His soul, and then slowly bowed His head until it rested low and motionless on His breast. Miraculous events instantly followed. The earth quaked, as if in terror; the great curtain in the temple was torn through the center by an invisible power; the rocks burst asunder; the graves opened and the dead came forth to mingle with the living. Thus did the Saviour impart emphasis to the power and significance of His seventh and last word upon the cross.

He uttered those dying words in a mighty voice as a final manifestation of His divinity; to make it obvious to all about Him that no human agency had power over His life or death except by His permission; to have us clearly understand that He gave up His life freely, since, being by nature sinless, He did not come under the decree of death which is the penalty of sin. He cried out with a loud voice to draw attention to the infinite love he bore us; for “greater love than this no man has, that one lay down his life for his friends”. But Jesus gave up His life not only for His friends, but for us sinners who were His enemies! He spoke those words in a loud voice to encourage us to place our confidence in His power when we are afflicted with sorrow and tribulation, and that we might recognize how inconceivably painful for Him was the separation of His noble soul from His sacred body; far more painful than it can be for any human being. Finally, it was a loud cry of triumph. He died

not in weakness but in power. His death was the last decisive act of victory over sin, satan and hell.

Reflecting on the mystical power of that dying voice, can we refuse to believe that Christ on the cross is truly our God? Can we hesitate to dedicate and consecrate our lives to the service of such a good Master, who loved us with so boundless a love and voluntarily submitted to death that we might have life eternal? Can any one doubt that He will support our weakness with omnipotence when we battle with violent temptation, when we stagger under the weight of our cross, and when we struggle in the throes of our death-agony from which He removed the bitter sting by His own death? Let us ever have in mind the consoling promise He made to St. Paul when that great apostle feared that all was lost: "Fear not; be of good cheer!" "My grace is sufficient for thee, for strength is made perfect in weakness".

Let us now consider His last words; "Father into Thy hands I commend my spirit". He addresses God by the loving title "Father" to teach us the sacred inviolability of truth and to instill into our hearts unwavering trust in God's Providence. Often in life, in the face of opposition and persecution, He asserted that God was His Father. This truth He proclaims with His last breath. So, too must we be ready to make every sacrifice in the practice and in the defense of our holy faith to the last moment of life. In every trying situation during His public life, Jesus called on the name of His heavenly Father, for courage and strength to execute His eternal decrees. So too must we lift our minds and hearts to our loving Father in heaven in every situation, convinced that whatever happens to us is foreordained by an all-wise and all-powerful Providence which arranges all things for our ultimate welfare.

To His heavenly Father, Jesus "commends His spirit". What an important lesson for us! Throughout life we worry and fret over our reputation, over the prosperity of our business, over the temporal welfare of our family, over the condition of our health, over the successful issue of this or that enterprise. But are we concerned about the salvation of our immortal souls? Do we make it the only business, the all-important and all-absorbing occupation of our lives? Seek first the kingdom of God!

It is "into the hands" of His heavenly Father that Jesus commends His spirit. How beautiful and inspiring is this act of submission and obedience of the Son to the Father! Jesus, as God, had no need of committing His soul to the care of the Father. He too was almighty! And we, poverty-

stricken, impotent, tempted and sin-laden children of our heavenly Father, despise His inexhaustible treasures, blind ourselves to His unlimited power, disregard the all-loving protection of His extended hands!

Let it not be so in the future! In life and in death let us imitate the example of our dying Saviour, and never fail to entrust our soul entirely in the hands of God. How shall we do this? By fidelity to the duties of our state of life, by practicing the Christian virtues at all times, under all circumstances, cheerfully, and conscientiously. Catholics first, last and always! Always worthy children faithfully serving our heavenly Father! To whom have you committed your soul in the past? Were you the slave of the world, the flesh and the devil? If so, repent before it is too late; for, "it is a dreadful thing for an obstinate sinner to fall into the hands of the living God!"

On the other hand, how blessed are they who die in the Lord. They die peacefully in the Lord, who, following the promptings of the Holy Spirit, lead a penitential life. It is impossible to lead a penitential life unless we are ruled by our holy faith. In this brilliant light we shall see ever more clearly the infinite perfections of God and our absolute dependence on Him. In this lively faith, we shall grow strong in our love for God and in true detachment from the world; we shall relish prayer, receive the holy sacraments frequently, and bear our cross with cheerful resignation. They who live in this manner may rest assured that they will breathe forth their soul with sentiments in their hearts and words on their lips similar to those of Jesus when expiring: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit". They will awaken in eternity to hear these consoling words of the Master: "Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things I will place thee over many things. Enter thou into the joy of the Lord". Receive the crown of life. Amen.

PRAYER FOR A HAPPY DEATH

PEOPLE —

— ALL KNEEL —

Ⓞ MOST merciful Redeemer, * my conscience so often warns me * that nothing in life * is so certain as death, * and, that nothing is so uncertain * as the time, the place and the manner * in which it will occur. * Even now, the dreaded moment * may be close at hand for me. * Nevertheless, * I still cling so tenaciously, to the fleeting things of this life * and

fail so seriously * to prepare for the next life. * But now, Thou givest me the grace * to realize my folly. * No longer will I wait for death * in the vain hope * that all will be well with me then. * No longer will I live * as if there were no strict account to render to Thee. * No longer will I delay * recommending my soul to Thee. * I do so now * and I will continue to recommend my soul * to Thy infinite mercy * at all times. * I am filled with misgivings * when I reflect * how remiss I have been in prayer, * how seldom I have given thought * to eternal truths; * how negligently I have served Thee; * how carelessly I have fulfilled * the daily duties of my state of life. * With all my heart, * I now repent of all these sins. * Through the infinite merits * of Thy sacred passion and bitter death, * enlighten my mind * so that I may know what is necessary * to prepare fittingly for death, * and strengthen my will * with Thy divine grace, * so that with all diligence, * I may do whatever Thy divine will requires of me. * Be gracious to me for the remainder of my life, * so that I may have no terror of death * and may be acceptable to Thee * when I stand before Thy judgement seat. * If the saints trembled in their last moments * at the thought of the strict account * they were about to render to Thee, * I, a poor miserable sinner, * have still more reason to tremble * when I reflect on that all-decisive moment. * But I place all my hopes in the infinite merits * of Thy precious blood, * I confidently hope * for the full remission of all sins * and the eternal happiness in heaven. *

O lamb of God, * sacrificed on the cross, and dead for me, * as a Victim of love, * grant by the merits of Thy death, * that I may love Thee with my whole heart * while life remains. * Thou hast died for love of me, * I will also die glowing with love for Thee. * Thou hast given Thyself wholly to me, * I will give myself wholly to Thee: * Into Thy hands O Lord, * I commend my spirit; * Thou hast redeemed me, * O Lord God of truth. * Thou hast shed Thy last drop of precious blood for me; * suffer not, that through my fault, * all should be lost unto me. * O Jesus, I love Thee * and with the help of Thy grace, * I hope to love Thee for all eternity. * In Thee, O Lord, I have hoped; * let me not be confounded forever. * O Virgin

Mary, * patron of a happy death, * teach me how to recommend my spirit to the care of Thy Son * and always to say with great fervor: * "Holy Mary, * Mother of God, pray for me now * and at the hour of my death. Amen. *



STAND—All Sing—

Thou alone wast counted worthy
This world's ransom to uphold;
For a shipwrecked race preparing
Harbor, like the Ark of old;
With the sacred Blood anointed
From the smitten Lamb that rolled.
Faithful Cross! above all other,
One and only noble Tree!
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be:

To the Trinity be glory
Everlasting, as is meet:
Equal to the Father, equal
To the Son, and Paraclete:
Trinal Unity, whose praises
All created things repeat. Amen.
Sweetest Wood, and sweetest Iron,
Sweetest Weight is hung on thee.



Wounded with His every wound,
Steep my soul till it hath swooned
In His very Bloody away;
Be to me, O Virgin, nigh,
Lest in flames I burn, and die
In His awful judgement day.

Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,
Be Thy Mother my defence,
Be Thy Cross my victory:
While my body here decays,
May my soul thy goodness praise
Safe in Paradise with Thee. Amen.



Short Way of the Cross

ACT OF CONTRITION

MY LORD Jesus Christ, * Thou hast made this journey to die for me * with love unutterable, * and I have so many times * unworthily abandoned Thee; * but now I love Thee with my whole heart, * and because I love Thee, * I repent sincerely for having ever offended Thee. * Pardon me, my God, * and permit me to accompany Thee on this journey. * Thou goest to die for love of me; * I wish also, * my beloved Redeemer, * to die for love of Thee. * My Jesus, I will live and die always united to Thee. *



1st STATION—Jesus is condemned to death.

PRIEST—We adore Thee, O Christ and we bless Thee.

PEOPLE—Because by Thy holy cross * Thou hast redeemed the world.

REPEAT BEFORE EACH STATION

PILATE dares to condemn * the all-holy Saviour to death. * No, not pilate; but my sins * have condemned Jesus to be crucified. * O Jesus, * have mercy on me * and remember Thou didst choose to die * that I may have eternal life. * Let me so live * that when I come to die * I may find Thee a most merciful Judge, * an all-loving Redeemer. *

2nd STATION—Jesus bears His Cross.

MOST willingly Jesus accepts * and patiently bears His Cross for my sake. * Will I refuse * to bear my cross for His Sake? * No, * my loving Redeemer, I will no longer seek to evade my cross, * but with the help of Thy grace * I will bear it with Christian patience and resignation * and follow Thee always! *

3rd STATION—Jesus falls the first time.

WEAKENED by torments and by loss of blood, *
Jesus falls beneath His Cross. * Alas! * More
truly was He crushed to earth * by the number and
enormity of my sins! * Good Master! * I am heartily
sorry for having offended Thee. * I love Thee, * in-
finite Goodness! * Help me to hate sin * as the only
real evil! *

4th STATION—Jesus meets His Mother.

JESUS, * the Man of Sorrows, * meets Mary, the
Queen of Martyrs. * Oceans of grief deluge their
Hearts * as they face each other. * They suffer thus
for my sins. * O Jesus, * O Mary, * bathe my sinful
soul * in a sea of true sorrow for my past offences.
* In all temptation I will say: * "Jesus, Mary, help
me!" *

5th STATION—Simon helps Jesus to carry the Cross.

ALTHOUGH * Jesus seems about to expire, * He
does not need, * yet accepts the help of Simon,
* since He wills to die on the cross. * Thus does He
teach me charity and perseverance. * O Jesus, * I
too * will carry my cross patiently to the end * and
strive to lighten the cross of my fellow-men. *

6th STATION—Veronica wipes the Face of Jesus.

JESUS accepts * and returns the towel to Veronica.
* Upon it is left * the impress of His adorable
Face! * Alas! * My sins have disfigured Thy holy
Countenance. * O Jesus grant me efficacious sorrow
* that all sin may be erased from my soul * and that
Thy grace and Thy divine image * may be stamped
upon it forever! *

7th STATION—Jesus falls a second time.

MY feeble resolutions, * my oft-repeated sins *
have crushed Jesus to earth a second time. *
Such is the malice of habitual sin! * O Jesus grant
me true repentance. * Let me die a thousand times *

rather than have the misfortune * to fall again into mortal sin! * Help me to hate all sin! *

8th STATION—Jesus meets the Women of Jerusalem.

THE Saviour * teaches the women not to weep for Him, * but for their own sins * and the sins of their children. * How generous is He! * O Jesus * grant that I may understand the true meaning of Thy Passion * and be so inflamed with love for Thee * that I may shed tears of blood * over my past transgressions! *

9th STATION—Jesus falls the third time.

CONSTERNATION fills my soul * when I behold the Saviour * fall a third time beneath the Cross! * What is the cause? * The incredible obstinacy of sinners * who refuse to amend their lives. * O Jesus * grant that I may be truly converted * and suffer every evil * rather than be numbered * among such ungrateful sinners! *

10th STATION—Jesus is stripped of His garments.

WHAT a pitiable spectacle * is this shameful stripping of Jesus! * Ghastly wounds are re-opened. * Blood flows afresh. * What shame would be mine * if the veil were torn from my soul * and the world saw my hidden sins! * O Jesus, * help me to know all my sins * and confess them with deep sorrow * and true humility! *

11th STATION—Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

HOW can I behold the Saviour * ignominiously nailed to the Cross * and seek only comfort, wealth and honors * and even indulge in unlawful pleasures? * Jesus Crucified! * Help me to esteem * and practice true Christian mortification * that I may love only Thee * and renounce the world, * the flesh and the devil. *

12th STATION—Jesus dies on the Cross.

JESUS, * My God. * dies on the Cross for me. * I have done nothing for Him. * I too must die! *

O my Crucified Saviour! * Grant * that I may so live in the future * that I may have no cause to fear * a sudden and unprovided death. * Jesus for Thee I live! * Jesus, for Thee I die! *

13th STATION—Jesus is taken down from the Cross.

THE lifeless Body of Jesus * now rests in the arms of Mary. * What anguish is hers * as she thinks of the many souls * for whom her Son shed His precious blood in vain. * What joy to know * that so many are redeemed. * O my Saviour * preserve me from perdition! * O sweet Heart of Mary be my salvation! *

14th STATION—Jesus is laid in the tomb.

LIKE Jesus, * I too must lie in the grave. * But Jesus * rises in triumph on the third day. * My buried Jesus grant eternal rest * to all who sleep in death! * Have mercy on me, * and grant me the grace to rise * to a new spiritual life, * that dying to myself now, * I may rise gloriously with Thee on the last day! *



