

Short Way of the Cross of the Holy Face

In a spirit of reparation, and for the works of the Church



Preliminary Prayer: O adorable Face of Jesus, hanging so pitifully on the tree of the Cross, at the time of the Passion for the redemption of the world! Have mercy on us miserable sinners even at this day, look upon us with compassion and grant us the kiss of peace. O my Jesus, mercy!

1st Station Jesus is condemned to death.

And He is silent! He, who is innocence itself; He, whose words have the power of giving life! His adorable Face loses nothing of its dignity and sweetness. What a lesson is this for me! O my God! forgive me all those words I have uttered contrary to charity, humility, modesty and piety. And grant that in my trials I may honour Thee by my resignation and patience.

2nd Station Jesus Carries his Cross.

And He receives it with joy and love, and He holds it to His Heart. He presses His Holy Face, His brow and His lips upon it. Oh! how much He loves us! My good Master, forgive me the murmurs and complaints with which I have received the sorrows sent me in Thy mercy, and teach me to account myself fortunate in having something to suffer for Thee.

3rd Station Jesus falls beneath the weight of His Cross.

And He bruises His Face with the violence of His fall. He rises, His Face covered with mire, dust and blood! Holy Father, I offer Thee the fall of my Saviour in expiation of those faults by which I have disedified and scandalised my neighbour. Because of Jesus humiliated and suffering, have mercy on me. In reparation I purpose to strive to prevent evil, and to win hearts to Thee.

4th Station Jesus meets His most holy Mother.

What a moment! What sorrow! What looks I behold, exchanged between this Man-God and His tender mother! What tears bathe their Faces! O Heavenly Father, I offer Thee these tears in expiation of all my self-indulgence and the little resignation I show to Thy holy will. Grant me, as Thou didst Mary, to encounter the look and the Face of Jesus in all my sorrows.

5th Station Simon, the Cyrenean, helps Jesus to carry His Cross.

Does a stranger help my Master to carry His Cross! and I, His child, the object of His tenderness, refuse to do so by endeavouring to escape the contradictions and disappointments with which life is strewn! Oh! how ungrateful am I! Pardon, my God, forget the past, turn Thy Face towards me. Hereafter, I will share Thy sorrows, at least, in accepting mine with a Christian spirit.

6th Station A holy woman wipes the Face of Jesus.

And should I not also, following her example, cause Thee to forget, by my reparation, the outrages Thou receivest from so many sinners? Is it not for me to make amends by greater fidelity and love? Oh! this is what I wish to do, my God! to find my glory in Thy humiliations and sorrows.

7th Station Jesus falls for the second time beneath the weight of His Cross.

Oh! to what a state of abasement and opprobrium do I see Thee reduced, my Saviour Jesus! A God prone in the dust! The executioners raise Him with blows! They do not spare even His beautiful face! And why? To expiate my thoughts of vanity and self-esteem. Oh! with what horror should they fill me, since Jesus has suffered so much to obtain their forgiveness! My God! my God! have mercy. Let my heart be truly humble.

8th Station Jesus comforts the women of Israel, who follow Him.

O blessed Master! in the midst of His sufferings, He is interested in those which cause the tears of the good women to flow! He teaches them how to make their tears useful for themselves, and deigns to console them by turning towards them His adorable Face which consoles and blesses them! O my Saviour, teach us how to weep for our sins, which are the true cause of Thy sufferings. Grant me more especially a sincere sorrow for my own sins; let my last tear be one of repentance and love.

9th Station Jesus falls for the third time.

He again inflicts upon His Face the same pain and humiliations as before. At the sight of Calvary, He rises, if one may so speak, with renewed courage and renewed love! His heart bids Him make haste to die for His children. O tender Heart of my God, what a poor return do I make Thee! At the approach of the slightest pain, or the smallest sacrifice I am frightened and discouraged. Pardon, my Jesus, pardon! I will rise up with Thee, and, as an encouragement to follow Thee, I will say to myself in every sorrow: The mercy of God calls me!

10th Station Jesus is stripped of His garments.

Strip me, my God, of all that displeases Thee in me; take from me more especially self-love. Wash me in the blood that flows from Thy wounds, and may this innocent blood cause the virtues of purity, sweetness, charity and a penitential spirit to take root in my heart! May my soul be pleasant to Thy eyes and rejoice Thy Holy Face!

11th Station Jesus is bound to the Cross.

O My God, I know that it is not sufficient to become detached from myself, but I must practise attachment and unite myself to Thee. Alas! I understand, it is only possible in this world by suffering. I submit, Lord, without delay and without reserve. Stretch me on the Cross which Thy Providence prepares for every one in this world, that I may become comformable to Thee! O suffering Face of my Jesus, suspended between heaven and earth, draw me up to Thee and elevate me to Thy height that I may become worthy of Thy eternal glory.

12th Station Jesus dies upon the Cross.

Holy Father, most powerful and eternal God, I offer Thee the sufferings of my Jesus, His aching Face, His sacred wounds, His adorable blood, His last words and last sigh, in thanksgiving for

the benefits which Thou hast heaped upon me, and in expiation of my sins, and more especially to implore of Thee the three following graces:

For me and mine, a perfect contrition, with a firm will to belong only to Thee;

For the conversion of poor sinners, and for the Holy Church, our mother. Accord to her the succour she expects from Thy bounty, in the terrible ordeal through which she is passing!

Look not upon our sins, O Lord! but look upon the Face of Thy Christ; look upon the Heart that has loved us so much, and, because of Him, have mercy on us.

13th Station Jesus is placed in the arms of His Mother.

O Mary, my tender Mother, it is I who have made thee suffer! Let me then, at least, weep with thee; let me adore the suffering and wounded Face of my dear Redeemer! Revenge thyself, beloved mother, it is but just, yet revenge thyself like a mother! Ask for me of thy divine Son such love as may enable me to drink with entire willingness the few drops reserved for me in the chalice of His Passion, and let me repeat with Magdalen: Oh! how sweet it is to recover one's innocence through tears of repentance and of love!

14th Station Jesus is placed in the sepulchre.

O my Jesus, my Saviour, Thou shalt not be there alone! permit Thy child to be buried with Thee! Again, this is not enough; enfold me in the mystery of Thy Face and the wounds of Thy Heart, it is there, I wish to take up my abode, to be seen by Thee alone." My God! my God! cause me to live but for Thee !!!"

PRAYER OF REPARATION TO THE OUTRAGED DIVINITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

O Lord Jesus, after contemplating Thy features, disfigured by anguish, and after meditating upon Thy Passion, how can my heart not be consumed with love for Thee, and hatred for those sins which, even at this day, wound Thy adorable Face? Permit me not, O Lord! to feel merely compassion alone; make of me a worthy child of Mary, and accord me the grace, as Thou didst to Thy divine Mother, to follow Thee so closely on this new calvary, that the insults destined for Thee, O Jesus! may fall upon me, a member of Thy Holy Church and cause me to undertake with courage the duty of expiation and of love. Amen.

The Manual of the Archconfraternity of the Holy Face, Approbation of the Archbishop of Tours, April 15, 1886, pp. 205-214