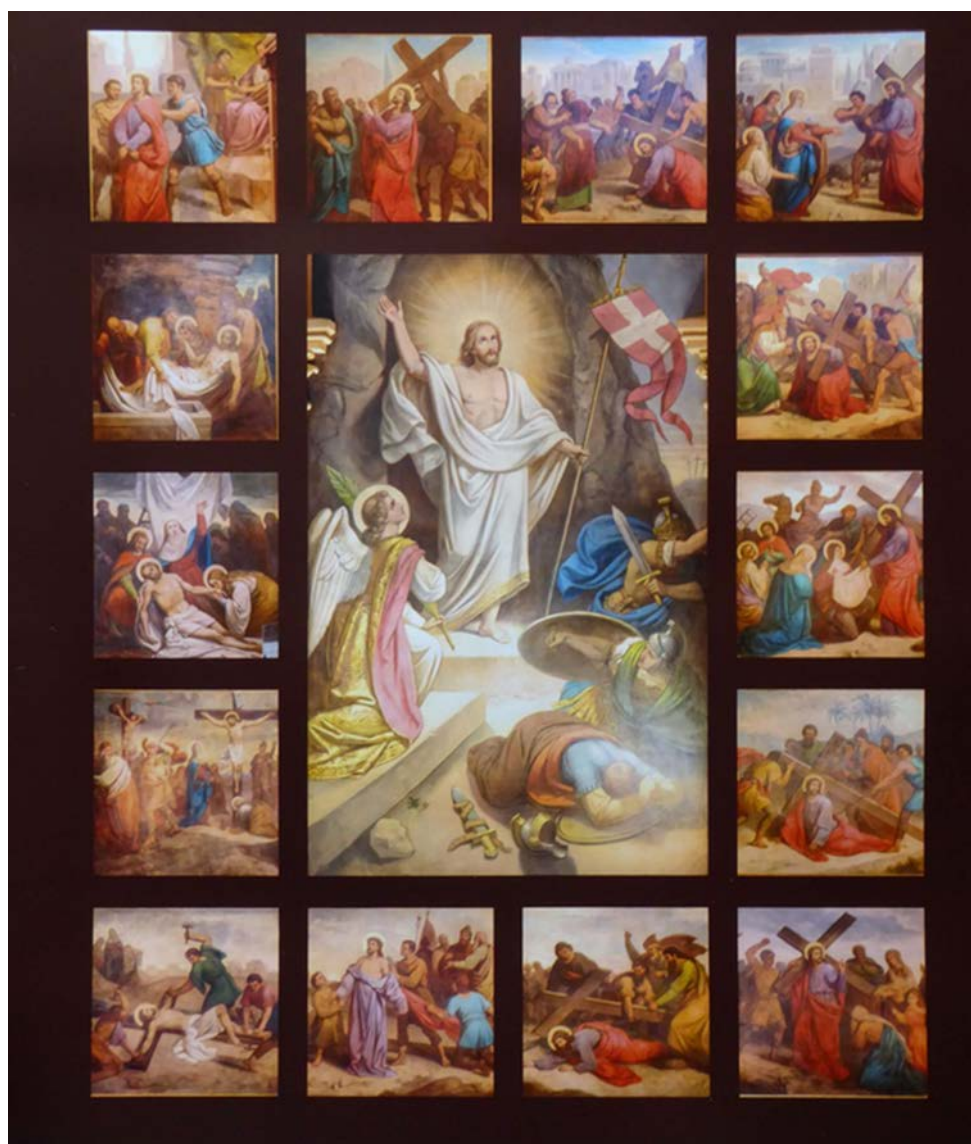


STATIONS OF CROSS: SACRED INTERGENERATIONAL ENCOUNTER



FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 2022

HOSTED BY THE FAMILY FAITH PROGRAM

MUSIC: JOHN UEHLEIN

CANTOR: LADD BORIS

FOR THOSE IN THE CHURCH: IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIAL DISTANCING, PLEASE REMAIN SEATED FOR THE DURATION OF THE STATIONS. THE CROSS BEARER WILL WALK THE STATIONS FOR EVERYONE IN THE CHURCH.

General visual description of the Church of St. Francis Xavier's depiction of the Stations of the Cross.

William Lamprecht, a German-born artist, one of the most prominent ecclesial painters of his day, painted the Stations of the Cross. The murals are unusually large, approximately eight feet tall by twelve feet wide, wrapping around the Church from the north wall of the east transept to the west transept. The stations begin in rich colors with Jesus wearing a red cloak over a purple garment under a clear blue sky, but the stations grow noticeably darker as Jesus is stripped of his clothes, and the sky darkens until Jesus' death in station twelve. The figures depicted look white and European reflecting the ethnic makeup of the 19th century congregation and the artist. In general, the bold movement of the twenty or so figures in each station convey drama and energy with Jesus and two or three figures typically dominating the foreground. A gold halo always surrounds Jesus' head as well as the head of the Blessed Virgin Mary and other women disciples, including Veronica, and presumably Mary Magdalene (4, 6, 12, 13). Large buildings and palm trees complete the background.

OPENING PRAYER

LUZ MARINA DÍAZ:

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.

HOLY GOD, BE WITH US NOW AS WE MEDITATE ON YOUR SON'S JOURNEY TO CALVARY. REMIND US THAT STILL, IN THIS PRESENT DAY, MANY OF YOUR CHILDREN CONTINUE THAT WALK TO CALVARY, CARRYING HEAVY, DIFFICULT CROSSES.

MAY WE BE SIMON TO THOSE WHOSE BURDENS ARE TOO HEAVY TO BE BORNE ALONE.

MAY WE BE VERONICA TO THOSE WHO NEED THE TOUCH OF LOVE AND COMFORT.

AND MAY WE, STRUGGLING WITH OUR OWN CROSSES, ALWAYS REMEMBER YOUR PROMISES OF JUSTICE, MERCY, AND PEACE.

ALL: AMEN

OPENING SONG

Via Dolorosa by Billy Sprague and Niles Borop

Down the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem that day
The soldiers tried to clear the narrow street
But the crowd pressed in to see
The Man condemned to die on Calvary

He was bleeding from a beating,
there were stripes upon His back
And He wore a crown of thorns upon His head
And He bore with every step
The scorn of those who cried out for His death

Down the Via Dolorosa called the way of suffering
Like a lamb came the Messiah, Christ the King
But He chose to walk that road out of
His love for you and me
Down the Via Dolorosa, all the way to Calvary

Por la Vía Dolorosa, triste día en Jerusalén
Los soldados le abrían paso a Jesús
Mas la gente se acercaba
Para ver al que llevaba aquella cruz

Por la Vía Dolorosa, que es la vía del dolor
Como oveja vino Cristo, Rey, Señor
Y fue El quien quiso ir por su amor por ti y por mi
Por la Vía Dolorosa al Calvario y a morir

The blood that would cleanse the souls of us all
Made it's way through the heart of Jerusalem.

Down the Via Dolorosa called the way of suffering
Like a lamb came the Messiah, Christ the King
But He chose to walk that road out of His love for you and me
Down the Via Dolorosa, all the way to Calvary



THE FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Wearing a purple tunic and red robe, Jesus is led / pushed forward towards the street, where His Cross awaits Him. Pontius Pilate, seated on a throne behind Jesus, is washing his hands of the condemnation.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Lector: So, when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood . . .” (Matthew 27:24)
In what ways do you “wash your hands” from doing what is just by going along with the crowd?

Who are those in your community who may be unjustly condemned, in large or small ways? How is Jesus inviting you to respond?

Silence

Prayer: God, give us the wisdom and clarity to understand the core of each situation and respond with generous, compassionate hearts.

All: Amen.

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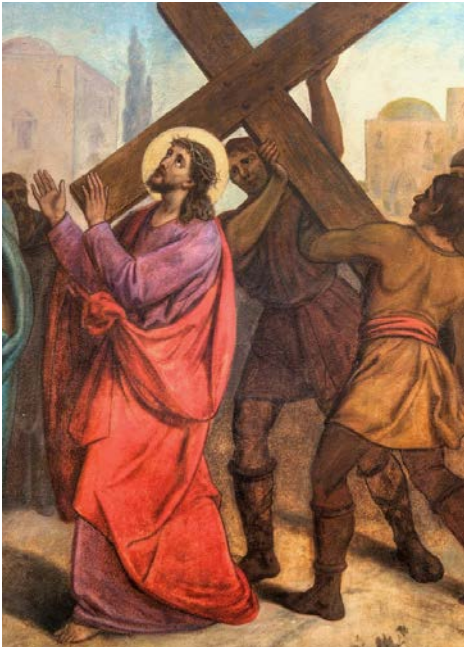
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SECOND STATION: JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

Still in the same tunic and robe, Jesus looks beseechingly up to Heaven; while two Roman Soldiers, in short white military tunics, lower the heavy wooden Cross onto His shoulders.

Members of the jeering crowd, in various colored tunics and robes, point the way to Calvary, the Crucifixion site.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Lector: And carrying the cross himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull. (John 19:17)

What kinds of burdens do you bear?

Where do you find strength to carry your burdens?

Silence

Prayer: God, help us to carry our crosses, which unite us to the suffering of Christ and the suffering of the entire world. And although our burdens may be heavy, let us remember to stop and help those we encounter along the way.

All: Amen.

Into Your Hands, All Loving God
In Manus Tuas, Pater

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THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

Weak after the Scourging at the Pillar and the Crowning with Thorns, Jesus Falls for the First Time under the weight of the heavy Cross. While being whipped by the attending Roman Soldiers, Jesus is mocked by the crowd.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Lector: Jesus falls under the weight of the cross for the first time. Despite his exhaustion, he picks up the cross and continues toward Calvary.

Do you know someone who has fallen—fallen on hard times, on difficulties in a relationship, on a moment of doubt and challenge?

What are the times in your life that you have stumbled under the weight of your burdens? How is Jesus inviting you to stand back up?

Silence

Prayer: God, you know that each of us falls, each of us fails, each of us gives in to temptation. Help us to remember that, with your grace, we have the opportunity to rise up stronger and wiser than before.

All: Amen.

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FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS SORROWFUL MOTHER

Pushing through the crowd, the Blessed Mother, dressed in a blue cloak and white head scarf, sees her Son and holds out her hands, imploringly to Him. Jesus, sadly and painfully, looks at Mary, and, knowingly, their eyes meet.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Lector: As Jesus walks the way of the cross, he meets his mother, whose love and care soothes his pain for a moment. Whom are you invited to care for? How do you help bear their pain?

Silence

Prayer: God, fill us with the eagerness to care and love others. Help us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

All: Amen.

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FIFTH STATION: SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY THE CROSS

Simon, from the North African city of Cyrene, dressed in a yellow cloak, is taken from the crowd and forced to carry Jesus' Cross for a time. Jesus, nearly on the ground in pain, looks thankfully at Simon.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Lector: They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrene, who was coming in from the country ... to carry his cross. (Mark 15:21)

Who is someone in your life or in your community who is suffering right now? How can you help share that individual's burden?

Silence

Prayer: God, inflame in our hearts with a spirit of solidarity. May we not forget to stand in solidarity with one another.

All: Amen.

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SIXTH STATION: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

Veronica, emerging from the shouting crowd, kneels in front of Jesus, the white cloth opened in her hands before her. Jesus, looking lovingly at her, reaches out to Veronica and the cloth.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Lector: Veronica sees the blood on Jesus' face and, out of love, wants to wipe it away. Jesus, when your face was wiped with gentleness, love, and care, you had a small moment of relief. Who in your life may need their physical needs met? How can you extend compassion in a way that shows your love?

Silence

Prayer: God, give us the grace to do small acts of kindness for one another. May we, like Veronica, have the strength to reach out to those we so often ignore—to those whom society has forgotten— and show love.

All: Amen.

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SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS FOR THE SECOND TIME

Exhausted from the heaviness of the Cross, Jesus stumbles and falls for the Second Time. The Roman Soldiers continue to whip and beat Jesus, while the crowd, even louder than before, deride Jesus.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Lector: Jesus stumbles and falls to the ground for the second time. In deep exhaustion, he stares at the earth beneath him.

When have you felt like giving up but chose not to?

How did God give your strength?

How did you get back on your feet again after you have fallen?

Silence

Prayer: God, lift us to our feet when we feel that we can go no further. When we feel battered by the storms of life, with neither the energy nor strength to carry on, then may we know that You will bear us onward until we arrive at home in God.

All: Amen.

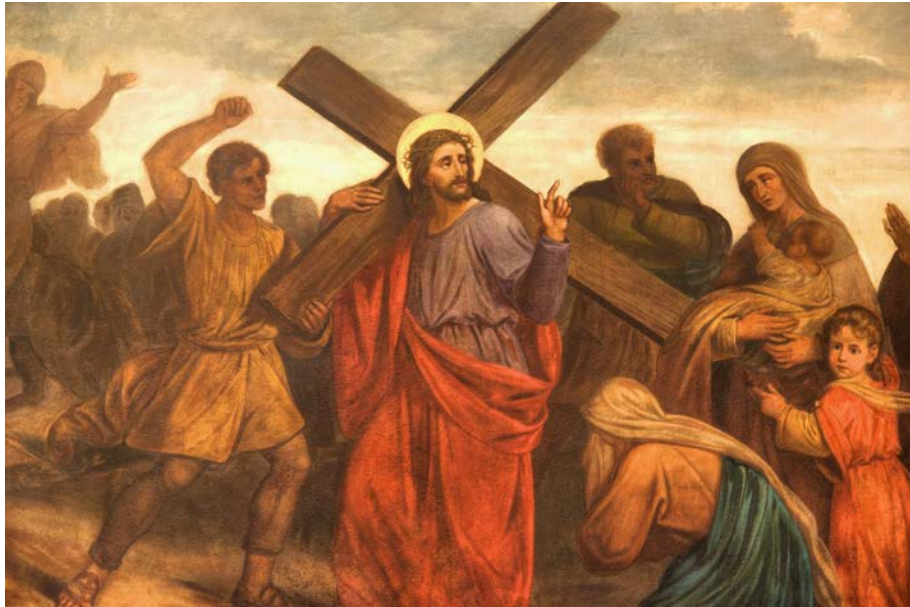
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EIGHTH STATION: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Continuing on the way to Calvary, Jesus encounters many of His women followers from Jerusalem, dressed in many colored robes and head scarves, crying and lamenting over the pain that He is suffering. Jesus turns to them, telling them not to weep for Him, but for themselves and their children.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Lector: Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children ...” (Luke 23:28)

What tragedies make you weep?

What can you do about these situations as an individual or as a family?

What can you do to show “tender, compassionate, merciful love” to those in need of hope and encouragement?

Silence

Prayer: God, may we rejoice with those who rejoice and share sorrow with those who are saddened. Peel away the shell of our selfishness that holds others at a distance, so we may be one with their lives, free to act with Your own spontaneous generosity.

All: Amen

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NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME

Overwhelmed by the heavy weight of the Cross, Jesus Falls to the ground for the Third Time. Ridiculed by both the Roman Soldiers and the crowd, Jesus is yet again forced to His feet by the soldiers, while the crowd admonishes Jesus by pointing towards Calvary.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Lector: Jesus' journey to Calvary is coming to an end. Weakened almost to the point of death, Jesus falls a third time.

When have you experienced suffering that seems to never end?

How can you take comfort in knowing Jesus is there with me?

Silence

Prayer: God, give us the perseverance to rise again and continue the journey in the face of suffering. Help us to perceive you walking with us through times, seasons, and circumstances.

All: Amen.

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TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS CLOTHES

While the Cross is being readied for the Crucifixion, Jesus is stripped of His outer robe and tunic, left standing in only His white loincloth before the crowd, who angrily continue to leer at Jesus.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Lector: The soldiers strip Jesus of his clothes to reveal his naked, bloodied body. The soldiers laugh as they do it. The worst part is that it is being done in a public manner—and all anyone can do is watch. When have you witnessed an individual or group of people being dehumanized by society? How is Jesus inviting you to stand up in solidarity with them?

Silence

Prayer: God, give us the courage to do and say something when witnessing people in power stripping others of their humanity. May we not be fooled into believing that we have no power to make a difference.

All: Amen

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ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Laying the Cross flat on the ground, Jesus is pushed down on top of it, His hands nailed to the crossbeam and His feet, one on top of the other, are nailed to the vertical post. Above His head is nailed the inscription “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.”

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Lector: Jesus’ hands and feet are nailed to the cross. As iron pierces flesh, the Son of God is vulnerable and alone. A man who lived life with open arms is readied for death, his welcoming and saving arms opened on the cross.

In times of suffering or loss, what has happened to your faith?
How have you experienced Jesus there with you?

Silence

Prayer: God, in times of suffering and loss, help us to find assurance in you. May we recognize your presence and perceive Christ in each other.

All: Amen

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TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

The soldiers hoist the Cross up in place. Jesus' final agony begins as He is crucified between two thieves. While the soldiers cast lots for His clothing and the crowd throws insults at Him, Jesus, suffering from pain, dehydration, and asphyxiation, breaths His last breath.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Lector: Abba, into your hands, I commend my spirit. After suffering greatly on the cross, Jesus bows his head and dies.

Kneeling in Silence

Lector: Jesus shows us that the biggest act of faith is to “commend” our spirits into the hands of God. What parts of your life need to be placed in God's hands?

Silence

Prayer: God, we pray for those who have died through war, violence, famine, illness, and Covid-19. We pray that the souls of all the faithful departed and those whose faith is known only to God, may rest in peace. Grant comfort to those who mourn.

All: Amen.

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THIRTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS AND PLACED IN THE ARMS OF HIS MOTHER

Jesus' lifeless body is taken down from the Cross and placed in the arms of Mary, His mother. Surrounded by Mary Magdalene and John the Apostle, all are sorrowful and weeping.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Lector: The lifeless body of Jesus is tenderly placed in the arms of Mary, his mother. How can you ensure that you do not turn away from suffering in your midst? How do we keep our hearts open to feel compassion for all the victims of our human cruelty and neglect?

Silence

Prayer: Christ Jesus, you offer us yourself in the Eucharist and invite us to offer ourselves to you and to your global family. May we learn to put the needs of others ahead of our own so we can better love our neighbor.

All: Amen.

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FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

Jesus' body, wrapped in the white ceremonial Jewish burial cloth, is placed in the tomb by Joseph of Arimathea and an attendant. The Blessed Mother and Mary Magdalene watch from outside the entrance to the tomb.

Lector: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

All: Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Lector: Having bought a linen cloth, Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus down, wrapped him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mark 15: 46.

Has there ever been a time that it was difficult to believe in Jesus' promises? The promise of everlasting life? The promise that God will always love and forgive you?
What are your dormant gifts that might call forth from the tomb?

Silence

Prayer: God, please make your presence known to us in a special way when we feel alone. May we never doubt Jesus' promises and the Hope of the Resurrection.

All: Amen.

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CLOSING PRAYER

Luz Marina Díaz:

Christ Jesus, we have walked the way of the cross with you. Help us better understand each other and how you guided, loved, healed, and journeyed with us in constant companionship. You never leave us and always hear our prayers and cries. Your Resurrection speaks of the hope of what is yet to come. May we soon rejoice in the wonder of your glory.

All: Amen

Were You There?

African-american Spiritual

Were you there when they cru-ci-fied my Lord? Were you there when they
cru - ci - fied my Lord? Oh! _____
Some-times it caus - es me to tremble, tremble, trem-ble. _____
— Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?

*Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Oh!
Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble. Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*