

WITH CHRIST



TO CALVARY

by

Servant of God Sister Ida Peterfy

Foundress

Society Devoted to the Sacred Heart

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Foreword by
Bishop Robert J. Dwyer, D.D.

FOREWORD

The devotion to the Way of the Cross goes back to the earliest centuries of the Christian era. As our Divine Lord had foretold, Jerusalem was utterly destroyed by the Roman Legions in 70 A.D. and quite literally not a stone was left upon a stone to mark where the city had stood.

Gradually it was rebuilt, now as a Christian city, and became a place of pilgrimage for thousands upon thousands of the faithful, whose piety traced the footsteps of Christ from Pilate's judgment hall to Golgotha. Religious imagination combined with the Gospel accounts of the Passion to point out the "stations" of that sorrowful journey.

In the seventh century, the Saracens swept over Palestine and conquered the city. Still the pilgrims came, though with greater difficulty and hardship, and sometimes at the risk of their lives. It was in part to protect them that the tremendous Crusade movement of the Middle Ages was launched, and for a time in the 11th and 12th centuries Jerusalem was again in Christian hands. But as the crusading spirit died out and the Turkish power became intolerant, the custom of substituting local "Ways of the Cross" for the actual pilgrimage to Jerusalem became widespread in Western Europe.

By the sixteenth century, the Stations of the Cross were accepted as a regular part of Catholic devotion, and the sequence and numbering of the

incidents were established. Many spiritual writers feel that the Stations played a prominent part in recalling wavering Christians back to the fervent practice of their faith at the time of the Reformation.

Today, the devotion is found everywhere, the Stations are fixed in every church and chapel, and the Holy See has enriched the practice of following the Stations with almost breathtaking indulgences.

There is no imposed formula, other than pausing at each Station, meditating upon its meaning or upon the meaning of the passion in general, and at the end, offering a brief prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father.

The suggestions printed in this booklet are meant simply to help in following the Stations, not to prevent you from praying in your own words – which is always better. And you can make the Stations anywhere, in church, at home, along the street, alone or with others.

Wherever or however, we make them with Christ. He has walked this way before us. It is in his Cross that we find salvation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "+Robert J. Dwyer." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and a cross at the beginning.

+Robert J. Dwyer



*"The Lord your God is with you
He is mighty to save
He will take great delight
in you, He will
quiet you with His love.
He will rejoice over you
with singing."*

Zeph. 3:17

FIRST STATION

Jesus is condemned to death

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at justice overturned; look at the crown of thorns that is pressed hard into the head of Jesus by the soldiers. Remember how much He suffers because of Pilate's cowardice and untruthfulness.

THINK - of the sufferings of Our Lord today in His Mystical Body, the Church, when so many of His members are unjustly treated in so many parts of the world.

REFLECT - Do you pass judgment rashly? Do you really care about the pain you cause with your evil thoughts, words, actions?

ASK - Jesus to forgive you for the sufferings you have caused Him.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit Who dwells in your soul by sanctifying grace to give you the virtue of Justice, to be Christlike.



SECOND STATION

Jesus accepts the cross

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the Cross. Embraced with love by our Lord, proclaimed blessed by the Church, this same Cross is the sign of your salvation.

THINK - of the great love of Jesus for God the Father and for us. His ardent desire to satisfy divine justice and to make up for our sins makes Him accept the Cross eagerly. When a price is to be paid, love never hesitates.

REFLECT - He invites you to take up your cross and follow Him. Do you recognize your cross? Do you accept it without complaint? Or, do you try to run away from all that is unpleasant, tiresome and hard in the service of God?

ASK - Jesus to forgive your weakness in rejecting the cross so easily.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit, Who dwells in your soul by grace, to give you Wisdom to see the meaning of the cross and to carry it with Jesus.



THIRD STATION

Jesus falls the first time

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the Cross swaying toward the ground and at the ropes that were cutting deep into the flesh of Jesus while He fell under its weight.

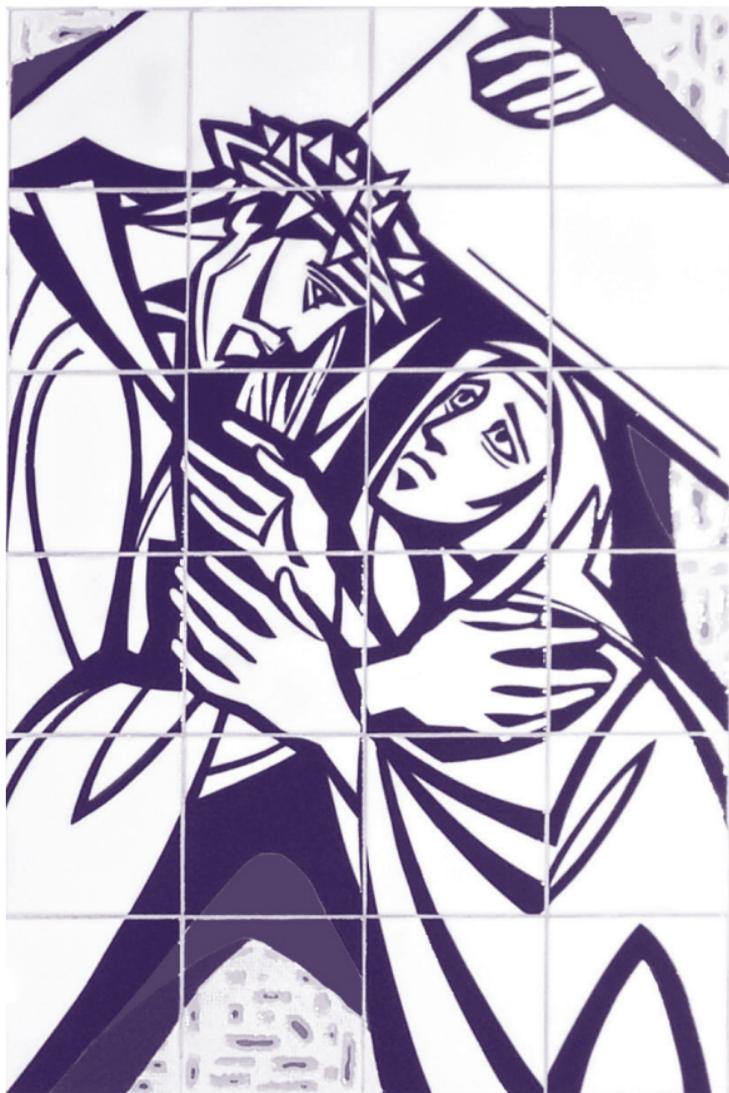
THINK - of the reasons why Christ takes up a human nature with all its frailty. He wants to suffer for us as one of us. He does not complain. He gives us an example to accept failure. He tells us not to give in even after a fall, but to stand up and continue towards the goal.

REFLECT - How easily do you give up the struggle when the going becomes rough? Do you accept suffering as He did; or do you find reasons to stay just where you are?

ASK - Jesus to forgive your softness—or your pride—which brings you to give up the fight rather than to face difficulties, pain, failure.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit, Who dwells in your soul by grace, to give you the virtue of Fortitude that you may go on bravely toward your eternal goal, in spite of human weaknesses.



IV.

FOURTH STATION

Jesus meets His Mother

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the Heart of Mary pierced by the mystical sword, a reminder of the sufferings she endured when she saw her divine Son on the way to Calvary.

THINK - of the great love and compassion of Mary. She does not ask questions, she does not complain, her trust in God is unshaken. Her motherly concern for us is the same. We are her children, she wants to be with us, too, when we suffer.

REFLECT - Do you ask our Lady for help? Do you return her love? Do you care enough for her to avoid offending Jesus and the members of His Mystical Body?

ASK - Jesus to forgive your coldness, your lack of confidence in the Mother He has given you.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you imitate Mary by obedience to God's will, seeking it with eagerness and agreeing with it as she did.



V.

FIFTH STATION

Simon helps Jesus to carry the Cross

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the strong hands of Simon lightening our Lord's heavy burden.

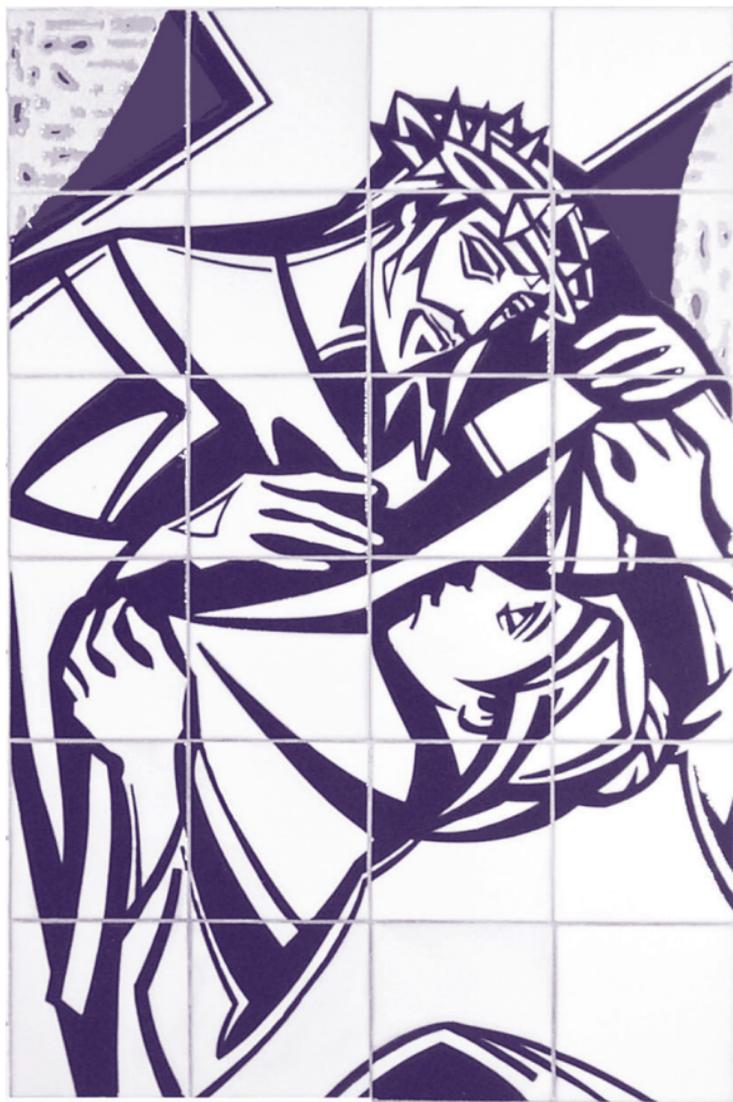
THINK - of the gentleness and humility of Jesus. He accepts help gratefully. He wants you to remember that there will be help for you, too, when you suffer for Him, but you have to accept suffering as He did.

REFLECT - Do you seek God's help first when you are in need? Do you remember that whatever help you give in His Name, our Lord takes personally? Do you help others, or are you afraid of being refused?

ASK - Jesus to forgive you because you did not help other people who are dear to Him as members of His own Body.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the supernatural gift of Counsel, to see the occasions when and how you could be of help to others.



VI,

SIXTH STATION

Veronica offers a veil to Jesus to wipe His Face

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the veil and the image imprinted on it, the Holy Face of Jesus.

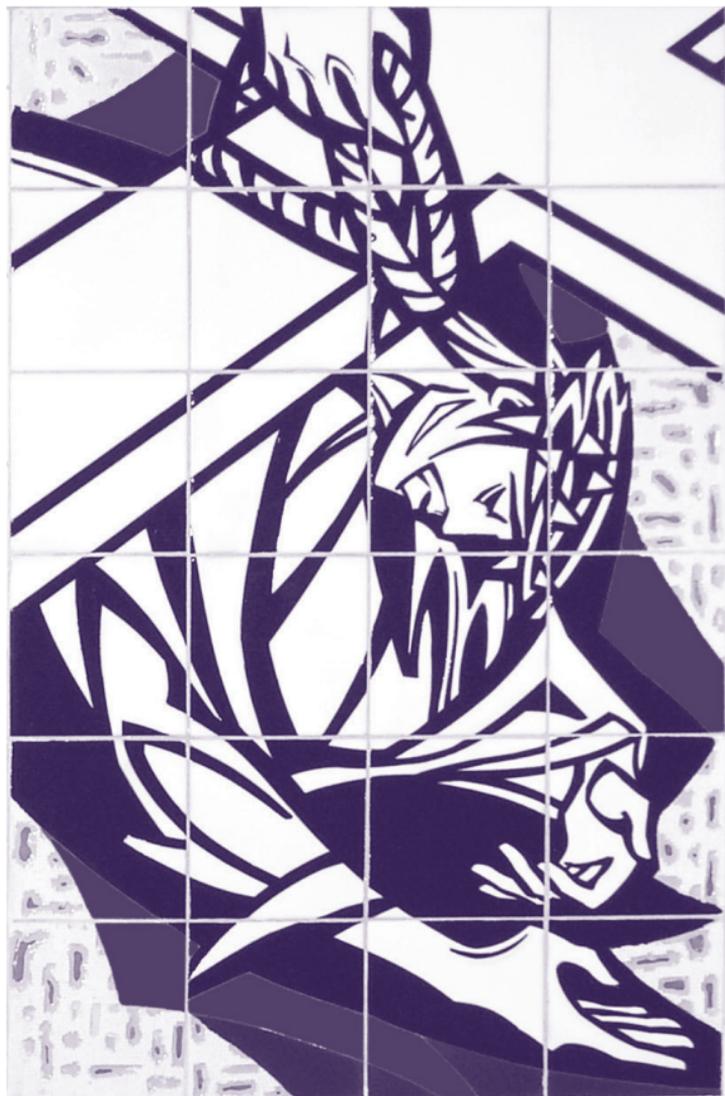
THINK - of the comfort that Veronica's action means to Jesus. It is not much; His Face is covered again with blood, sweat and the dust of the road. What really matters to Him is her care, her love and her desire to help. She does not mind what might happen to her, what people might say about her for helping Jesus. Her reward is great!

REFLECT - Do you feel compassion for Christ suffering? Do you try to console Him by receiving Him in Holy Communion as often as possible, even during the week? Are you afraid of being considered too pious, too religious? What do you seek in return for helping others? Are you satisfied with the reward that Christ can give: the imprint of His likeness on your soul?

ASK - Jesus to forgive you for being cold towards His sufferings and the sufferings of His members, for being so selfishly absorbed in your problems.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to make you resemble God, your heavenly Father, in your mercy and compassion towards others.



VII.

SEVENTH STATION

Jesus falls the second time

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the Cross bearing down towards the ground. See the whip the soldiers used so mercilessly on Jesus.

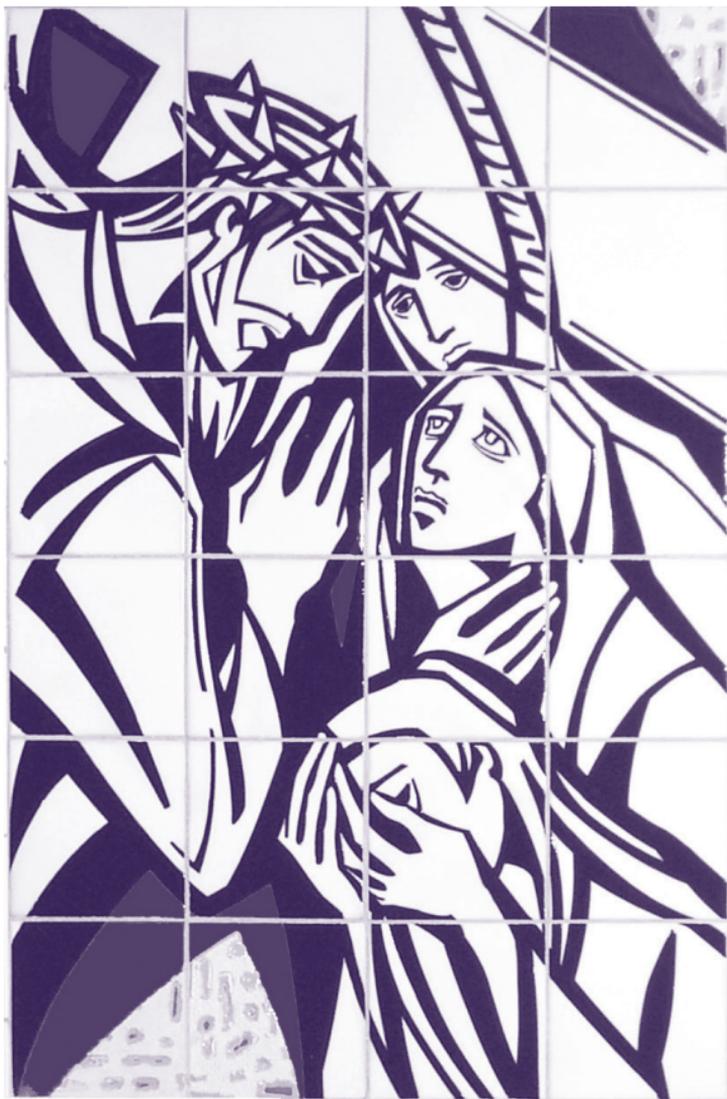
THINK - of the satisfaction that the enemies of Jesus have in seeing Him so helpless, so weak, so human. There is no visible trace of divine strength. He could have called on the heavenly legions for help, but He does not. For us, He chooses to suffer the utmost.

REFLECT - Do you see God's providence in all that happens to you, sweet and bitter alike? Or do you easily give up when your prayers are not immediately answered, when you are not given special help to overcome hardships without much effort?

ASK - Jesus to forgive your doubts in Divine Providence at times when you feel left alone and helpless.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you to have confidence in God, your Father in heaven, even when you do not see visible signs of His care.



VIII.

EIGHTH STATION

The women of Jerusalem meet Jesus

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the veiled figures of the women. They weep because they see Jesus treated unjustly and brutally.

THINK - of the words of Jesus: "Weep not over me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." It is easier to cry over a dying man than over someone's sins, although losing divine grace and heaven is a far greater tragedy than death.

REFLECT - Do you weep for the right reasons, or do you complain about less important things? The way people think, feel and talk about you can change fast. What God knows about you is important. Remember that "the sufferings of this world cannot be compared to the glory of heaven."

ASK - Jesus to forgive you for feeling sorry for yourself when you had to give up some worthless indulgence to preserve sanctifying grace.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge to see that no created good is worth being exchanged for divine grace.



IX.

NINTH STATION

Jesus falls for the third time

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the Cross falling heavily on the ground over the Body of Jesus.

THINK - how silently Jesus endures the greatest sufferings for us. It is easy enough to make a promise. The test comes when we have to live up to it, and especially when our strength is used up by suffering and pain.

REFLECT - How many promises do you make to God when you go to confession or receive Holy Communion? At times, when it becomes hard to fulfill your promise, let Jesus be your example. He did not rely on His natural strength—there was none left—but on the will of God. This must be the source of your spiritual strength, too.

ASK - Jesus to forgive you for breaking the many promises you have made to Him.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the divine virtue of Hope, that no matter how many obstacles you have to face from within or without, you may be able, with the help of God, to overcome every weakness of will and reach heaven.



X

TENTH STATION

Jesus is stripped of His garments

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the garment of our Lord and remember the dice cast by the soldiers who unknowingly fulfilled the prophecy, "Upon my garments they have cast lots."

THINK - of Christ giving up His life for us, holding nothing back, when all the world and all its joy and beauty were His!

REFLECT - How many times you wish you could give to God something great, yet remain so attached to little things? Do you fight against your bad habits? Are you willing to put aside anything that displeases God?

ASK - Jesus to forgive you for being wedded to things of little value which keep you from reaching higher and becoming more like Him.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you Prudence to act wisely, that you may decide what to keep or to give up as it helps or hinders you in the service of God.



XI,

ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus is nailed to the Cross

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the Cross and picture the long, sharp, heavy nails that pierced His hands and feet, and the hammer that pounded them in.

THINK - of the triumph of the enemies of Jesus. Now they are certain that His hands cannot help anyone. His feet, securely fixed to the wood of the Cross, cannot bring Him to His people any longer. How little they know that when lifted up on the Cross, He will “draw all things” to Himself! No force can stop the flow of divine life, divine grace, divine help.

REFLECT - Adore the wounds of Jesus. Think of the many blessings that come to you through these wounds. Is there anything that these hands would not do for you? Is there any way you could carry His message to others, to bring others to Him?

ASK - Jesus to forgive you for looking at His wounds so many times without really seeing them; for remaining unconcerned about all those for whom His Sacred Blood is shed.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you lively Faith and an ardent desire to lead others to Christ.



XII,

TWELFTH STATION

Jesus dies on the Cross

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the Cross standing erect, as the sun darkens and the spear of the Roman Centurion pierces the Divine Heart. Jesus Christ, Son of God, true God and true man, is dead.

THINK - of the last words of Jesus: "It is finished." He sheds every drop of His Blood for you. He gives His life for you. "He was truly the Son of God," a witnessing soldier exclaims. Remember how much God the Father loves you: He gave His only Divine Son to redeem you!

REFLECT - What can you give to Him in return? Would anything be "too much" to give Him compared with what He has done for you? Do you appreciate the Mass where the Sacrifice of the Cross is constantly renewed? Do you receive your Redeemer with gratitude in Holy Communion?

ASK - Jesus to keep you close to His Sacred Heart, never to let you be separated from Him or from His Mystical Body, the Church.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you Charity to love God as He deserves to be loved.



XIII

THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus is taken down from the Cross

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the Cross. Try to picture the painful task that the friends of Jesus had when they came to remove the nails from His sacred hands and feet.

THINK - of the pain that our Blessed Mother felt on receiving the lifeless Body of Jesus in her arms. His closest friends, the apostles, are gone. She does not complain. She does what she must do, completely resigned to the will of God.

REFLECT - Do you think about your last day, your last hour, your last moment? Who will be able to help you? Your heavenly Mother will be there. Will she look at you at that moment as she looked at Jesus, as one obedient to God, obedient even unto death?

ASK - Our Blessed Mother now to be with you every day and at the hour of your death.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit for Wisdom and Courage to live today as you would want to be found at the hour of your death. So live that when death comes, you may look back on a life of loyal and loving service to God who made you for Himself.



XIV.

FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is laid in the tomb

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You, because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

LOOK - at the friends of Jesus who give Him the last service as they place His Body in the tomb.

THINK - of the great humility of our Lord in accepting all the punishments of sin for us. Death comes to us as a result of original sin. Jesus, who never committed sin Himself, dies to make up for our sins. What greater proof can there be of His love?

REFLECT - He dies that you may have eternal life. Do you ever think of death as the beginning of a new, never ending life? Do you long for the day when you will see God face to face; when you will know what complete union with Him means?

ASK - Jesus to pardon your negligence by not thanking Him enough for the gift of eternal life which He has won for you by His death. Ask pardon for being overly concerned about receiving less important favors from Him.

Ask God the Father to accept the Precious Blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins.

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the grace of final perseverance.

INDULGENCES
OF THE WAY OF THE CROSS

1. Plenary indulgence as often as you make the Way of the Cross
2. An additional plenary indulgence is gained if Holy Communion is received on the same day.

Prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father to gain the indulgence: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

In her youth, Sister Ida found the source of her strength in the merciful Heart of God. She asked Him: *“Lord, give me a burning love that I may love You, and everyone for You. Give me your faithful, never-ending divine love and your strength, and I will go anywhere, to any corner of the world for You!”*

God granted her prayer. Under His inspiration, with her undivided love for God, courageous strength and profound simplicity, Sister Ida led her Sisters through the turbulent years of war and Communist occupation to the Heart of God and to the new world. God gave Sister Ida the grace to comprehend and the power to explain with simplicity the most profound truths of our faith.

What most touched the hearts of those who spoke with her was the eloquent simplicity of her joyful spirituality that she often expressed in brief words:

“God has a Heart for you!”



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