

MANGER - CROSS - EUCHARIST  
JESUS - JESUS - JESUS

The manger, the star, the dark winter night reminded us of Christmas.

The three crosses on a hill tell us about the death of Jesus among two criminals.

The cup with wine and the Holy Eucharist bring Jesus to us today when we go to Mass and welcome Him in our hearts by receiving Him in Holy Communion.

When we walked to Bethlehem back in December, we got to know the story of Jesus' birth. Today we walk again with Jesus and will come to know about four days in Jesus' life. We remember these days as Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Silent Saturday and Easter Sunday.

Let us be still, listen and become aware of how much Jesus loves us. Let us walk in a prayerful way in the footsteps of Jesus, knowing that he is walking with us every day of our lives.

## LAST SUPPER

Celebrating the liberation of God's people, Jesus is having a meal with his Twelve chosen friends. Before the meal he knelt down and washed the feet of all twelve. Then he said: "I am giving an example to follow." With this gesture and these words Jesus is showing his disciples to be good and helpful to others and not to be afraid to do the humble tasks. Then he sits down at the table, during the meal, he takes the bread and says: "This is my body broken for you". Then he takes the cup of wine and says: "This is my blood pour out for you. Do this to remember me".

Jesus' words may be difficult to understand

-Where do we hear these words today?

As we walk with Jesus, we will come to understand better the meaning of his words, and we will see how his words become real as he gives his body and shares his blood and suffers so much pain in love for us.

## FEAR

During the meal, Judas, one of the friends of Jesus left the table and walked out... Darkness has fallen.

Not only the darkness of the night but also the darkness of evil had blinded Judas. His love for money was greater than his love for Jesus. Walking into the darkness of sin, he is going to betray Jesus for money.

After the meal, Jesus, the Light of the World, left the upper room to walk out into the darkness of this world. Knowing what was going to happen he was full of fear, so he took three of his friends with him and went to the garden of Gethsemane to pray. "Stay awake and pray," he said to his friends. Then he went a bit further and prayed in fear and trembling: "Father, let this cup of suffering pass away from me. Father not my will but yours be done".

He went back to his friends, but they were asleep. "Come", he said, "this is the hour of darkness, the time has come". Then Judas came to the garden and betrayed Jesus with a greeting and a kiss. Jesus was taken to prison.

We pray for all those in prison today that they may know the love of Jesus.

In our lives we sometimes have difficult tasks ahead of us. Do I pray for strength like Jesus did?

*Jesus, teach me to pray and to love you above all things. Amen*

## BULLIED

Jesus was bullied, the guards mocked him, spat at him and said all kinds of nasty words and made all kinds of bad gestures.

Jesus looked at them with love.

The soldiers crowned Jesus with the crown of thorns and continued the bullying.

Jesus looked at them with love.

Then the soldiers blindfolded Jesus and slapped him shouting “who slapped you” and made fun of Jesus. Yes, they blindfolded Jesus because He looked at them with love.

The loving eyes of Jesus were too powerful. These soldiers could only continue doing bad things to Jesus by blindfolding him.

Have I ever bullied or hurt someone, spoken nasty words to someone?

Have I ever found it difficult to look someone in the eye because I did something wrong?

*Jesus, give me the strength to be a good person. Amen*

## CONDEMNED

Jesus was falsely accused and condemned to death, death on a cross. "I find no fault in this man," said Pilate. The crowds shouted all the louder, "Kill him, crucify him".

Jesus accepts his cross and carries it in love for each one of us. On his way to Calvary, Jesus falls but he stands up again. He carries the weight of what we do wrong.

Have I ever been falsely accused of something?

How did that feel?

When things are difficult for us, it is good to remember how Jesus stood up again after each fall out of love for us.

*Jesus, help me always to remember how much you love me. Amen*

## VERONICA

In all the pain that Jesus suffers, we see goodness win. We will meet some very good people on this walk, men and women who have the strength not to follow the crowd but listen to their own inner goodness, and bring some help to Jesus.

Helping hands, helping gestures, helping words.

Veronica is a woman with courage, as she pushes herself through the crowds and shames the bullies, she runs towards Jesus and wipes his face, a gentle gesture that takes a lot of courage. Telling him by this gesture, “I love you, I care about you, I do believe in you.”

Take notice how lovingly Jesus looks at Veronica. Allow Jesus to look at you with love.

Mother Teresa of Kolkata said “do small things with great love”. Yes, you can do it, small things in love for others, and Jesus’ love will fill your hearts.

Have you ever had the courage to take the stand against bullies and help the victim?

*Jesus, help me always to do what is good and just. Amen*

## SIMON

A man coming from the fields is forced by the soldiers to help carry the cross. Although at first it is not Simon's initiative to help, he does carry the weight of the cross with Jesus.

See how Jesus and Simon hold firmly the wood of the cross and hold one to one another. They become as one. Both look straight ahead at the way to follow, but they look at us too. There is so much unity here, together they will accomplish a difficult task. If you look closer, you will see how the thorns of Jesus crown also cause pain to Simon. When we really help someone who is in pain, we feel some of their pain too. The pain of loving someone, but there is a joy in this pain, the joy of helping someone.

Mother Teresa said "love until it hurts".

Have I ever helped others to accomplish a difficult task?

Am I always ready to help or do I need to be asked, like Simon?

*Jesus help me to be helpful to others. Amen*

## MOTHER

As a mother, Mary followed Jesus as close as she could. Just as we walk with Jesus today on his way to the cross, so Mary did.

Mary pushed through the crowds and embraced her son. How much it must have strengthened Jesus to have this moment with his mother, his mum. They look at each other with tenderness and compassion. Mary holds Jesus with her motherly hands, the hands that held him as a baby, the hands that wiped his knees when he fell as a little boy, the same motherly hands bringing consolation. Jesus strokes his mother's face. The mother shares in the pain of her son. The son shares in the pain of his mother.

We thank you for our mothers, fathers, grandparents and all those who help us when we are sad or experience pain.

We pray for children who do not receive the love of a mother.

*Jesus help me to be good to my mum, dad, and all those who care  
for me. Amen*



## NAILED

We just saw goodness win in Veronica, Simon and Mary. But now it is as if darkness and evil are winning again. The soldier is ready to nail Jesus to the cross. The hands that blessed, healed and helped people, are now going to be pierced through and fastened to the wood of the cross.

How can anyone do such a bad thing to someone so good?

Do you notice how the soldier's hand has become a fist around the wood of the hammer?

Have my hands ever been fists in order to hurt someone?

*Jesus help me to bring healing and love with my hands and let goodness win in every situation. Amen*

## DIED

Jesus is hanging upon the cross, his strength is ebbing away. He is coming to the end and soon will die. The soldiers seem to be so indifferent. Their minds are already on gain, as they start playing a game of throwing dice for his garments. Others pass by and shout insults at Jesus. Only very few are at the foot of the cross, standing by Jesus in his last hour: his mother, John the disciple and another woman.

Have you ever been insensitive to someone's pain or even added to their pain by making fun of them?

*Jesus help me to stay close to those in pain. Amen*

## TOMB

Jesus is taken down from the cross. Mary receives Jesus in her arms. They wrap him in a linen cloth and place his body in a tomb. A heavy stone is rolled at the entrance and soldiers keep watch.

We pray for all those who have lost someone dear to them.  
We pray that Mary, who knows the pain of losing her son,  
may console them.

*Jesus, help us to be gentle when we experience the pain of someone's death. Help us to help those who have lost someone.*

## RISEN

Early in the morning some women came to the tomb. The stone was rolled away. The linen cloth in which Jesus was wrapped is there, but the body of Jesus is not. Jesus is risen. Here we experience that death is not the end. Jesus died for us and in Jesus we all have eternal life. Jesus rose from the dead. Death has no power over him, that's why we celebrate Easter. Jesus is risen, yes, he is truly risen and our song is ALLELUIA!

*Jesus helps us always to remember that you are the Way, the Truth and the Life. Jesus help us to walk with you all the days of our life, and in doing so make good and positive choices. Amen*

## THE SEVEN LAST WORDS

Jesus from the cross spoke seven times. We remember this as The Seven Last Words of Jesus. Let us take a moment and listen to these words.

### 1. MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?

Jesus is overcome with pain and darkness and fears that his own father God has forgotten him. What a sadness must fill his heart.

*Jesus, help me always to remember when I feel alone, sad and unloved and say "Where is God?" that God is right there in the situation and that even you had asked this question from the cross.*

### 2. TRULY YOU WILL BE WITH ME TODAY IN PARADISE.

One of the two criminals turns to Jesus saying Jesus remember me and Jesus promises him eternal life with him in heaven that same day.

*Jesus, teach me to turn to you for help Amen*

### 3. WOMAN THIS IS YOUR SON, SON THIS IS YOUR MOTHER.

Speaking these words to John, Jesus is giving us his mother, and he also entrusts us as sons and daughters to his mother.

*Hail Mary full of Grace...*

4. FATHER FORGIVE THEM FOR THEY DO NOT KNOW WHAT  
THEY DO.

Jesus prays to His Father for all those who have hurt him.

*Jesus, help me not to be afraid to say sorry and to ask for forgiveness.  
Amen.*

5. I AM THIRSTY

Jesus cries out “I am thirsty”. He is not only thirsty for a drink. He is thirsty for our love. Today we hear the cry of Jesus in every person that needs help.

*Jesus, help me to respond to those in need. Amen*

6. FATHER INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT.

A prayer of Jesus as he dies.

*Let us remember when someone dies that we can pray like Jesus and  
commend their souls to our Heavenly Father. Amen*

7. IT IS ACCOMPLISHED.

Jesus says, “It is accomplished,” then he bows his head and dies.

*Jesus, teach me to say yes to God every moment of my life. Teach me to say  
thanks to God every moment of my life.*