



*Ours were the sufferings He bore, ours the sorrows
He carried. . . and through His wounds we are healed
(cf. Isa 53:4-5).*

THROUGH HIS WOUNDS WE ARE HEALED

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Illustrated



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Introduction

Origin of the Way of the Cross

FOR the past 2,000 years, our faith has reinforced our firm belief that we are not alone when we face the difficulties of our lives. Only a short time before He returned to the Father, Jesus promised His disciples, “Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the world” (Mt 28:20). This is a promise that speaks to every generation of the faithful for He lives and He “is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb 13:8). Each person who believes in Christ can experience His faithfulness to this promise. One only needs to open one’s heart to Him and to place one’s faith in Him.

The Way of the Cross is not only a chance for us to acknowledge that our lives are filled with confusing and difficult situations. We already know that. Rather, it is a unique opportunity for us to choose to unite these problems to Christ and the power of His love. This helps us remember that we are not alone. The Lord wants to take care of us and guide us through every dark valley (cf. Ps 23:4). The Lord makes His presence known, even in the darkest moments of our lives, for “even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for to you darkness and light are the same” (Ps 139:12).

The Way of the Cross

Introductory Prayer

JESUS, I truly believe You are here with me. With deep devotion, I ask You, through the grace of Your Cross, to give me the gift of faith and love so that I may not remain passive or indifferent to the revelation of Your love. I desire to open my heart to You and to meditate upon the journey of Your life and my life. Grant me freedom, if even only for a short time, from all of my distractions and troubled thoughts. I place all of these things in Your hands. Protect me from them. Cure me of these distractions and of the indifference that is in my heart. Let me know that You are near. Please, Lord, guide me by filling my heart with the gift of Your Holy Spirit as I pray this Way of the Cross.

Holy Spirit, please open my eyes and my heart to better understand the words of Sacred Scripture. May they find a home in my heart. Enlighten my thoughts so that I might understand today what is mine to understand. Renew in me the desire to be like Christ in all things. By Your power and grace, may I not only call myself a child of God. May that be what I truly am. Amen.



Second Station

Jesus Takes Up His Cross

Carrying the Cross by Himself, He went out to what is called the Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, "Golgotha") (Jn 19:17).

JESUS freely chose to embrace His condemnation. He willingly handed Himself over into the hands of these people. He was not forced into it. We see Him battle it out in His own mind in the Garden of Gethsemane, where His struggle caused Him to sweat blood (cf. Lk 22:44). The evangelist John tells us how He confronted those who had come to arrest Him. They fell to the ground, overwhelmed by the revelation of His divinity (cf. Jn 18:4f.). If He had wanted to do so, He

unjustly. Now, He was the One Who needed other people's compassion. Of course, not everyone gathered along the Way of the Cross was mean or indifferent. An ancient tradition speaks of Veronica, who became a symbol of all of those who helped Jesus during His life here on earth. She is like Mary, who anointed the feet of Jesus with precious oil shortly before His Passion (cf. Jn 12:3).

Jesus was like us, for during His earthly life He needed other people's help and understanding. He was not afraid to ask for these things. In the Garden of Gethsemane, during His time of testing, He asked the disciples to remain with Him. He was not a superhero who did not need anyone and who could calmly face his destiny. He knew all of our human emotions: anguish, fear in the face of suffering, abandonment, etc. Because of this, He was open to expressions of love and compassion, even in His most difficult moments. In spite of His physical and other suffering, He did not close in on Himself. Even in the midst of the Way of the Cross, He rewarded Veronica for her act of love.

Lord, in light of this Station, I once again realize how important it is that we not be left alone in our times of difficulty. We always need others who, even if they cannot