

Lent 2018

Way of the cross
prayed and meditated
by integrating the fate of migrants
and victims of human trafficking

Entry song (free choice)

Sing of the cross (free choice)

Deep within us, shared among us, may we ever keep, the mind and heart of Jesus Christ.

Introduction

By celebrating of the Stations of the Cross, we symbolically live the passion of Jesus and his painful path to the cross. We want to accompany Jesus in this decisive moment of his life.

Today we will walk this way of the cross meeting our brothers and sisters who, like Jesus on his way to the cross, are deprived of freedom, considered as objects and forced to do what they do not want.

Today Jesus lives his passion again in these children, these women and these men who are victims of forced migration and human trafficking. By following Jesus' passion and that of our sisters and brothers who live their way of the cross in our streets, our roads, our workshops, our fields, or hidden where no one sees them, we will also celebrate the hope of the resurrection, the victory of love over all sorts of evil, the triumph of life over death.

May this Way of the Cross be for us too, a path of hope and of commitment so that these sisters and brothers may live the resurrection of a new beginning, and that we may consider a world without slavery, without human trafficking.

Song :

The Lord hears the cry of the poor. Blessed be the Lord.

Let the lowly hear and be glad: the Lord listens to their pleas and to hearts broken he is near; for he hears the cry of the poor.

The Lord hears the cry of the poor. Blessed be the Lord.

1st station: Jesus is condemned to death



From the Gospel according to John 19: 14-17a

It was Passover preparation Day. 'Here is your king.' said Pilate to the Jews. 'Take him away! Take him away!' They said. 'Crucify him!...' So in the end, Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. They then took charge of Jesus.

Testimony

Originally from Mauritania, I was born and brought up in the suburbs of Paris. When I was 18, life was just opening up for me. In May, just before my A-level exams, my mother told me that in July, I would marry a man from a good family because the honour of the family was at stake. I collapsed; I was not ready and I wanted to get

married for love. I begged her to reconsider her decision, but instead I was locked up at home for two months, without a phone. Then, one day, I was taken to an apartment where unknown women washed me, did my hair and dressed me in a white tunic. I wanted to die while we were celebrating! That night, in the midst of terrible suffering, I lost what I had most dear. At his side, I lived hell and I had no one with whom to share my distress. My mother had betrayed me!

Prayer

Jesus, you were innocent, but you were betrayed and condemned because you defended the little ones, and because you attacked the established order.

Even today, people are betrayed by those who are meant to protect them, and are condemned without reason.

Lord Jesus, be with the people who live the consequences of betrayal and who have lost all hope.

Be near to people who are sentenced to death by those around them.

Our Father

Song:

Grant to us, O Lord, a heart renewed; recreate in us your own Spirit, Lord.
(3 times)

2nd station: Jesus carries His cross with the victims of trafficking

From the Gospel according to John
19: 16b-17a

They seized Jesus. Carrying his cross himself, Jesus went out.

Testimony

Full of hope I left my village in Ethiopia to work in Lebanon and to help my family. But there it was hell! I got up at 5 a.m. to clean a huge house, take care of the children and cook for the family and the many guests who arrived at any time. I was often scolded and insulted, sometimes beaten. Sometimes I went to bed at 2 o'clock at night. One day the husband assaulted me and raped me. I struggled but he continued. After that, any time he was in the house, I was shaking. I could not run away because they had taken my passport. In addition I was not paid. One day when I was cleaning the windows, Madame passed by and I asked her for my salary. She became furious and pushed me; I lost my balance and fell through the window. In the hospital, I screamed with pain. A doctor called the embassy. They came to see me and I told my story and they arranged for me to return to Ethiopia.



Prayer

Jesus, you did not look for the cross, but you agreed to carry it. You carried the weight of the lack of love, the betrayal and lies and the resulting despair of so many victims who seek to improve their lives, but who are treated as 'objects', sold, degraded, humiliated, treated without dignity, and suffer unimaginable suffering.

Lord Jesus show your love to the victims who carry their cross!

Help us to live with your unconditional love for these victims and give us the courage to commit ourselves to the eradication of human trafficking.

Our Father

Song

Oh Lord save us, Oh Lord heal us, give us your peace. (3 times)

3rd station: Jesus falls the first time



Word of God from Psalm 142: 4-7

Look on my right and see - there is no one who recognises me. All refuge is denied me, no one cares whether I live or die. I cry out to you, Yahweh, I affirm, 'You are my refuge, my heritage in the land of the living!' Listen to my calling, for I am miserably weak. Rescue me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me. Lead me out of prison that I may praise your name. The upright gather round me because of your generosity to me.

Testimony

Eva met Nik, the year she was preparing for her A-level exams in Marseille. They went out together and Eva fell in love with Nik. She felt safe with him and trusted him. One day he invited her to get into his friend Boris' car and she accepted. Boris, a man of a certain age, offered her whiskey in which he had put drugs ... When she was asleep, Boris paid Nik for providing the girl and let him go. Boris drove Eva to a pornography network in another city where he was paid for 'the merchandise'. When Eva woke up, she didn't know anyone and she didn't know where she was. She asked questions and wanted to leave ... but the response was violence. They had bought her and now she belonged to them.

Prayer

Jesus, exhausted you fall under the weight of the cross. You lie on the ground; you are just dust, like so many children, women and men whose dignity has been removed by the traffickers.

Lord, send your Spirit to traffickers and to people who have fallen into slavery so that they can find a way out.

Give us eyes to recognize victims of trafficking and give us the courage to work for their release.

Our Father

Song

Yes, I shall arise, and return to my Father (3 times)

4th Station: Jesus meets his mother

From the gospel according to John 19, 25

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala.

Testimony

Attracted by an advertisement of domestic work in Turkey, I left my husband and three children on Trinity Island in the Caribbean. I went to Turkey to send money home for their studies, but the work turned out to be different from what I had negotiated.

Arriving in Turkey in 2016, the traffickers tried to force me to work in a brothel. I escaped and found myself in Greece in a refugee camp filled with Syrian refugees.

In that situation, I was unable to send anything home. However, I met Galloway, who had come to Greece from the United States to do training to accompany victims of human trafficking. When I told her my story, she did everything to take me with her and helped me on the path to freedom.

Prayer

Lord, you comforted your mother who suffered on seeing you, her beloved son, humiliated, condemned and going towards your death. There is no greater pain than the one of a mother who loses her child.

We pray for families brutally separated by human trafficking, when employment opportunities become a trap that plunges the victim into sexual slavery or labour exploitation.

Give us the courage to commit ourselves to work for family reunification and to continue to support parents who are living only to see their children's return.

Our Father.

Song

Turn an ear to me, O Lord; answer when I call. (3 times)



5th Station: Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross



From the Gospel according to Ilk 23:26

As they were leading him away, they seized on a man, Simon from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and made him shoulder the cross and carry it behind Jesus.

Testimony

Sergio had migrated from Mexico to the United States with an employment contract to work on a farm. Upon his arrival, the employers took his passport and he discovered that there were no days of rest and no break during the twelve hours of work. The salary he received was much smaller than the promised one and the dwelling provided by his employer had no

access to a bathroom or running water. Without documents, he could not escape, as he would have risked being sent home by the police.... After a long time, Sergio obtained the number of the National Line Against Human Trafficking and telephoned, so that he could better understand his rights. The National Line connected him with a legal service provider who put him in a secure place and protected his rights.

Prayer

Jesus, Simon of Cyrene was obliged to help you, by sharing your burden. Despite his fear, while walking behind you, he met you and this changed his life: he became your disciple.

As we walk with you, grant that we may also learn to walk with the survivors of human trafficking, to ease their burden.

May these encounters change our lives as we meet you in these brothers and sisters, because it is you who said to us, "Whatever you did to the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."

Our Father.

Song

Whatsoever you do to the least of my people, that you do unto me. (3 times)

6th station: A woman wipes the face of Jesus

Word of God from Isaiah 53: 2b-3

He had no form or charm to attract us, no beauty to win our hearts; he was despised, the lowest of men, a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering, one from whom we averted our gaze; he was despised and we had no regard for him..

Testimony

I am Jazmine, from Nigeria. When I was five years old, Paul took me from my mother's house and took me to Italy. He told me that he had bought me. I didn't understand anything! At nine, I started to receive clients. When I was fifteen years old, he brought me to London, where everything was the same: I was locked up, I saw only white men and I did the same thing. The 'guests' were not nice to me: they beat me, insulted me or worse. One day I had the courage to run away. I walked far, far away, until I was exhausted and I went to sleep in a corner. Some people gave me hot coffee. They asked my name and my age. I said I was seventeen years old. One of them accompanied me and took me to his organization. I was scared, but the social worker was very kind and helped me a lot. I just wanted to have a chance, to be someone in society. The road has been long and difficult but now I am a woman! I am proud to be Jazmine.

Prayer

Jesus, a woman comes to meet you to wipe your face with a cloth. She can't do much, but she does the little she can - and you thank her by printing your face on the linen, but even more, in her heart.

Give us the courage to relieve the suffering and to comfort the victims of trafficking, of migrants and persons deprived of their liberty, by doing what we can, even if it is very little.

Enable us to look at the other with respect and not avert our gaze from suffering and poverty. Help us meet them as you would.

Song:

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me; I will hold your people in my heart. (3 times)



7th Station: Jesus falls for the second time



God's Word from Isaiah 53: 4-5.

Yet ours were the sufferings he was bearing, ours the sorrows he was carrying, while we thought of him as someone being punished and struck with affliction by God; whereas he was being wounded for our rebellions, crushed because of our guilt; the punishment reconciling us fell on him, and we have been healed by his bruises.

Testimony

I am Abel. I left Romania to go to Italy with my sister and her husband. In Rome, my brother-in-law's family taught me to steal from tourists. With other young people, we were taught what to say to the police if we were arrested: we had to give different identities and to say that we were under thirteen years of age. I had to

bring back first 50 € per day, after 75 and later 100 €, otherwise they beat me.

I was often caught by the police but, because I was a minor, they let me go. One day I was caught in the act of stealing. For the police and the judge I was a delinquent! They sentenced me to one month in prison. The prison was terrible ... I had something to eat, but I was no longer free... But this month of prison was my salvation, because, with the help of an association, I started a new life. Now I know that I was a victim and not a delinquent. Today I am training as a mason.

Prayer

Jesus you fall again. The cross becomes heavier, and it becomes harder to get up. But you keep fighting, trying to get back on your feet and walking again. You do not give up.

Give us the courage to get up when we fall on our way, but above all give courage to those who want to get out of trafficking, so that they can take the necessary decisions.

Grant that we may help those who fall, who cannot bear life anymore and who are discouraged.

Our Father

Song

Only this I want, but to know the Lord, and to bear his cross, so to wear the crown he wore. (3 times)

8th Station: Jesus comforts the women of Jerusalem

From the Gospel of Luke 23: 27-28

A large number of people followed him, and of women too, who mourned and lamented for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children.'

Testimony

James is six years old. His mother cried when she saw him, so small, being taken away by the rebels in Liberia. They gave him weapons and drugs and sent him to fight. James tells us, "For five years, I fought alongside the rebels. I was promoted to Platoon Commander and called myself Captain War Chief. When our mission was to 'capture and destroy', we would not leave any survivors and we had to destroy everything ... I often took opium and Valium, so as not to feel the pain. I felt as if someone else was doing all those awful things for me." The negotiation of the peace agreement allowed him to leave his life as a soldier when he was eleven years old. Thanks to a demobilization program, James was able to receive training and to start a new life.



Prayer

Jesus, you invite the saddened women to look at their reality, to go beyond mere pity, to convert and start a new life.

Take pity on those who are responsible for trafficking: who use children to kill, who marry children, who due to their love of money and luxury enslave others. Grant that they may convert to mercy and charity.

Give us the necessary love not to close our eyes to others' sufferings, but to turn towards them.

Song

Someone's crying Lord, kum ba yah. Someone's crying Lord, kum ba yah.
Someone's crying Lord, kum ba yah. Oh Lord, kum ba yah. (3 times)

9th station: Jesus falls for the third time



**From the Gospel according to John
12: 24**

Unless a wheat grain falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies it yields a rich harvest.

Testimony

"I am Rawshan Ara, and I live in Kalai near Dhaka in Bangladesh. I was strangled by debts and poverty: my husband is perpetually ill, my daughter's education is expensive. I went to Dhaka to work in the textile industry, but wages are miserable... In my neighbourhood many sell a kidney to make some money. My sister and brother-in-law, who had done it two years before, encouraged me. It was my only solution! They put me in touch with

those who did everything" she said. As she refuses to say who served as intermediary, the police suspects her family of pushing her for surgery and belonging to a network of intermediary donors who receive a commission on each recruitment. Forty of the Kalai residents sold their kidneys this year and another twelve are missing, suspected of travelling to India for surgery.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you fall again like so many people bent by the weight of their poverty and their suffering which pushes them to find solutions which are often a trap, where they are deceived and find themselves in dead-end situations.

Take pity on them, let them find people who can enlighten them on the projects they want to undertake, so that they may know what is really involved, and can make choices that lead to more life.

Change the hearts of those who deceive them, so that they may take into account the dignity of every person, rather than just their desire to own more.

Our Father

Song

R/ Yes, I shall arise and return to my Father!

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. In you O my God, I place all my trust. **R/**

10th Station: Jesus is stripped of his clothes

From the Gospel according to John 19: 23b

They took his clothing and divided it in four shares, one for each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in one piece and they threw dice to decide who was to have it.

Testimony

Leïla fell in love with Louis, a Frenchman she met in Algeria, her country of origin. He proposed to her that they should get married, and she accepted. She went to join him in France, but as soon as she arrived there, when she had barely seen her husband, Leila was taken into her mother-in-law's clutches. She was exploited by her at the family home. She confiscated her papers, and made her undergo all kinds of humiliating treatments. Leila was isolated and could not make calls.... she didn't know anything about the city and she was told that without papers the police would put her in jail. Her husband had become a different man; all she did was bad; she was defenceless. She began to feel that she was useless and good for nothing and that they were right to treat her like this!



Prayer

Lord Jesus, your injured body is stripped of your clothes and exposed to mockery and contempt. You lower yourself to join us where we are. You are weak, exhausted, defenceless and without dignity.

Be with every person whose body is used as merchandise, with those who are exploited and denigrated for the pleasure or the benefit of those who exploit them.

Grant that all the victims may have the strength to resist and fight to get out of their situation.

Grant us the courage and the strength to commit ourselves to accompany people who are still stripped today.

Our Father

Song

God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. (3 times)

11th station: Jesus is nailed to the cross



**From the Gospel according to Luke 23: 33
-34**

When they reached the place called The Skull, they crucified him there and the two criminals also, one on the right, the other on the left. Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.'

Testimony

When Osei was only six years old, his parents gave him to a fishing master from Lake Volta, who promised to show him the job and give him an education and a job in fishing. This was a lie. Instead, he forced Osei and other children to work on a fishing boat several hours a day in difficult conditions. The master also forced girls into domestic servitude near the

lake. None of these children went to school, nor were they apprentices: they were forced to work on the boats. Osei dreamed of sleeping, of eating enough and of escaping, but where could he go? A NGO rescued Osei and other children in similar situations. Currently they are housed in a health center, where they receive education and specific services for victims of trafficking, to help their healing and to prepare them for their future.

Prayer

Jesus, you who "went around doing good," are killed as a criminal, They make fun of you, they take revenge on you. But you forgive those who put you on the cross and you do the will of the Father. Lord, to follow you is to live like you, to act like you, to forgive like you.

Show your love, your mercy and your forgiveness, to those who are still nailed on the cross of life, and be for them a source of hope that they can have life in fullness.

Give us also the strength to follow you to the end; to love as you loved, even at the cost of our own lives.

Our Father

Song

Behold, behold the wood of the cross on which is hung our salvation. O come, let us adore. (3 times)

12th Station: Jesus dies on the cross

From the Gospel of Luke 23: 44-46

It was now about the sixth hour, with the sun eclipsed, darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. The veil of the Temple was torn right down the middle, and when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he said 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.' With these words, he breathed his last.

Prayer

Jesus, Son of God made man, you die in complete helplessness, but you commit your life and your powerlessness to your Father. You trust him, convinced that He is with you and that He will transform your suffering and your death into life.

Today, men and women live this same powerlessness in their lives as slaves, migrants, refugees and poor.

Even today, men, women and children are dying in horrific situations.

Now we will keep a moment of silence and commemorate all those people who lose their lives unjustly!

Our Father

Song

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord.
O, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord.



13th Station: The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross



From the Gospel according to Luke 23: 53

Joseph from Arimathea took the body of Jesus down, wrapped it in a shroud and put him in a tomb which was hewn in stone, in which no one had yet been laid.

Testimony

Bintou saw her eldest son, Ibrahim, leave for Europe. When his father died, he had left school to find work, but without hope of improving his situation in the country, he left for Europe, promising his mother to send her money for the school fees of the little ones. For a few months he phoned from time to time to say that he was okay. However, one day there was a phone call and Ibrahim was not talking but screaming in pain, saying, "If you do not send me 100,000 Francs CFA before two weeks, they will kill me." His mother

tried everything to find the money, but she did not succeed. She cried thinking he was dead. Then some months later, he phoned, "I'm fine; I escaped and I found work and I'm waiting to cross the sea." Bintou laughed, filled with joy! And then, a few days afterwards, there was another phone call. A stranger told her, "Your son died while crossing the Mediterranean. His inflatable boat capsized. His body was identified by one of his comrades." Bintou lost consciousness. She was so sure that Ibrahim was going to succeed and now he is dead!

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are dead, you, the master of life. Your mother's heart is broken. She is helpless. But even there, faced with your death, some of the women, the centurion, Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus have the courage to declare that they are on your side. Your helplessness becomes God's power in them and gives them the courage to follow you without looking at the consequences.

Have mercy on those women who cry for their children!

Give strength to the captives of today so that they can also get out of their 'life of death'.

Grant that we may die to ourselves, to follow you and live for others.

Our Father

Song:

I cry to you in the night, turn your ear to me; show your face to me, O my God.
(3 times)

14th Station: Jesus is put in the grave

From the Gospel according to Luke
23: 55-56

Meanwhile the women who had come from Galilee with Jesus were following behind. They took note of the tomb and of the position of the body. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. And on the Sabbath day they rested, as the Law required.

Testimony

Charlotte Awino was fourteen years old when the rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army of Uganda abducted her from the boarding school. She told her story: "We were removed from the school campus and we walked for several days. We were taken to South Sudan. In the camp we were raped, beaten, forced to work in the fields and to carry heavy loads when the camp moved. I dreamed of running away, but after seeing the terrible way they killed one of my friends who escaped, I decided to stay. I thought I would never get out of that hell that was this camp in the savannah or in the forest. I was given as a woman to a fighter and I had two children, but I felt as if I was dead. I thought the children would become like their father." After eight years of sexual slavery, a battle with the army gave her the opportunity to escape with her children.

Prayer

Jesus you are in the tomb. For many of those who followed you, 'everything is over'. They feel empty and without hope. But the women who had come with you from Galilee are already looking towards the next day and how they will express their love, and during the Sabbath rest they live a time of waiting, to prepare for the following day.

Grant that we and all those who live in the night of despair may always trust in the power of God.

Grant that we may believe that God can bring life forth even from death, and that He is capable of transforming reality.

Our Father

Song

We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome some day.

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe, that we shall overcome some day.



15th Station: Jesus is risen from the dead



From the Gospel according to Luke 24, 4a.5b

On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, they went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. Two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. The two men said to them, 'Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he has risen.'

Testimony

When Joy, a Nigerian woman, left her home country to work as a hairdresser in France, she was full of hope and she left her two children with her sister. However, when she arrived in Libya, she was raped and forced into prostitution and she became pregnant. She was then taken on to France, where her 'madam' made her abort illegally and she almost died. Once she healed, she was again forced into prostitution, this time in the woods ... She had no choice, as she had to pay her debt for the trip

(50,000 €). One day workers for an association were there near the woods and she was offered hot tea ... It was the first time that anyone had been kind to her since her departure from home. ... She approached the association, which then helped her to take steps to make her way out of her situation. It was hard to break with what was her life... but she trusted... and what a joy it was to feel free! Today she is learning a profession.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, the Living One, the last word is not death, but Easter, the triumph of Life, the victory of love over evil.

The helplessness of your death and the darkness of the tomb are replaced by the Light of Love, which overcomes all hatred.

The God of Life has raised you from death and you lead us with you on the Path of Life.

Final blessing

Song

I am the resurrection, I am the life. He who believes in me will never die.

I am the resurrection, I am the life. He who believes in me will live a new life. (bis)

The images of the Way of the Cross come from the chapel of the formation house in Lublin. The artist was inspired by the way of the cross published by MISEREOR.

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