

The Way of the Cross - Charity and Passion

(Script by Sr. Therese Mac Kinnon, D.C.)

This meditation on the Way of the Cross combines the passion of Jesus as portrayed in the Stations of the Cross and Jesus' message from the Gospel of St. Matthew on the last judgment. "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least ones of mine, you did it for me." Matt. 25:40. The meaning of this scripture passages is summarized in the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. This Way of the Cross correlates a work of mercy with each Station of the Cross. With each station is included a quote from St. Louise de Marillac. These meditations on charity and the passion of Jesus were mysteries close to her heart.

Quotation: *We are applying to ourselves the merit of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. And what is God doing in heaven? He is eternally fulfilling the purpose for which His Son suffered and died, by granting eternal happiness to souls redeemed by this Divine Savior.* (St. Louise – #1)

The First Station

Jesus is Condemned to Die



"I was in prison and you visited me."
Mt. 25:36

Reflection: Jesus was in prison. How many innocent persons suffer unjust condemnation or maltreatment in the name of justice or expediency? Do I know persons who are imprisoned by meanness, hatred or indifference?

Quotation: *Thirst for justice, which is a more pressing need, must lead us to desire greater things. We must long for union with God and the disposition and means to attain it. We must ardently desire that the effects of His holy will reign in us; and we must do all in our power to bring about this reign in others.*

(St. Louise - #2)

Prayer: Jesus, open our minds, our hearts and our wills to bring the gift of freedom to all those we meet. With the imprisoned and all those who seek human rights we pray, may God's kingdom come. AMEN.

The Second Station

Jesus Carries His Cross



"...Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you." Lk. 6:27-28

Reflection: Jesus, who was totally innocent, was condemned to die. How many times are we misjudged, offended? Do I take the time to understand the perspective of others?

Quotation: *It seemed to me that in order to be faithful to God we must live in great union with one another....This will prevent us from becoming annoyed by the actions of others and enable us to bear with one another and to live together with cordiality and gentleness.* (St. Louise #3)

Prayer: Jesus give us the gift of understanding and acceptance so that we will always act with true humility. With all who bear unjust wrongs we pray for patience, gentleness and the courage to bless our offenders. AMEN.

The Third Station

Jesus Falls the First Time



"For I was hungry and you gave me food." Mt. 25:35

Reflection: Jesus was hungry. How many people today hunger for food! How many people hunger for food for the soul! When I give food to feed a person's body, do I also give food to feed his/her soul?

Quotation: ...we are called upon to honor this Holy Cross by all types of suffering, after the example of Our Lord, who teaches us this by His death on the Cross and by all the other pains and sufferings which He endured during His life on earth and which are recounted in several places in the Gospel. (St. Louise - #4)

Prayer: Jesus, you fed the five thousand, give us the gift to know that we are called to feed both a person's body and spirit. Help us to see with compassion both the material needs and spiritual needs of those whom we serve. AMEN.

The Fourth Station

Jesus Meets His Mother



"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." Mt. 11:28

Reflection: Jesus meets his mother. Their eyes exchange unconditional love which heals all wounds. How many people yearn to experience this love! Jesus and his mother give this love to all. Is my love unconditional?

Quotation: ... Thus, no more self-will! May Your will alone be the rule of my life! Grant me this grace, O my Jesus, for the love which You have for me and through the intercession of Your Holy Mother who loved so perfectly all the effects of Your loving will. I beg this grace of You with all my heart. (St. Louise - #5)

Prayer: Jesus, you share unconditional love with your mother. Give us the gift of love to relieve other's burdens and to comfort the sorrowful. AMEN

The Fifth Station

Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross



"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you...Do not your hearts be troubled or afraid." Jn. 14:27

Reflection: Jesus accepts help. How often others need help! How often we need help! Do I bring about peace with those whom I counsel?

Quotation: Our Lord wanted us to understand the dignity of suffering when He told Saint Paul that he would be honored by the privilege of suffering in His name. This belief is a truth which must be deeply rooted in our hearts. Effectively, what are we accomplishing on earth when we suffer? We are applying to ourselves the merit of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. (St. Louise - #6)

Prayer: Jesus, you came to bring peace. Give us the gift of gentleness to reach out to those who are confused and hurting. AMEN

The Sixth Station
Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face



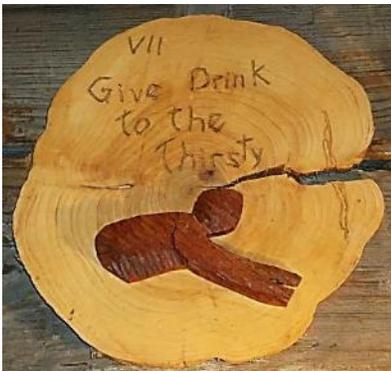
"The aim of this instruction is love from a pure heart..." I Tim. 1:5

Reflection: Jesus welcomes assistance. A kind touch, an act of compassion, these express love in action. How often have I been touch by someone's tender care?

Quotation: *This practice of charity is so powerful that it gives us the knowledge of God, not as He is in Himself, but we penetrate so deeply into the mystery of God and His greatness that we may say that the greater our charity the greater our participation in this divine light which will inflame us with the fire of Holy Love for all eternity. (St. Louise. - #7)*

Prayer: Jesus, you are the incarnation of love. Help us to love with tenderness and compassion. As our love of others increases, so will our love of you. AMEN.

The Seventh Station
Jesus Falls the Second Time



"...I was thirsty and you gave me drink..." Mt. 5:35

Reflection: Jesus who fell a second time, was weak and in pain. How many people suffer and thirst for clean water to drink? Am I helping to preserve a clean environment?

Quotation: *Jesus thirsted on the Cross after He saw that all had been accomplished. His afflicted body, like a deer, sought the relief of water. He suffered a double thirst: that of His body and that of His spirit.He willed to forgo even necessities so as to use every moment of His life to the fullest. Listen to Him, O my soul, as if He were speaking to you alone, "I thirst for your faithful love." (St. Louise - #8)*

Prayer: Jesus, open our hearts to see the needs of people close to us and the needs of those in faraway places. Guide our actions to help bring about equality on earth so that no one will thirst. AMEN.

The Eighth Station
Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem



"...admonish the idle, cheer the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient with all." I Thes. 5:14.

Reflection: Jesus, even in your agony, you touched the hearts of those who came to you. How can I reach out creatively to support those I encounter?

Quotation: *I experienced consolation in my great sorrow without feeling that it was for the love of God. Therefore, desiring to make good use of my weakness and recognizing my powerlessness, I recalled the suffering of another person and united my intention to his and offered them to God with Our Lord on the Cross. (St. Louise - #9)*

Prayer: Jesus, help us to assist those who cross our path who may need encouragement in life and with life's demands. Guide us to see both sides of an issue so that your love can flow through us. AMEN.

The Ninth Station
Jesus Falls the Third Time



“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” Mt. 6:12

Reflection: Jesus, as you fell a third time, remind us that life is not easy. How much peace would there be in the world if people forgave each other! Do I continue to forgive over and over again?

Quotation: *Death has lost its sting because it has not separated the divinity from the blessed body of Jesus Christ nor deprived it of grace. The jeering of the crowds reveals those who do not believe in Jesus Christ and who refuse to do good without miracles. By forgiving them, Jesus shows that there is no place in Him for contempt or revenge. In asking pardon for His enemies, He excuses them.* (St. Louise - #10)

Prayer: Jesus, help us to forgive injuries, not just once but each time. Give us the humility to admit our faults so as to see clearly the struggles of others. AMEN.

The Tenth Station
Jesus is Stripped



“I was...naked and you clothed me...”
Mt. 25:36

Reflection: Jesus, as you gave all, help me to share what I have. How many people need the basics of life? Are my eyes open to recognize these needs?

Quotation: *The demands of the Bad Thief show me that we do not know how to appreciate fully the value of suffering, while the conduct of the Good Thief teaches me the merit to be found in honoring justice, confessing the truth and praying.* (St. Louise - #11)

Prayer: Jesus, give us the gift of generosity, to be willing to share from our need and not just from our surplus. AMEN.

The Eleventh Station
Jesus is Nailed to the Cross



“...I was ill and you cared for me...” Mt.
25:36

Reflection: Jesus was confined to the cross. How many sick persons are confined by their illnesses! Do I bring the light of Christ to the sick?

Quotation: *"I thirst." Jesus addresses these words to us so that we might understand that His death is not sufficient to save us if we do not apply the merits to ourselves and this can only be done by the personal consent of each individual soul ... He does not address His Father. He does not ask for something to drink. He simply cries out, "I thirst."* (St. Louise - #12)

Prayer: Jesus, you suffered so that we might live. Give us the wisdom to assist others to live life to the fullest. AMEN.

The Twelfth Station
Jesus Dies on the Cross



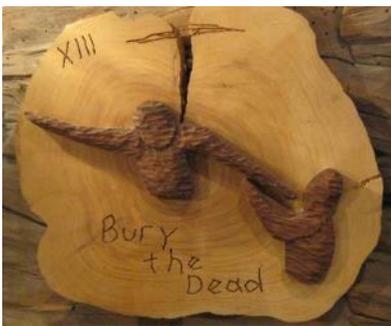
"It is finished." "And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit." John 19:30

Reflection: Jesus showed us how to live and how to die. How many people wander searching for truth! Do I live a life of simplicity and integrity?

Quotation: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Jesus no longer says "My Father." Thus He reveals the suffering of the Son of God and the sense of abandonment of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. The Father forsakes His Son so as to welcome back the human race. (St. Louise - #13)

Prayer: Jesus, you died so that we might live. Grant eternal peace to all those who have died. AMEN.

The Thirteenth Station
Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross



"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one these least ones of mine, you did it for me." Mt. 25:40

Reflection: Jesus gave all. How often it is tempting to just give enough. Do I go the extra mile and see others with the eyes of Christ?

Quotation: ...we are called upon to honor this Holy Cross by all types of suffering, after the example of Our Lord, who teaches us this by His death on the Cross and by all the other pains and sufferings which He endured during His life on earth and which are recounted in several places in the Gospel. (St. Louise - #14)

Prayer: Jesus, fill our beings with the gift of respect so that we will see good in each person that we meet and treat each one with the dignity of a child of God. AMEN.

The Fourteenth Station
Jesus is Laid in the Tomb



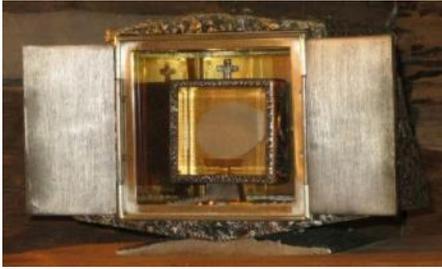
"...I was a stranger and you welcomed me..." Mt. 25:35

Reflection: Jesus came and lived among us. Often one moves into a new place or situation. Do I welcome a stranger or a guest with cordiality?

Quotation: I must practice great humility and mistrust of myself; abandon myself continuously to the Providence of God; imitate, insofar as I am able, the life of Our Lord who came on earth to accomplish the holy will of God His Father; assist my neighbor to the best of my ability both corporally and spiritually for the love which God has for all of us equally. (St. Louise - #15)

Prayer: Jesus, open our hearts and dispose our wills to make room for each person who enters our life. AMEN.

The Fifteenth Station
Jesus Rises from the Dead



“I am with you always, until the end of the age.” Matt. 28:20

Reflection: Jesus rose from the dead and lives among us. How many people are weighed down by the cares of this world! Does the fact that Jesus rose from the dead make a difference in my everyday life?

Quotation: *As the deer seeks water, so my soul seeks God. I shall prepare myself by a great desire to be united to Him so that, as food shares its properties with the human body which consumes it, so the union of my soul with God may render it conformable to Him, and the reception of the Precious Blood of my Savior may lead me to imitate His most holy life.* (St. Louise - #16)

Prayer: Jesus, give us the gift of treasuring your presence in the Holy Eucharist. Increase in us genuine devotion to your everlasting presence and love. AMEN.

1. A.20 (THOUGHTS ON THE CROSS), p. 776 (Sr. Louise Sullivan, D.C., Spiritual Writings of Louise de Marillac, Correspondence and Thoughts, Brooklyn, New York, 1991)
2. Ibid, A.30 (MEDITATION ON THE HUNGER AND THIRST FOR JUSTICE) , p. 734.
3. Ibid, A 75 (ON THE CONDUCT OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE) p. p768
4. Ibid, A.20 (THOUGHTS ON THE CROSS) p. 775
5. Ibid, A.15 (CONFORMITY TO THE DIVINE WILL) p. 713
6. Ibid, A.20 (THOUGHTS ON THE CROSS) p. 775
7. Ibid, A.29 (ON CHARITY) p.710-711.
8. Ibid, A.21 (THOUGHTS ON THE PASSION OF OUR LORD) p.702
9. Ibid, A.43 (ON THE GOOD USE OF SUFFERING) p.725
10. Ibid, A.21 (THOUGHTS ON THE PASSION OF OUR LORD) p.702
11. Ibid, p. 701.
12. Ibid, p.702.
13. Ibid
14. Ibid, A.20 (THOUGHTS ON THE CROSS) p.775
15. Ibid, M.4OB - (ABANDONMENT TO DIVINE PROVIDENCE) p. 784
16. Ibid, A.42 (ON THE MULTIPLICATION OF THE LOAVES IN THE DESERT) p.778

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