

Stations of the Cross for the Victims of Abortion
By Rev. Cletus Healy, S.J.
Foreward

“Let all be convinced that human life and its transmission are realities whose meaning is not limited by the horizons of this life only; their true evaluation and full meaning can only be understood in reference to man’s eternal destiny.” Gaudium et spes, n. 51.

Reflection on this passage from the decree of Vatican II on The Church in the Modern World, puts the abortion issue in proper perspective. We are dealing here with eternal realities. Once called into being, each human being is destined for eternity. Abortion at any stage deprives a little human being of all opportunity, even of the opportunity of baptism. We know that God “wishes all men to be saved” (I Tim 2:4). We can hope and pray that, some way, He who loves these little divine images more than anyone else, has an unrevealed dispensation by which these little ones, may some way achieve an eternal beatific destiny.

But the infants are not the only tragedies in this world-wide drama. Innumerable mothers, who, regardless of any other progeny, will always remain such, are fortunately haunted by the realization of the awfulness of their sin. Fortunate, for their pain can lead to repentance. Tormented though they are, they need to realize that God is infinitely merciful and loves them with an everlasting love. Lack of repentance is the only thing that stands between them and forgiveness and His loving embrace. To take this gigantic, trustful step, they need our prayers.

Other actors in the tragedy, the fathers, other relatives who misled, misguided, or even pressured the mother, are also in need of conversion and repentance, as are, of course, the professionals who, for mercenary or even ideological considerations, actively participate in the misfortune. They all need our prayers.

Politics or amendments to the Constitution may help, but they won’t solve the problem. Our country and the whole world will ultimately get the government it deserves. We need a national change of heart. In fact, we need Christ! Legal protections for the unborn and for the long-ago born without that change of heart will either prove inadequate or are in danger of being completely dismantled. It was not an innocent people who accepted Roe vs. Wade without vigorous protest.

May our prayerful association with Christ, the Incarnate Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, in His Sacred Passion help us all to grow in appreciation of the awfulness of sin, which required such an atonement. May it help us realize His great love for sinners, all of us. May it inspire us to pray for the victims of abortion, and in a special way for the perpetrators who, unrepentant, remain the primary victims.

Inspired by our association with Christ in His Sacred Passion, may we through our prayers overcome this evil afflicting our Nation and the culture of death that burdens us. With God’s grace may we eliminate this serious obstacle to the culture of life and to the coming of the Civilization of Love to which followers of Christ are called to contribute.

Prayer Before the Way of the Cross

In profound humility I adore You, my Lord and my God. I believe in You, I hope in You, and I love You above all things. I am heartily sorry that I have ever offended You, great and lovable above all beings. I will make this Way of the Cross for Your greater glory and for the salvation of souls.

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.

REFLECTION: See our innocent Savior standing before His worldly judge. Pilate knows that Jesus is innocent. He even knows that Jesus stands accused before him only because of the envy of the hypocritical scribes, Pharisees, and other religious leaders of the Jews. But he tries to act as though it were not so! He tries to compromise with the truth.

He seeks peace at the price of injustice. He finds only enduring wretchedness and anguish of the soul.

PRAYER: My innocent Jesus, often, rather than offend men, I have forsaken You. And yet, in spite of this, You have taken upon Yourself the sentence of death that You might be restored to life. My God and my Savior! As long as I try to please men I am in danger of forsaking You. Give me the grace and the courage to be willing to displease men, even the entire world, rather than to offend You.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

SECOND STATION

JESUS RECEIVES HIS CROSS

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

REFLECTION: When Jesus sees the Holy Cross, willingly, eagerly He embraces it. For those who give it to Him the Cross is an instrument of torture, but for Him it is an instrument of my salvation.

It is by enduring the Cross that He is able at last, once and for all, to atone to His Heavenly Father for the

sins of the centuries, for my sins. Therefore, He embraces it eagerly.

PRAYER: O Jesus, by bearing Your Cross You atoned for my sins and gained the graces necessary for my salvation. And it is by bearing my cross after You that I can best make sure that the sacrifices You made for me were not in vain.

Whatever little worry, or trouble, or trial, or responsibility You will send me, I shall bear each generously for love of You, Who bore Your Cross so generously for love of me.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on the little ones who this very day must receive the cross of rejection and pain in the secrecy of their own mother's womb.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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.

REFLECTION: Although weakened by the loss of blood and broken hearted because of my infidelities, Jesus strains to bear the heavy weight of my sins. But they are too much for Him!

With His unaided human strength, and unaided human strength is all He permits Himself to use, He is simply unable to bear up under the oppressive burden. He stumbles and falls. But, impelled by love for me, He strains to rise again and carry on. However much I deserve to be forsaken, He will not forsake me.

PRAYER: My Jesus, if ever I should have the misfortune of falling into sin again, I shall take courage from Your example. I promise, with the help of Your grace to rise again and to follow faithfully Your footsteps, even if they do lead to Calvary.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on mothers who, overcome with confusion and anxiety, have caved in to the temptation to try to solve their problems by secretly destroying their own baby, that they may have the grace of conversion and repentance, and reverse their decision.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

FOURTH STATION

JESUS MEETS HIS BLESSED MOTHER

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

REFLECTION: Imagine Mary, Mother of Sorrows, meeting her beloved Son carrying the Cross. Think of the deep sorrow that fills her heart. She wished to die either for Jesus or together with Him. But her cross was to live! It was by sharing so intimately in the Passion of her Divine Son that she brought me forth into supernatural life and merited to be called my mother.

As a worthy child of so glorious a Mother, I must strive in her great and intense sorrow that I might not only console her, but also by suffering with her, learn to hate sin which caused her such great anguish.

PRAYER: O Mary, my Mother, by the merits of your intense grief, obtain for me the great grace of realizing that God chastises those He loves. Following your graceful example, let me be reconciled to the fact that suffering and sorrow and the cross must be my lot in this valley of tears.

In your motherly solicitude, strengthen me that I might bear my cross well, as He would have me.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on all pregnant mothers who are overwhelmed by anxieties over their pregnancy; may they, through the example and prayers of our Blessed Mother, have the grace and courage to accept crucifixion with their baby rather than try to escape the cross by aborting their baby.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

FIFTH STATION

SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY THE CROSS

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

REFLECTION: Simon of Cyrene is compelled to help Jesus carry the Cross. How he recoiled at the embarrassment of helping a condemned criminal! How he preferred, as I often prefer, to carry the cross of his own choice instead of the cross Jesus would have him bear.

Let me be ashamed that, like Simon, I so frequently carry the cross only on compulsion, that I so reluctantly help Jesus bear the heavy burden of atonement for sins.

PRAYER: My Jesus, whoever does not carry the Cross and follow You is not worthy of You. I will help You carry the Cross; I will be Your companion.

Do help me realize, as St. Paul realized, the great privilege I have in being able to make up in my body what is lacking in Your sufferings for the salvation of souls, that I am able, by carrying the Cross with You, to share in Your work of saving souls.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on all pregnant mothers who are overwhelmed by anxieties over their pregnancy; may they, through the example and prayers of our Blessed Mother, have the grace and courage to accept crucifixion with their baby rather than try to escape the cross by aborting their baby.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

SIXTH STATION

VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

REFLECTION: Veronica, out of devotion and compassion for Jesus, approaches Him and wipes His blood-stained countenance with a cloth. Brave woman! Long ago she had learned the vanity of human praise and emptiness of human contempt. Scorning the jeering multitude, she befriends the friendless Jesus and offers Him her comfort and sympathy. Jesus imprints on her veil the image of His Holy Face.

A little service brings a great reward. God will not be outdone in generosity.

PRAYER: O Jesus, grant me the courage to befriend You in the company of the scornful. Let me learn from those who ridiculed and condemned You the insignificance of human contempt. Give me the courage to stand alone, if need be, in witness to what is true and in defense of what is right. Let me fear only Your adverse judgment.

Behold I offer You my heart; seal it as Your very own. Imprint upon it the image of Your countenance, and may that image never be effaced there from.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on the many women who, dreading the loss of reputation their pregnancy brings, are tempted to avoid the embarrassment by aborting their babies. May they valiantly resist the temptation and refuse to mar the image of God they bear in their womb.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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.

REFLECTION: Again, weakened by suffering and overcome by fatigue, Jesus falls. Though utterly exhausted, He will not give up. He will not surrender to death until atonement is made and my salvation is accomplished.

PRAYER: O Jesus, help me bear with perseverance and ever greater generosity the cross of fidelity to Your commandments and of docility to Your inspirations.

But if I should ever again have the misfortune of sinning, let me, encouraged by the example of Your zeal to atone, have the honesty to acknowledge my guilt, the humility to confess my failure, the courage to atone for my sin, and the strength to rise again.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on all those guilty of second abortion, that they might not only come to an acute realization of the awfulness of their sin but also to a firm conviction of the infinite mercy of God and of His love for the repentant sinner.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

EIGHTH STATION

JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

REFLECTION: The pious women of Jerusalem weep for our suffering Savior. He turns to them and says, “Weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.”

Compassion is good and we should compassionate Our Lord, but He wishes us to understand that it is better to be sorry for our sins.

He also wants us to realize that we, too, might be asked to bear such sufferings as His. We must be prepared for it.

PRAYER: O Jesus, grant me, like the women of Jerusalem, a compassionate heart, a heart ever sensitive to the sufferings of others and ever eager to help them in their trials. Grant me especially a heart acutely sensitive to the malice of sin. But also, dear Lord, help me to realize that I, like You, may be required to bear my cross down the gauntlet of ridicule and scorn. Please strengthen me for any trials You have in store for me.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on all lonely mothers who having been deceived into aborting their baby are now abandoned to bear alone the burden of a tortured conscience, may they realize that in spite of their sin they are still objects of God’s overwhelming and merciful love. With tears of repentance may they quickly return to their Father’s loving embrace.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

NINTH STATION

JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

Because by you Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

REFLECTION: As Jesus approaches Calvary, He falls again, the third time. I must realize how very real was the suffering, the heartache, the fatigue of my beloved Savior; and therefore, how great and how

genuine was His love for me in bearing the Cross.

From this third fall I must realize especially that, regardless of how many times I fall, I must acknowledge my failure, repent of my fault, and rise again.

PRAYER: O Jesus, grant me the grace of immunity from despair. Imprint indelibly on my soul the realization of Your great love for me and of Your infinite patience and forgiveness. Instill in me a firm determination never to allow unrepented sins to keep me from you.

Make me firm in my resolve ever to be honest in admitting my guilt; make me ever ready to endure any embarrassment, to tolerate any consequences, rather than rail to confess and atone for my sins.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on the professional abortionists, the mothers who have had multiple abortions, the abortionists and their assistants. With a keen realization of the awfulness of their sin, may they, with sincere repentance, strive to atone for their sin by helping others avoid the trap they have fallen into.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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.

REFLECTION: Behold our Blessed Savior as He is stripped of His garments. Even in His Sacred Passion He teaches me detachment from things of this world. He divests Himself of the last vestiges of the things of this world, His own garments.

He reminds me that in my final agony I must relinquish all, that nothing on earth can serve as my support. Riches, honors, reputation, are of no avail.

Even friends must pass me by, helpless to come to my aid. I must, therefore, seek above all, the kingdom of God and His friendship. With these I am rich and secure; with anything else, I am poor and wretched.

PRAYER: O Jesus, let me, like You, be detached from the things of this world. Help me to realize that things of this earth can never bring me final happiness, nor ever support me in my critical trials.

Grant me the grace to see that attachment of things that cannot bring happiness is not wisdom, that dependence on things that cannot save is folly. Grant me the grace of being poor in spirit; that I might have one consuming ambition: to amass merit in Heaven; and that I might have one consuming passion:

to do always Your Holy Will.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on those who are at this hour being prepared for an abortion. With a keen awareness of the sin they are about to commit, may they, even at this last moment, have the grace and courage to reverse their decision, and spare their child.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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.

REFLECTION: Contemplate our Divine Savior as He suffers the pain of being nailed to the cross. By His anguish He atones for our sins of sensuality. Hear the dull thud of the hammer. Feel the piercing pain as each blow strikes. How intolerable is the aching agony that follows as each hand and each foot is fastened to the Cross.

Reflect on the fact that this is my Savior; and that He endures all this for my sins of self-indulgence. By His anguish He atones for my repeated folly of seeking happiness where it cannot be found, in forbidden pleasures of sense.

PRAYER: O Jesus, my Savior, by the merits You gained for me by Your Sacred Passion, grant me an abiding realization that genuine happiness does not consist in pleasures of the senses.

Make me vigilant in guarding against the approaches of sin, whether its attraction springs from the lure of passion or a deceit of Satan. Make me prompt and generous in my determination to resist all temptations.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on the little ones who, this day, are being nailed to their cross of pain in their mother's womb. Some way, in God's Divine Providence, may their pain, united with that of Christ, effect not only their own redemption, but gain the grace of repentance for those who inflict this pain upon them.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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.

REFLECTION: Contemplate our Divine Savior as He hangs for three agonizing hours upon the Cross. This is He in whom the Father is well pleased. And yet how abandoned, how forsaken is He. He is paying the price of sin, rejection by God.

His whole body is racked with pain. His sacred features are distorted with anguish. He is overwhelmed with weakness. His Sacred Heart is utterly broken with grief. With His own unaided human powers, He forces Himself to bear the agony of approaching death, and this without consolation, with nothing but loneliness as His companion.

Finally, obedient unto death, when His Heavenly Father would have Him do so, He dismisses His weary Soul. He dies that I might have life.

PRAYER: O most Sacred Heart of Jesus, wounded that I might be healed, even today You still make of Yourself a victim of Love upon our altars. What do You desire and what do You seek but victims to continue in them Your sacrifice?

Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary and in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, accept my sacrifices in atonement for sin and for the salvation of souls.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on all those mothers, fathers, abortionists and staff who have committed abortions. May they all have the honesty and the integrity to admit the awfulness of their sin, the grace to repent, and the determination to atone by helping others avoid the fatal folly they have been made guilty.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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.

REFLECTION: Only after He is dead does our Divine Savior condescend to come down from the cross. He wished to give me an example and to teach me a lesson. Although desolation still envelopes the land, although failure seems to fill the air, His life has been a tremendous success. Things are not what they seem. With God, failures are often successes; and successes, failures. The folly of fidelity to God is the highest wisdom.

His Passion is over; mine is yet to be endured. He wants me to realize that although God may at times appear to abandon me, He does not. Although my cross may at times seem unbearable, it is not. Although all may at times seem to be lost, the victory is really won. He won it. My only possible failure is to fail to persevere in bearing my cross as He would have me bear it.

PRAYER: O Holy Mary, Mother of God and my Mother, teach me to follow your example of fidelity and fortitude. As you mothered me, giving me life, as you have so solicitously cared for me throughout all the days of my life, do now in your motherly solicitude continue to care for me. Teach me to bear my cross generously as a child of yours should; and do comfort and strengthen me in the hours of my greatest trials, especially at the hour of my death.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on all those who, guilty of the sin of abortion, are tempted to despair of ever being forgiven. May they come to a keen realization that the atonement of the crucified Son of God is so great that ONLY their refusal to confess their sin and repent their fault can render them unqualified for their Savior's loving embrace.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

FOURTEENTH STATION

JESUS IS LAID IN THE SEPULCHER

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

REFLECTION: Contemplate our Divine Savior as He is laid in the sepulcher. How proper it was that He should have so suffered and thus should have entered into His glory.

And how proper it is, if I am to reign with Him, that I too should follow His bloody footsteps, that my entire life should be a life of atonement for sin and pleas for grace, that I should make up in my body for

sufferings that are wanting to His for the salvation of souls!

PRAYER: O Christ Jesus, I acknowledge You King of the Universe. All that has been created has been made for You. Exercise upon me all Your rights.

I renew my baptismal promises renouncing Satan and all his works and pomps. I promise to live a good Christian life and to do all in my power to procure the triumph of the rights of God and Your church.

Divine Heart of Jesus, I offer You my poor actions in order to obtain that all hearts may acknowledge Your Sacred Royalty and that thus the reign of Your peace may be established throughout the universe. Amen.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And have mercy on all those supporting the abortion industry; the abortionists, politicians, lawyers, journalists, and ordinary citizens, that they might have the grace to realize the awfulness of the sin they promote, repent their fault, and do what they can to stop abortion, in our country and in the whole world.

Have mercy on them.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Look down with favor, O Lord, we beseech You, on this, Your assembly, for which Our Lord Jesus Christ did not hesitate to be delivered into the hands of wicked men and suffer the torment of the cross; Who lives and reigns, world without end. Amen.