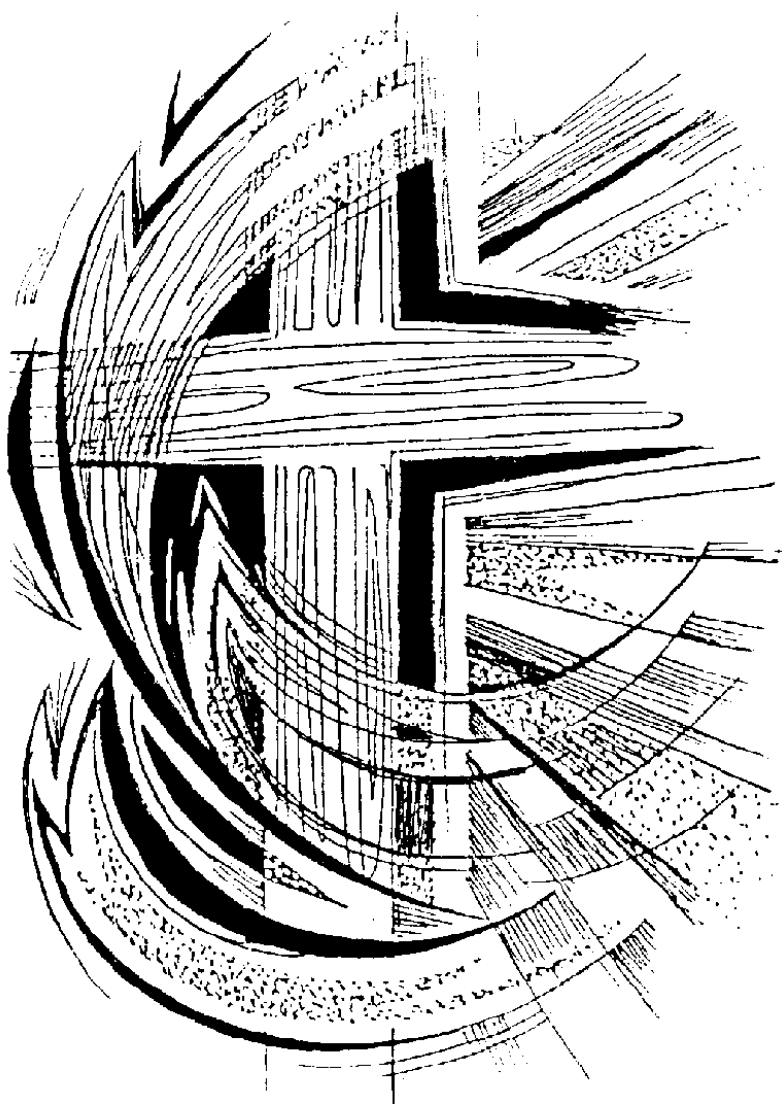


The Stations of the Cross



Parish of English Martyrs,
Danbury
with
Holy Trinity,
South Woodham Ferrers



As we make the Stations of the Cross, let us remember that at every stage of that journey Jesus encountered His fellow men and women. He knows their weaknesses and their strengths, their vices and their virtues. The forces of good and evil are always in conflict. We witness that conflict on the road to Calvary. What the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus tell us is that good will always overcome evil but so often we have to go through suffering before resurrection.

Opening Prayer:

Lord, we are about to walk in prayer the
way of the Cross with you.

You bore our faults in your body on the
Cross.

Through your wounds may we find
healing.

Through your suffering may we find
peace.

Through your dying may we be born to
everlasting Life.

Through your passion and death may we
be brought to the glory of the
resurrection.



First Station



Jesus is Condemned to Death

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider how Jesus, after having been scourged and crowned with thorns, was unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the Cross.

We remember the innocent ones condemned today.
Victims of war and violence; of earthquake, famine and fire.
We remember the unborn.
Those we condemn by word or deed and even by our silence – our own brothers and sisters of every race and creed for we are all connected as parts of One Body of Christ.
Lord, we pray for all who are treated unjustly.

Lord, grant us the grace not to condemn life but to accept and respect it.

Human life is sacred from womb to tomb.

No motive can ever make its destruction right.

Enlighten those who exploit the dignity of human life to see the futility of violence and murder.

May the gift of your Spirit lead us to recognise, across all frontiers, the faces of our brothers and sisters, children of God, our Father in heaven.

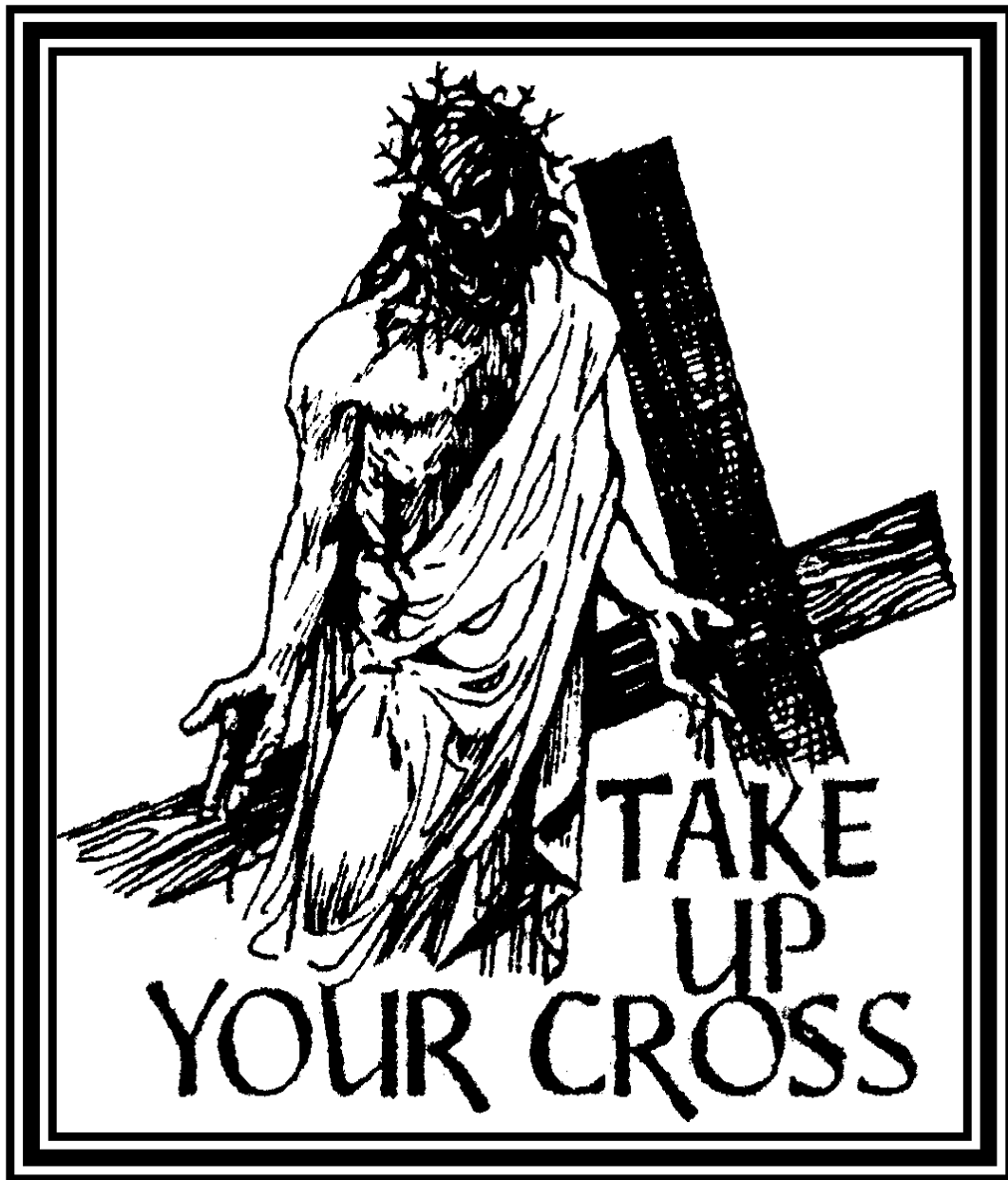
Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***At the cross her station keeping,
stood the mournful mother weeping,
close to Jesus to the last.***

Second Station



Jesus Receives The Cross

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider how Jesus, in making this journey with the Cross on His shoulders, thought of us, and offered for us to His Father the death He was about to undergo.

How do we accept the cross in our lives – ill health, loneliness, failure or fear? Do we embrace them as Jesus did?
How do we respond to suffering in our world? To major tragedies?
Do we unite with the victims in our prayer placing them in the presence of God?
Lord we pray for strength to bear our cross, knowing that it is your cross we are carrying.

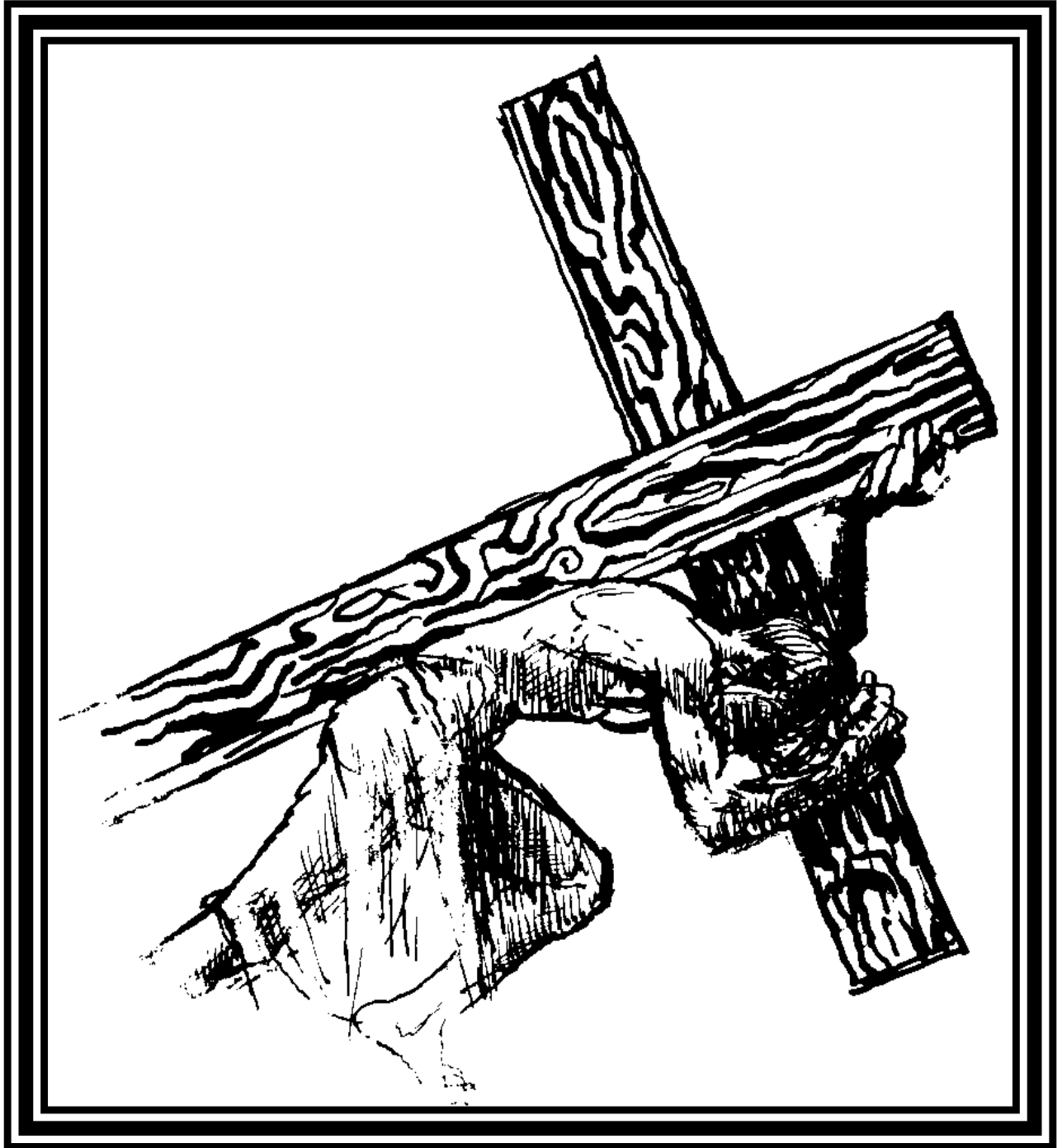
**Lord, your Gospel does not promise that we will be spared from pain but equips us with the tools to confront it.
Help us to understand that no matter how we try to escape the cross it remains a human reality, but your life gives meaning to it.
You saw that it was necessary to pass through pain and death and bowed your head to the Father's will.
Keep us from bitterness and despair.
Teach us to come prayerfully, in poverty of spirit, with open hands.
Give us the grace of acceptance and resignation.
Help us to accept reality, to live with ourselves and our crosses.**

Our Father Hail Mary Glory be to the Father

***Through her heart, his sorrow sharing,
all his bitter anguish bearing,
now at length the sword has passed.***

Jesus Falls The First Time

Third Station



**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider this first fall of Jesus under His Cross. His flesh was torn by the scourges, His head was crowned with thorns; He had lost a great quantity of blood. So weakened He could scarcely walk, He yet had to carry this great load upon His shoulders. The soldiers continually lashed Him.

Your sins are forgiven.

We fall over and over again through the frailty of our human condition.

Are we aware of these and other weaknesses?

Do we pray regularly for strength to overcome them?

We remember those evil regimes and institutions and the individuals manipulated by them. Help all those involved to see the error of their ways.

Lord, when we fall help us to rise and walk once more with you.

Lord, your first fall is like the fall of the young person on the threshold of adolescence.

There are many new challenges and temptations now.

Give courage and strength to the young.

Help them to avoid wrong-doing.

Protect them from drunkenness, drugs and permissiveness.

Teach them to handle their problems with gentleness, without panic or self-pity.

Help us, who lead them, to build an environment of love and trust where they will make the right decisions for their future.

When their youthful idealism is shattered by sin and human weakness, give them the grace to rise from their fall and try again.

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***Oh, how sad and sore distressed
was that mother highly blessed
of the sole-begotten One!***

Fourth Station



Jesus Is Met By His Blessed Mother

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider the meeting of the Son and the Mother, which took place on this journey. Their looks became like so many arrows to wound those hearts which loved each other so tenderly.

What are Mary's thoughts as she is reunited with her suffering Son? Does she not experience and share the pain of all mothers, whose children suffer through illness; whose children are missing; whose children are parted from them through national disasters?

Does she not share also the pain of children, who perhaps, through a misunderstanding or a desire to be free of parental control are cut off from their loved ones?

Lord, we pray that, as on the way of the cross you brought Mary and her Son together, all families may be united once again in a bond of love.

Mary, you were human, a woman who knew the pain and hard knocks of life.

Your son gave you to us to be our mother.

Gentle Mary, mothers are often torn between anguish and hope, baffled at seeing their children suffer, tempted to think that we have failed our families and that God has abandoned us.

Give to women a calm vision of life.

Teach them their true role in modern society.

May they be Christ-bearers, evangelisers in the home, in the community, in the workplace, maintaining and restoring life and love.

Mary, our mother, protect the gift of innocence in today's youth.

Mirror of Justice, Queen of Peace, be with us now and at the hour of our death.

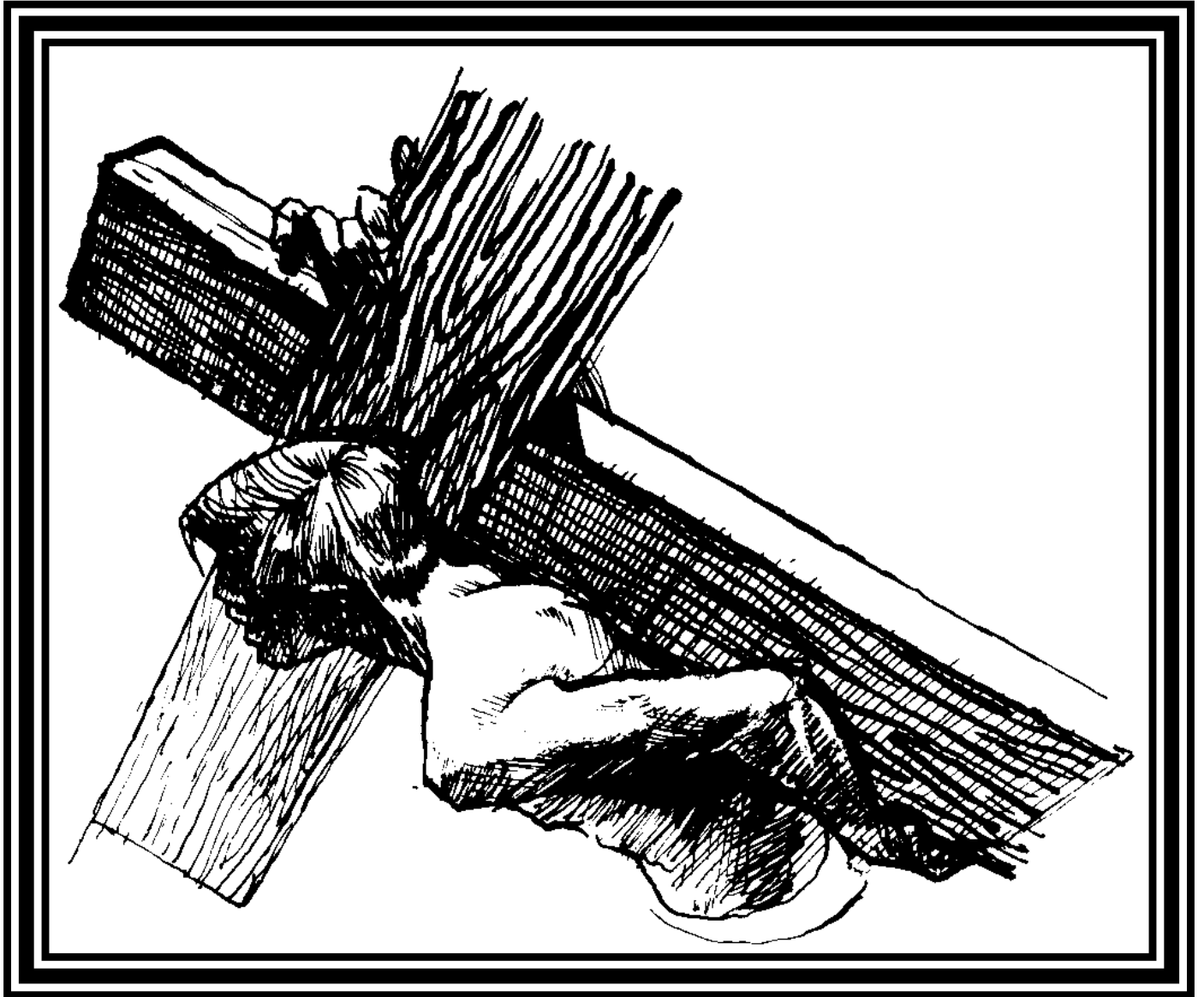
Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

*Christ above in torments hangs;
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying glorious Son.*

Fifth Station



The Cross Is Laid Upon Simon of Cyrene

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider how His cruel tormentors, seeing Jesus was on the point of expiring, and fearing He would die on the way, whereas they wished Him to die the embarrassing shameful death of the Cross, constrained Simon of Cyrene to carry the Cross behind Our Lord.

Simon helps Jesus unwillingly to carry the cross; nevertheless he does help. Do we allow others to help us in times of great difficulty? By such action we evoke the Christian virtues of mercy and compassion. Do we go out of our way to help others in time of need? Lord help us to extend help willingly to our brothers and sisters when their burdens have become too heavy to carry.

Lord, we sometimes find it burdensome to involve ourselves with people, we should know that following you is about self-sacrifice. Teach us that the essence of Christianity is love, that every person is our neighbour.

Let us see your presence in all people.

Help us to recognise you especially in the poor, the sick and the elderly.

May we do the menial tasks that no one else will take on.

Make us humble enough to accept help from others.

Thank you, Lord, for the good neighbours and friends who bring us sunshine and laughter and love.

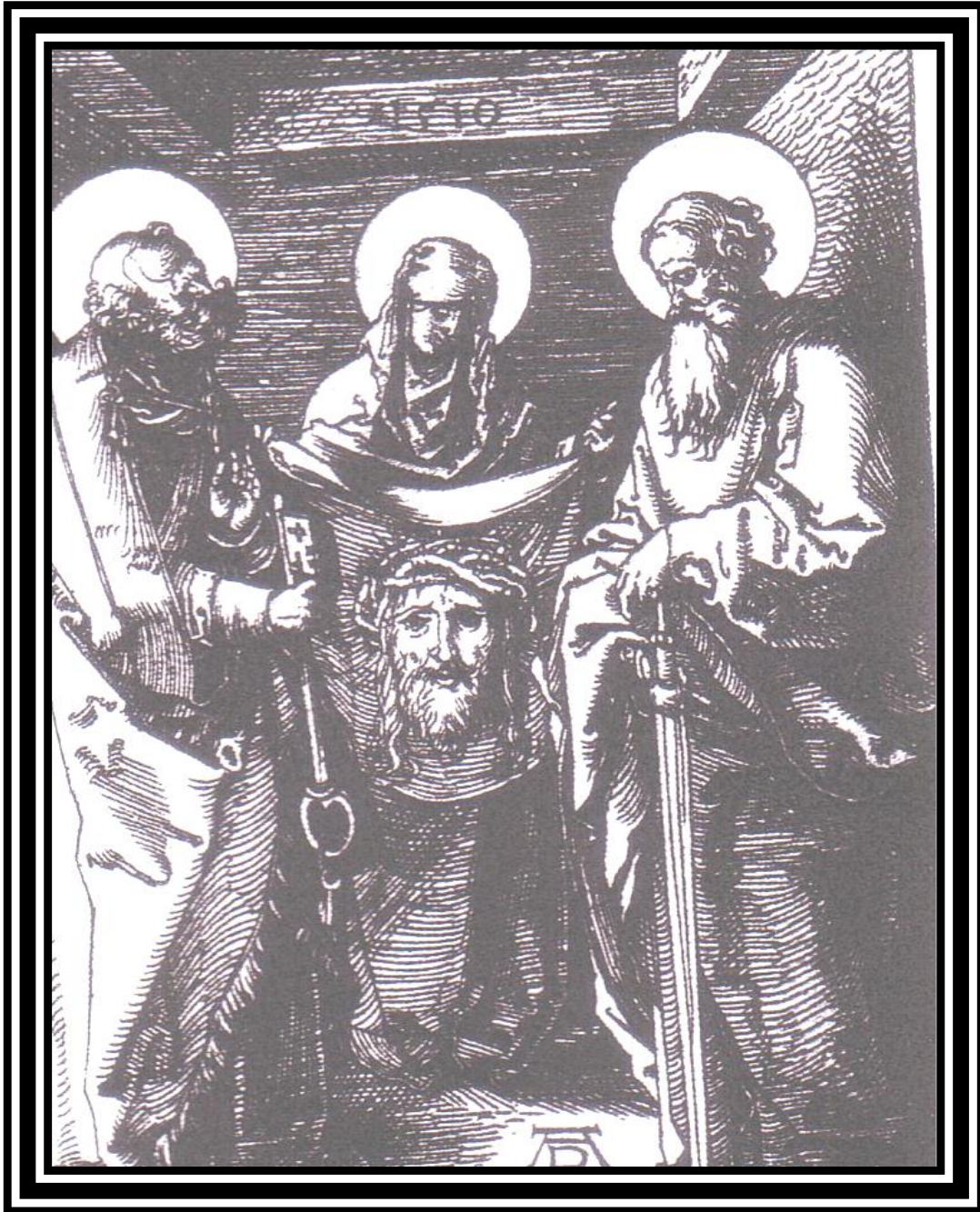
Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***Is there one who would not weep,
Whelmed in miseries so deep
Christ's dear Mother to behold?***

Sixth Station



Vernonica Wipes The Face Of Jesus

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider how the holy woman named Veronica, seeing Jesus so ill-used, and bathed in sweat and blood, wiped His face with a towel, on which was left the impression of His holy countenance.

Veronica wiped the face of Jesus because she saw before her a suffering person, not knowing that he was the Son of God. When do we have the opportunity to see the suffering Jesus in other people and offer to comfort him? It happens every day. Lord we pray to love others as you have loved us.

Lord, fear often makes us run away from demanding situations.

Give us the strength not to be swayed by the fashions of the times, or the desire to foolishly follow the crowd.

Strengthen us to speak out when Christian values are at stake.

Give us the courage to follow our own consciences no matter what others may think or say.

Keep us faithful to your teaching.

Grant us the grace to accept the difficulties of sometimes having to stand alone in defending justice and truth.

Our Father

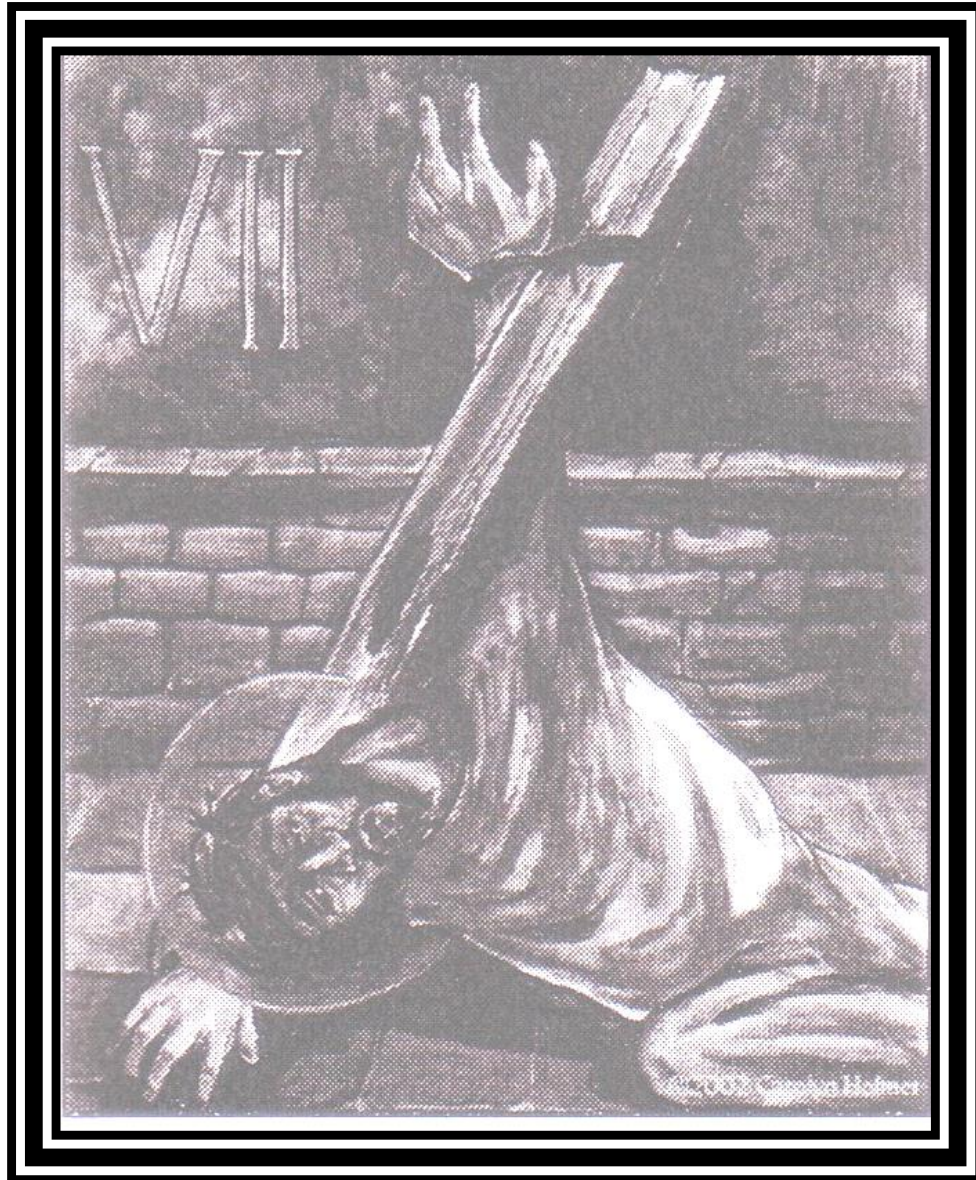
Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?***

Jesus Falls The Second Time

Seventh Station



**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider the second fall of Jesus under the Cross; a fall which renews the pain of all the wounds in His head and his crushed body.

What do we do when someone stumbles and falls again and again? Do we look around us for someone to blame? If we do then we are stumbling too.

We remember the homeless throughout the world, those who sleep rough in the big cities many of whom have lost the will to rise up and carry on.

Lord, be with all of us who stumble and fall as you did on the road to Calvary and prompt us to help others to rise and serve you.

Lord, when we are drained and discouraged from continual frustration and setbacks, give us strength to accept ourselves with humble patience.

A person is not a failure because he falls.

When life seems to crumble and we imagine that we are useless and unimportant, help us to our feet again.

Listen to the cry of our brokenness and confusion; help us to rise with dignity and begin again.

May we never despair of your love and forgiveness, let us pass this supreme hope on to others.

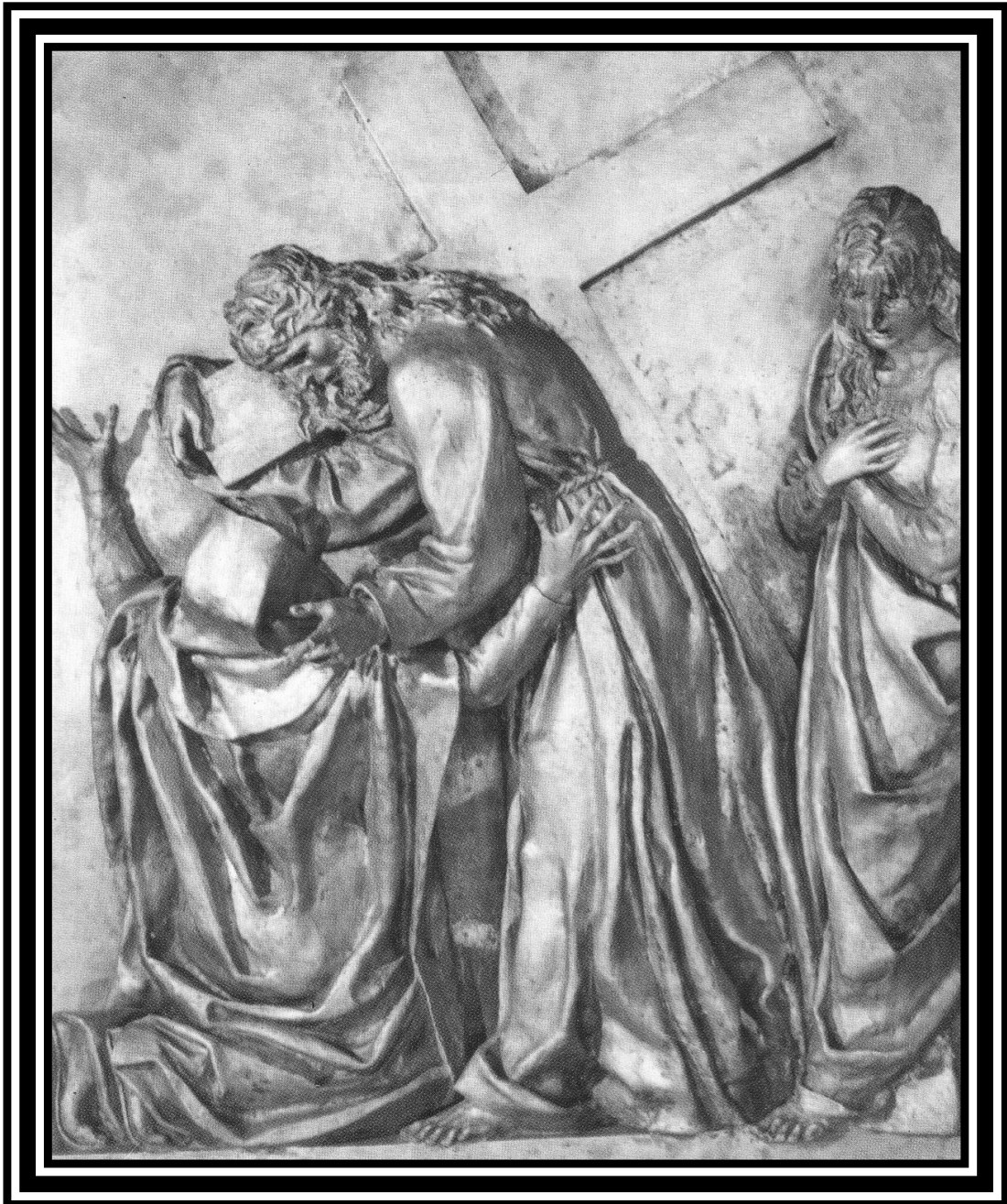
Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled.
She beheld her tender Child.
All with bloody scourges rent.***

Eighth Station



The Women Of Jerusalem Mourn For Our Lord

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider how these women wept with compassion at seeing Jesus in such a pitiable state, streaming with blood as he walked along. "Daughters of Jerusalem," said He, "weep not for Me, but for yourselves and for your children."

We recall how Jesus shed tears at the death of his friend Lazarus. Most people at sometime in their lives are reduced to tears. May our tears not be shed in self-pity. May we in such moments rather weep for the sadness and tragedy of another person's life. Lord we pray that when darkness engulfs us, your light will guide us to extend a helping hand to another in distress.

God of mercy and compassion, teach us that even if our hearts condemn us you do not come to reject us, but to reveal yourself as the God of immense tenderness. In your providence, all things co-operate for good, even, in a mysterious way, our sins. Lord of infinite mercy, our future lies in your hands. All we really need is a contrite, humble heart coming back to you. Stretch out your hand in blessing, in pardon and in peace.

Our Father Hail Mary Glory be to the Father

***For the sins of His own nation
Saw Him hang in desolation,
Till His spirit forth He sent.***

Ninth Station



Jesus Falls The Third Time

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider the third fall of Jesus Christ. His weakness was extreme, and the cruelty of His executioners excessive, who tried to hasten His steps when He could scarcely move.

We can link this fall of Jesus to his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus weighted down by the evil in the world falls to the ground and cries out to his heavenly Father for strength to carry on.

What a lesson for us. We remember so many people in our material world searching for help in their distress.

Lord hear our pleading, our cries of agony, and give us strength to overcome all pain and evil.

Lord of all hopefulness, bring to the sick your comfort and healing.

Be to the old and bedridden their stay and companion.

Teach patient tolerance to all who are no longer young.

Give to the dying the grace of perseverance which you won for them in your third fall, the assurance that when the final moments of life ebb away you will come and take them to yourself.

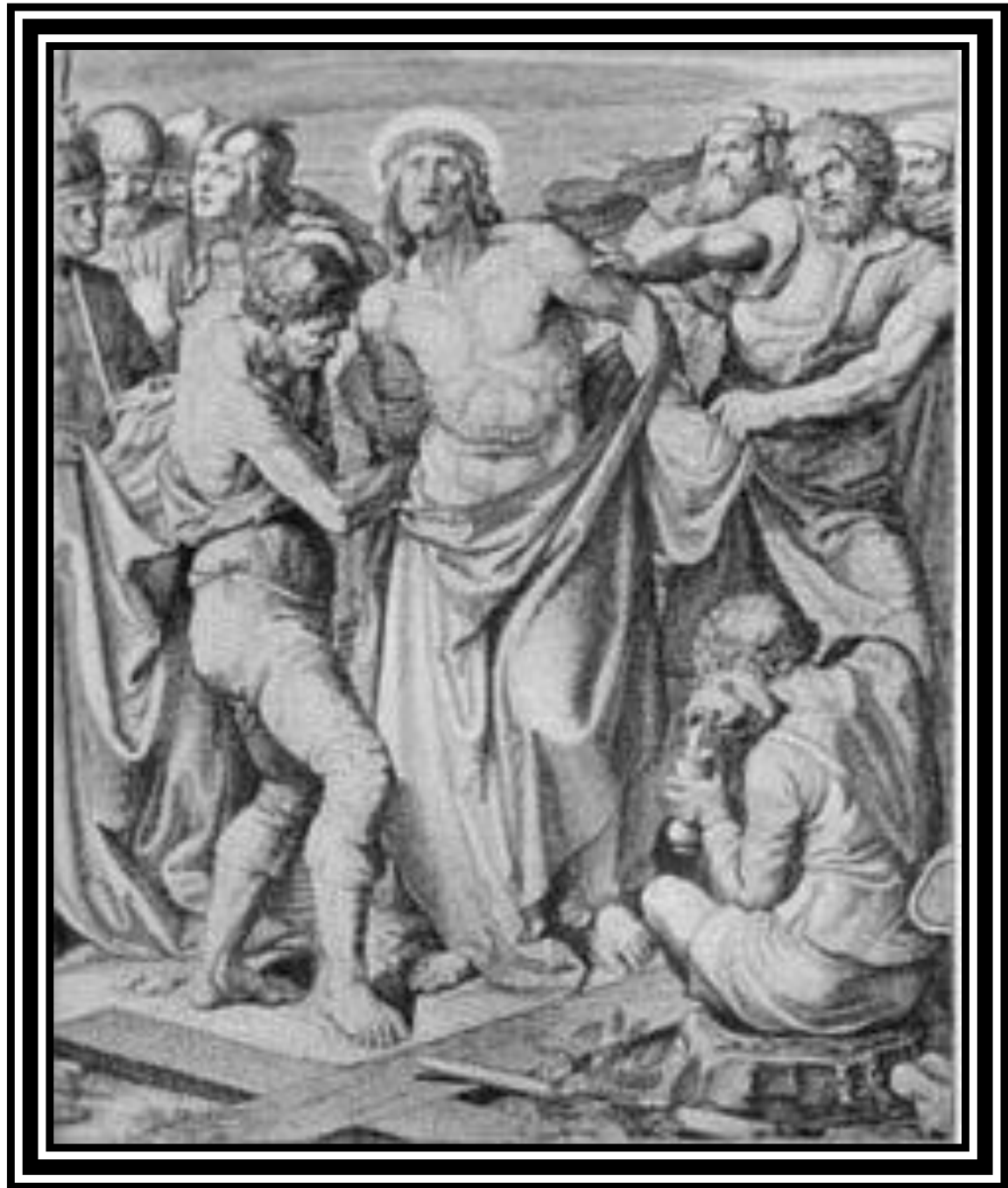
Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***O thou Mother! Fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with thine accord.***

Tenth Station



Jesus Is Stripped Of His Garments

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider the violence with which Jesus was stripped by the executioners. His inner garments sticking to His torn flesh, and they dragged them off so roughly that the skin came off with them.

The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world is prepared for sacrifice. His clothing is torn away from his body. Love is revealed in its starkest form.

May we strip ourselves of all attachment to the things of this world in order that our crucified and risen Lord may fully dwell in us.

Lord we pray that, having emptied ourselves of all that separates us from you, the love of God may be revealed in us, as it was in our brother Jesus.

Lord you know the loneliness of the empty chair, the parting with loved ones, the going away of children.

Lord, help us when sickness seems to strip away our protections and nails us to a bed of pain. Be close to those who live alone; in hospital; those on the fringes of society; those who are so often neglected and devalued.

Strengthen us when all the support we have in life – family, health and possessions – are taken away and we stand there raw and bleeding because these things have been so much a part of us.

Lord, let us remember this moment of your passion and be consoled.

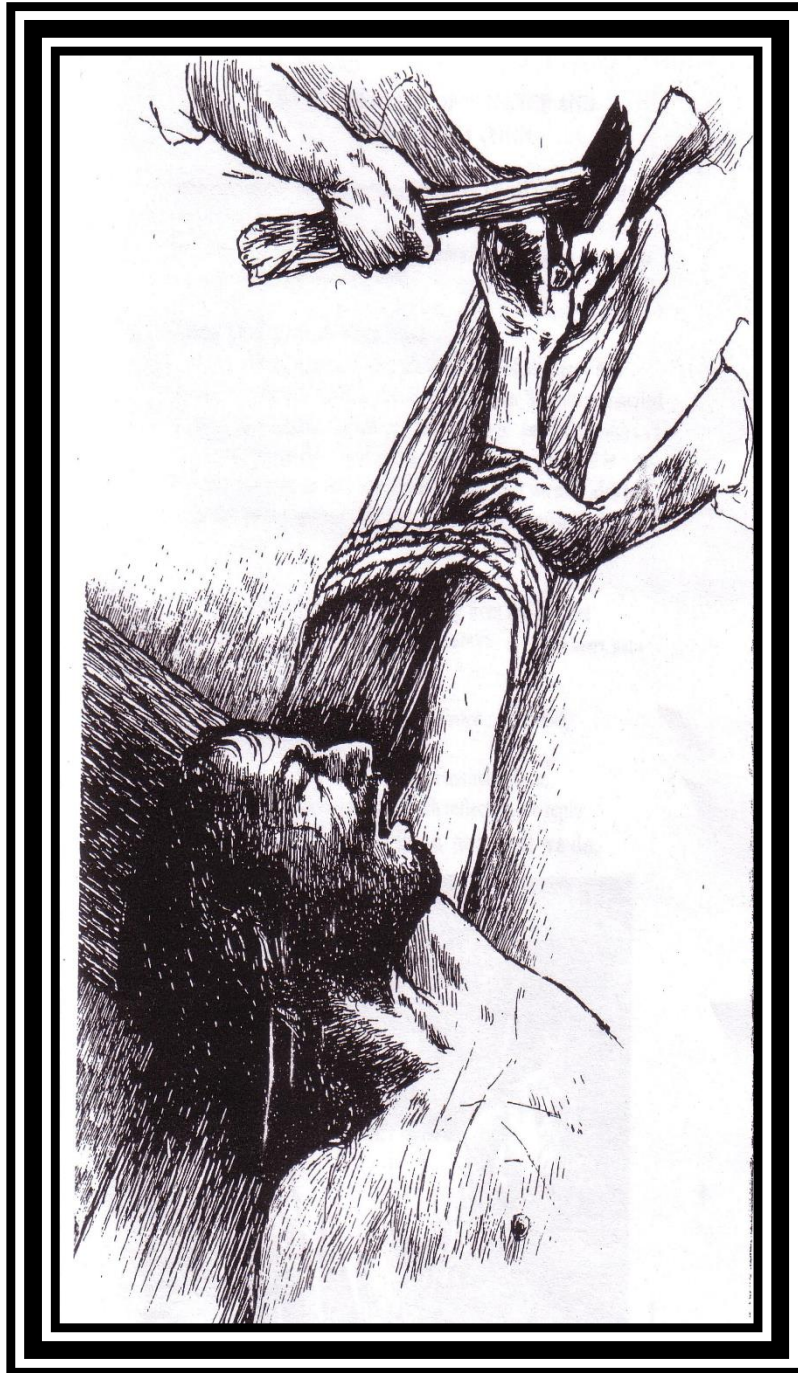
Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***Make me feel as thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my Lord***

Seventh Station



Jesus Is Nailed To The Cross

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider how Jesus, having been placed upon the Cross, extended His hands, and offered to His Eternal Father the sacrifice of His life for our salvation. Those barbarians fastened Him with nails, and then, securing the Cross, allowed Him to die in agony.

The body of Jesus, the son of God, is now secured to the instrument of torture and people's inhumanity to one another is revealed.

But are things any different today?

We reflect on the destruction/persecution of one race by another, and on the violence of crime today.

And let us never forget our own failure to love our neighbour as Jesus taught us.

Lord, our God, we ask you to forgive us for the suffering that we cause to others, for our lack of understanding, for nursing grudges, for keeping up resentments, for not admitting when we are wrong, for the bitterness and spite we often feel towards others.

Create a new heart in us, give us a spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness.

Where sin has brought division and enmity, may your love bring healing and strength; where sin has brought death, may the grace of your passion and death bring new life.

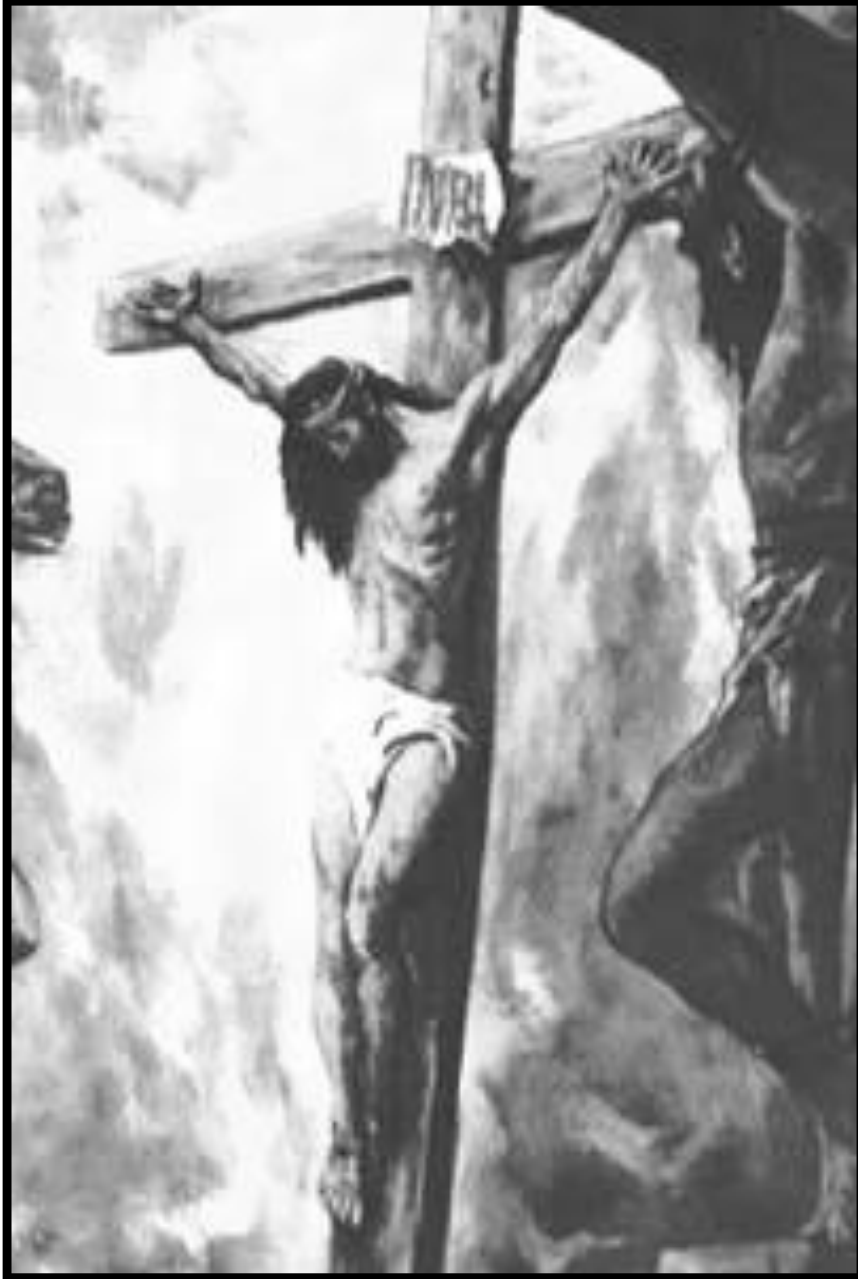
Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***Holy Mother! Pierce me through;
In my heart each wound renew,
Of our Saviour crucified.***

Twelveth Station



Jesus Dies On The Cross

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider how Jesus, being consumed with anguish after three hours' agony on the Cross, abandoned Himself to the weight of His body, bowed His head and died.

"Father forgive them for they know not what they do".

These are the words of a man dying in agony.

Even in his dying breath, he reaches out, asking for God's mercy for ourselves and the world.

No thought for himself.

Who do we reach out to when we are in pain?

Do we just reach into ourselves and focus on survival?

What about when pain, like Jesus' pain, is inflicted by others?

Revenge?

Can we bring ourselves to forgive?

Lord, you are the Suffering Servant.

You preached peace and reconciliation, yet, you were treated like a fool, with utter disrespect, with blows and beatings, stripped of everything, abandoned by all, dying the death of a slave.

O Jesus, Wounded Healer, we place our trust in you; your entry into glory is our hope of heaven.

Let us know your peace at the hour of death.

May we be prepared and willing to go when you call us from this world to our eternal home in heaven.

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***Let me share with thee His pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died.***

Thirteenth Station



Jesus Is Taken Down From The Cross

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider how, after Our Lord had expired, two of His disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, took Him down from the Cross, and placed Him in the arms of His afflicted Mother, who received Him with unutterable tenderness and held Him to her.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.
Before the mystery of the death of our Lord Jesus on the cross we fall silent. Only adoration remains.
We know that, whatever suffering we have to undergo in this world, we are held in the hands of God.
His cross is ours.
Lord God our Father we thank you.

**Lord, we look on your wounded hands.
We think of our own hands, lazy, idle, sinful hands.
Your wounded feet recall your journeys of mercy.
We think of our feet that have often gone astray.
Your wounded side reveals a heart that was broken for love of us.
May your wounds help us to live with a sense of responsibility.
Teach us to appreciate the Eucharist and Confession, to love you with intensity and sincerity.
Grant us patience to accept our own wounds with resignation and peace.**

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him who mourn'd for me
All the days that I may live.***

Fourteenth Station



Jesus Is Laid In The Tomb

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world**

Consider how the disciples, accompanied by His holy Mother, carried the body of Jesus to bury it. They closed the tomb, and all came sorrowfully away.

Truly this was the son of God.

Thus said one of his executioners – thus said his disciples on the sea of Galilee when Jesus calmed the waters. A profession of faith.

We should all have these words on our lips and in our hearts.

Jesus is taken down from the cross. Mary must have been there, and the women who followed Jesus.

Mary shares the thoughts of all who hold close to them a loved one who has died.

Lord, take all whom you have called from this world into your eternal light, your life and your peace.

Lord, as we lay our loved ones to rest let us remember that pain and suffering have no power over them.

Give resignation and peace to all who mourn.

By your cross and resurrection you have set us free.

Thank you for being a Saviour for each and every one of us.

Yes, Lord, we firmly believe that you have gone to prepare a place for us so that where you are, we also may be.

We shall always be with you Our Lord.

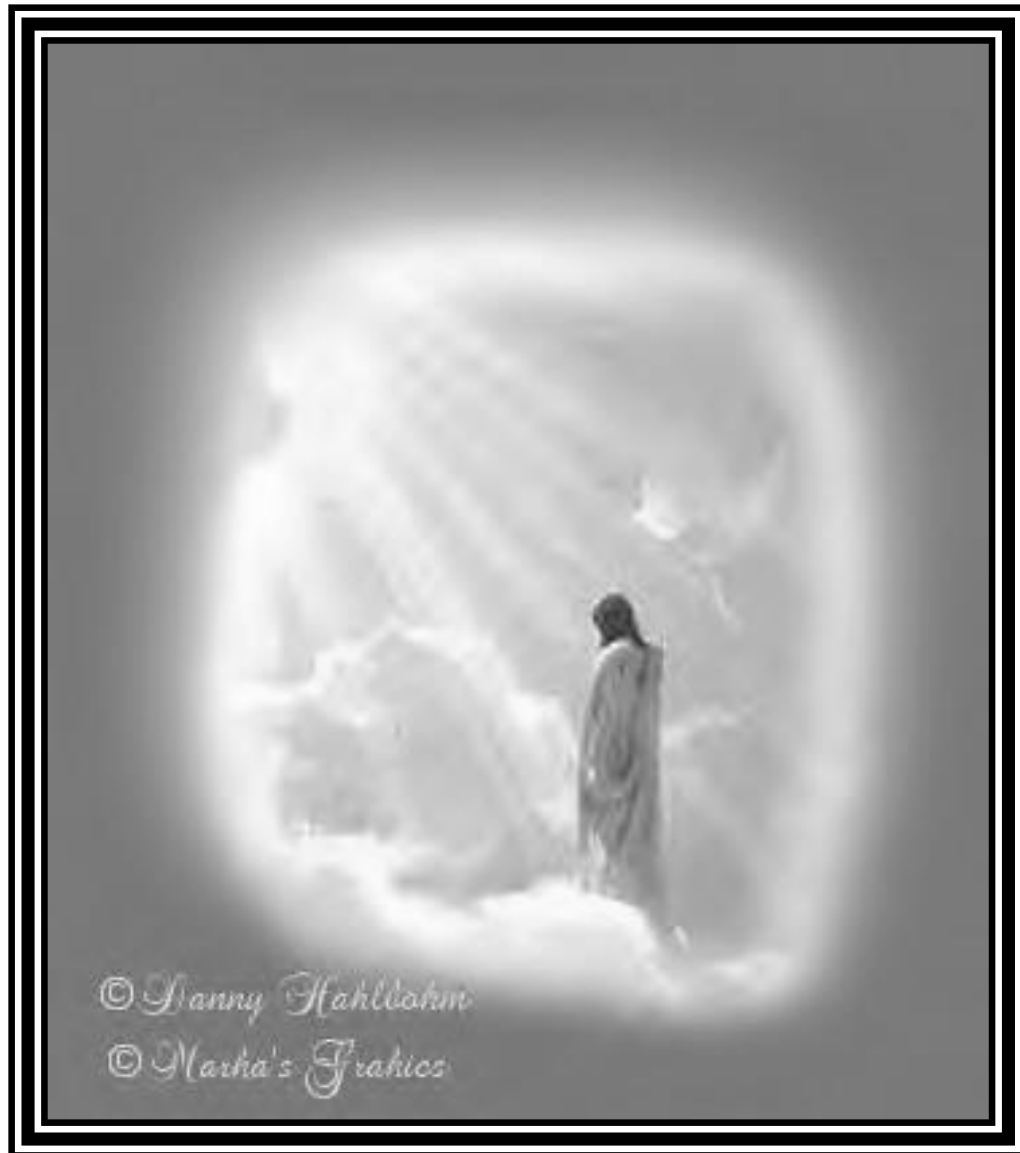
Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

***By the Cross with thee to stay;
There with thee to weep and pray,
Is all I ask of thee to give.***

Fifteenth Station



The Resurrection

**We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ,
and we bless you,
because by Your Holy Cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Consider how on the first day of the week, as the light dawned, the women went to the tomb.

Suddenly two men in dazzling clothes appeared and said to the women, "Why do you look for the living one among the dead? He is not here, He is risen!"

What is our greatest fear? Death, the dreadful fear of the unknown. Christ has conquered our greatest fear through His resurrection, like a bright light lighting up the whole earth. But if our eyes are open we see & even if our eyes are closed we still sense there is something more.

Let us carry this message of new life with the unparalleled joy Easter will bring.

O God, who by thine only-begotten Son hast overcome death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; grant, we beseech thee, that those who have been redeemed by his passion may rejoice in his resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord Amen.

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be to the Father

Let us pray together:

**Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again!**

Prayer To Our Lady Of Sorrows

***O most holy Mother, Queen of sorrows,
who didst follow thy beloved Son through
all the Way of the Cross,
and whose heart was pierced with a fresh sword
of grief at all the stations of that most sorrowful journey,
obtain for us, we beseech thee,
O most loving Mother,
a perpetual remembrance of
our Blessed Saviour's Cross and Death,
and a true and tender devotion
to all the mysteries of His most holy Passion.
Obtain for us the grace to hate sin,
even as He hated it in the agony in the garden;
to endure wrong and insult with all patience
as He endured them in the judgement hall;
to be meek and humble in all our trials
as He was before His judges;
to love our enemies even as He loved His murderers,
and prayed for them upon the Cross;
and to glorify God and to do good to our neighbour,
even as He did in every mystery of His suffering.
O Queen of Martyrs, who by
The Agonies of thy Immaculate Heart on Calvary,
didst merit to share
the Passion of Our Most Holy Redeemer,
obtain for us some portion of thy compassion,
that for the love of Jesus crucified,
we may be crucified to the world in this life,
and in the life to come may,
by His Infinite merits
and thy powerful intercession,
reign with Him in glory everlasting.
Amen.***



**Lord you bear the wounds of the whole world in your
hands and feet and in your heart.
While you draw God's mercy upon us, showing our
wounds in your glorified body,
let us draw all people to you,
showing your wounds to the world.**

Lord Jesus, we remain in awe at the mystery of your death and resurrection. We wonder at the depths and power of your love for us. May all peoples of the earth receive the good news of your gospel. As your people we ask this day for the power to live in the joy of your rising and to be witnesses of this joy to one another.



*He was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
by His wounds we are healed.*

Isaiah 53