

<b>LASALLIAN WAY OF THE CROSS</b>
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(GOOD FRIDAY 1991)

The texts are taken from the Meditations of St. John Baptist de La Salle for Holy Week, by Br. Umberto Marcato. (M. 22-28).

**1. Jesus is condemned by Pontius Pilate to death on the cross.***We adore you, O Christ...*

Jesus Christ came on earth, says St. Augustine, not to govern nations, to exact tribute, to raise armies, or to combat his enemies in a visible manner, since he assures us himself "My kingdom does not belong to this world", but he came to establish his reign in souls, according to the expression he uses in the gospel "the kingdom of God is here, within you". (M.22, 1)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...***2. Jesus sets off for Calvary carrying his cross.***We adore you, O Christ...*

Adore these different dispositions in Our Lord, conformable to the designs which God had over him. As Jesus said himself: "My meat is to do the will of him who sent me", that is to say, it was the rule and the very soul of his conduct. In imitation of your divine Saviour, study to desire only what God wishes, when he wishes, and how he wishes. (M.24, 1)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...***3. Jesus falls for the first time under the weight of the cross.***We adore you, O Christ...*

It is thus that the Son of God abandoned himself to the will of his Father to suffer and to die when and as it pleased him. When he prepared for his Passion, praying in the Garden of Olives, he declared to his Father, that notwithstanding the repugnance he felt for the sufferings and death which he saw near at hand, he did not wish to do his own will, but that of the Father, to which he abandoned himself completely, as he had always done during his life. (M.24, 3)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...***4. Jesus meets his mother on the way to Calvary.***We adore you, O Christ...*

O amiable abandonment of the human will of Jesus, submissive in all to the divine, and directed in both life and in death, and as regards the time and the nature of the tortures in which he was to expire, by the decisions of the Eternal Father. Endeavour to become a disciple of Jesus in this respect by having no other will than that of God's good pleasure. (M.24, 3)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...***5. Jesus is helped to carry the cross by Simon of Cyrene.***We adore you, O Christ...*

Our Lord Jesus Christ having descended from heaven only that he might secure the salvation of men, and knowing that this design was to be accomplished only by suffering much and by dying upon a cross, offered himself to his Eternal Father...to suffer all that he would be required to satisfy for our sins. Adore the holy dispositions of our divine Saviour in entering the world: dispositions which he continued ever afterwards to have, of suffering and dying for your sins and for those of all mankind. Thank him for such goodness, and endeavour to render yourself worthy of participating in the fruits by sharing in his sufferings. (M.25, 1)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...***6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus***We adore you, O Christ...*

\* The tender love which Jesus felt for sinners not only disposed him to suffer and die for us, but even gave him an ardent desire to do so. Hence, in speaking of his wish that sin should be extirpated he says: "It is fire that I have come to spread over the earth, and what better wish can I have than that it should be kindled?" (M.25, 2)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...***7. Jesus falls for the second time on the way to Calvary***We adore you, O Christ...*

Not content with having a life-long desire to die for us, Our Lord testifies his joy at the approach of the hour of sacrifice. This caused him to say to his Apostles, when he celebrated the Pasch with them: "I have longed and longed to share this paschal meal with you", because he knew that this was to be the last action of his mortal life, and the final repast he would take with his Apostles before suffering and dying for us, which was his greatest desire. All that remains now, as St. Paul says, is "to pay off the debt which the afflictions of Christ still leave to be paid", which is the application that must be made of his merits to ourselves through our participation in his sufferings. Render yourself worthy of such a grace. (M.25, 3)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...*

### 8. Jesus meets the women disciples on the way to Calvary

*We adore you, O Christ...*

Wishing to give us a mark of his affection and goodness, he left to his Apostles, and in their person to the whole Church, his body and blood before dying, to be for all time a precious token of his tender love. Receive this present today with all due respect and thanksgiving. Render Jesus love for love in acknowledgement of so great a gift, and let your love for him and your desire to be united with him, lead you to have an ardent longing to receive holy communion frequently. (M.26, 3)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...*

### 9. Jesus falls for the third time on the way to Calvary

*We adore you, O Christ...*

None can conceive how great were the sufferings of Our Lord during his Passion. He suffered in every part of his body and his soul was so overwhelmed with sadness that he could only express it by saying "it is ready to die with sorrow". Such was the effect upon him that it caused a sweat of blood and he fell into such extreme weakness that his Eternal Father had to send an angel to sustain and strengthen him, that he might be in a condition to endure the tortures of his Passion to the end. (M.27, 1)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...*

### 10. Jesus is stripped of his clothing on Calvary

*We adore you, O Christ...*

What crime had Jesus committed to be thus treated? Even after all these tortures inflicted upon him, the Jews were not satisfied, says St. Bernard. How is it possible that he who had studied only to do good to men could be so dealt with? (M.27, 2)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...*

### 11. Jesus is nailed to the cross

*We adore you, O Christ...*

Jesus suffered from all classes of persons. One of his Apostles betrayed him, another denied him, and the rest took flight abandoning him to his enemies. The Chief Priests sent a body of soldiers to seize him, and these outraged him. He was mocked by the people and a King insulted him and sent him away as though he were a fool. The Governor of Judea condemned him to death; all the Jews looked upon him as a malefactor, and the passers-by blasphemed him. (M.27, 3)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...*

### 12. Jesus dies on the cross

*We adore you, O Christ...*

Can we possibly contemplate the Man-God in so pitiable a state without conceiving a lively horror for sin, and heartfelt sorrow for those we have committed?

For it is our iniquities which have caused his death and his untold sufferings. Not to wish to cease sinning is not to desire that Christ's sufferings should end. The more we sin the more he has to suffer, for, as St. Paul says: "Would they crucify the Son of God a second time, hold him up to mockery a second time for their own ends?" This is for Jesus a kind of death more painful and more difficult to endure than the first. (M.27, 3)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...*

### 13. The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross

*We adore you, O Christ...*

These adorable wounds not only honour the sacred body of Our Lord, but teach us, as St. Peter says, that "Christ suffered for our sakes, and left you his own example: you were to follow in his footsteps. On the cross his own body took the weight of our sins; we were to become dead to our sins, and to live for holiness; it was his wounds that healed you". (M.28, 2)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...*

### 14. The body of Jesus is placed in the sepulchre

*We adore you, O Christ...*

These sacred wounds may likewise procure us the advantage of animating us with a love of suffering, through the remembrance of what Jesus suffered for us. Our divine Lord has preserved the marks of the wounds in his glorious body as ornaments and signs of honour, hence as members of Christ we should likewise esteem it an honour to suffer something for him. After the example of St. Paul we should exclaim: "God forbid that I should make a display of anything, except the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ." (M.28, 3)

*A pause for silent prayer Glory be...*

### Final adoration

*We adore you, O Christ...*

Prostrate yourself frequently before the divine wounds of Our Saviour, looking upon them as the source of your salvation. Place your hand with St. Thomas in the wound of the side, not so much to strengthen your faith as to penetrate, if possible, right to the Heart of Jesus, in order to draw from thence into your own sentiments of Christian patience, entire resignation, and perfect conformity to the will of God, as also to take courage sufficient to lead you to seek occasions of suffering. (M.28, 3)

Let us pray for the intentions of our holy father the Pope, our Institute and for all the members of the Lasallian Family:

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

**Live Jesus in our hearts! Forever!**