

# THE WAY OF THE CROSS OF AN IMMIGRANT

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## I. JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Jesus, you are sentenced unjustly by your enemies. I know what you must feel. Many of us have been condemned to a slow death. Our children are already condemned to death because they carry the marks of an alien, condemned to die because of people's sentiment toward the stranger and condemned to die illiterate because education is for those born in the United States.

**Reader: Jesus is unjustly condemned.**

**All: Help us, who have been unjustly condemned.**

## II. JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

Jesus, you accepted the cross for us. I also have many crosses, seven crosses of responsibility, to be exact, seven children to raise without a father, without a husband, and without any help. Thanks to Divine Providence, I have obtained, if only for three months, a job as a domestic, which will allow me to survive and keep my children alive.

**Reader: Jesus, we need your help to be able to go on.**

**All: Give us the faith to not become disheartened.**

## III. JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

Jesus falls under the weight of the cross. Help us not to fall under the weight of our crosses of each day: poverty, exclusion, abuse and lack of hope. We travel to many places to find acceptance and we are not welcome in this land.

**Reader: Lord, you who fell under the weight of the cross.**

**All: Help us not to be bitter.**

## IV. JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

The eyes of Jesus and those of his mother meet. I remember the last time I saw my family. I also remember the hopeful aspect of those of us who went out in search of a better future. I knew the way would be long and uncertain. The desert journey is rugged.

**Reader: Mary, protect those who are gripped by despair.**

**All: Help us to find in your face the comfort Jesus found there.**

## V. SIMON, THE CYRENE, HELPS JESUS CARRY THE CROSS

They say that Simon was converted after helping Jesus with the cross. Jesus, please convert me while I carry my crosses with yours. Let us not fall in our search for justice, respect, and family unity. Lead us to conversion following the example of so many others who do not grow weak in the struggle for justice.

**Reader: Jesus, helped by Simon.**

**All: Teach us to carry our cross with dignity.**

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## **VI. VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS**

Veronica sees your bleeding face. She wipes your brow so gently. So the impression of your face remains on the cloth, but even more, your suffering is imprinted on her heart. I remember the suffering face of so many immigrants who long to be reunited with their families. I also see my brothers and sisters who work so hard their brows are furrowed with pain and anguish. These images are burnished in my memory too.

**Reader: Lord Jesus, who suffered so much injustice.**

**All: Fill our hearts and our lives with your love and your gentle, comforting touch.**

## **VII. JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME**

Jesus, the weight of the cross is too much and you fall again. My cross is very heavy, also, Lord. It is so hard. People call me "alien", "illegal" and "stranger" as if I were a criminal. People shout, "Go home where you belong." I want to return to my town, but I cannot because the economic and political situations there have become even worse.

**Reader: Jesus who got up the second time.**

**All: Don't let others marginalize me because of my status here in the US.**

## **VIII. JESUS SPEAKS TO THE WEEPING WOMEN OF JERUSALEM**

Jesus, you are suffering, but even so you speak to the women of Jerusalem who weep and who know your pain. You comfort them. Jesus, we need you still today to speak to the women who suffer, to the women who weep to see their children eating so little or working in the streets under inhuman conditions. We need you to speak to the women who have to sell their bodies in order to survive or who are exploited at their work.

**Reader: Jesus, you who comforted the women of Jerusalem.**

**All: Comfort today also those who are exploited and weep.**

## **IX. JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME**

Jesus, your cross is so heavy like mine but you inspire me to continue. My cross becomes so heavy when they tell me, "There is no work here." "Return to your town, to your country because you are a nuisance here." "You are in this country to get handouts and you take jobs other Americans need." I am paralyzed by these words. I can't do anything in the face of these accusations.

**Reader: Lord, forgive them.**

**All: Because they know not what they do.**

## **X. JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS**

Jesus, you lost the very last of your possessions. They have taken everything from me, the land that I worked, trust in the organization that worked for my rights, my dignity and the possibility of having access to health care and educational services. They have raided our houses and deported our loved ones as if we were criminals. Our spirits have been stripped.

**Reader: Jesus, stay with me and help us not to fall into the pit of despair.**

**All: Help those of us who have nothing left except our faith.**

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## **XI. JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS**

Jesus, it is so cruel and unjust what they did to you. Now they nail us, the immigrants, to the cross of poverty, marginalization, ignorance and scarce opportunities for work. I have so many questions to ask: Why does the government loan money to the rich? Why spend so much money on arms and armies? Why do only some have access to health, education and work? Our questions get lost in a sea of political bureaucracy. Who will hear us?

**Reader: Jesus, you were the first to combat despair.**

**All: Help us to not despair.**

## **XII. JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS**

Jesus, on your cross you united the divine with the human. You died accused of inciting the people, of being political, of being revolutionary. If you began a revolution, it was a revolution of love. Don't allow us to die hating our brothers and sisters. Allow us to see that all things are possible in you.

**Reader: Jesus, you gave your life for us, but not in vain.**

**All: May the life of so many immigrant brothers and sisters not be in vain.**

## **XIII. JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS**

Your mutilated body is taken down from the cross and placed in the arms of your mother. Jesus, I know what a mutilated body is. I have held in my arms the body of a friend who was assaulted and killed when we tried to come to the United States. What can we do? We have to hold on to the faith that death is not in vain and believe in the resurrection.

**Reader: Jesus, mutilated by soldiers.**

**All: Teach us to forgive those in this society who mutilate our hope, our dreams and our bodies.**

## **XIV. JESUS IS BURIED IN THE TOMB**

Those whom you loved so much buried you. They can return your body to the earth, but they cannot destroy your spirit. You will rise. You give us the hope that we also will be raised from hopelessness and live the dreams we have for our families.

**Reader: Jesus, who died and rose from the dead.**

**All: Help us to have faith in your death and resurrection.**

## **XV. RESURRECTION**

They killed the body but they cannot kill the spirit. Jesus, you said, "I am the resurrection and the life." Help us to have the strength to continue our journey, to fight against despair, to be freed from oppression and from sin. Help us keep our heads held and journey together with our brother and sisters who walk the path with us.

**Reader: We adore you, Oh Christ and we bless you.**

**All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

