

PRAYING THE WAY OF THE CROSS



WITH
BLESSED MOTHER TERESA
OF CALCUTTA

PILATE CONDEMNS JESUS TO DEATH

It is not how much you do but how much love you put into the doing and sharing with others that is important. Try not to judge people. If you judge others then you are not giving love. Instead try to help them by seeing their needs and acting to meet them. Don't judge people. It isn't what anyone may or may not have done, but what you have done that matters in God's eyes. If we really fully belong to God, then we must be at his disposal and we must trust in him. We must never be preoccupied with the future. There is no reason to be so. God is there.



Give me singleness of purpose, strength to lift up a part of the burden of my suffering fellowmen, and a realization of the privilege that is mine.

JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

Crosses used to frighten me. I used to get goose bumps at the thought of suffering, but now I embrace suffering even before it actually comes. Suffering in itself is nothing; but suffering that is sharing in the passion of Christ is a wonderful gift, the most beautiful gift: a gift and proof of love, because in giving us his Son the Father showed that he loves the world. This was the greatest gift of love, because Jesus' suffering was the expiation for sin. The suffering in the world is like an enormous Calvary, where the Body of Christ is crucified once more.



When suffering overtakes us, let us accept it with a smile. This is the greatest gift of God: having the courage to accept with a smile whatever God gives us and whatever God takes from us.

JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

By yourself you can do nothing, have nothing but sin, weakness and misery. All the gifts of nature and grace you have from God. Even when we sin or make a mistake, let's allow that to help us grow closer to God. Let us tell him humbly, "I know I shouldn't have done this, but even this failure I offer you." If you truly repent, if you really mean it with a clean heart, you will be absolved in God's eyes. He will forgive you if you truly confess. Pray to be able to forgive those who have hurt you or whom you don't like, and forgive as you have been forgiven.



Give yourself fully to God, who will use you to accomplish great things on the condition that you believe much more in his love than in your weakness.

JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

If you only knew what goes on within my heart. Sometimes the pain is so great that I feel as if everything will break. We need the eyes of deep faith to see Christ in the broken body and dirty clothes under which the most beautiful one among the sons of men hides. We shall need the hands of Christ to touch those bodies wounded by pain and suffering. We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do. We speak of our God, good, clement and understanding; but are we the living proof of it? Those who suffer, can they see this goodness, this forgiving God, this real understanding in us?



Never let anyone come to you without coming away better and happier. Everyone should see goodness in your face, in your eyes, in your smile.

SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY THE CROSS

Prayer in action is love, and love in action is service. Try to give unconditionally whatever a person needs in the moment. The point is to do something, however small, and show you care through your actions by giving your time. Sometimes this may mean doing something physical or sometimes it may mean offering spiritual support for the shut-ins. If an ill person wants medicine, then give him medicine, if he needs comfort, then comfort him. We must find Jesus in the dark holes of the slums, in the most pitiful miseries of the poor, in the God-man naked on the cross, mournful, despised by all, the man of suffering, crushed like a worm by the scourging and the crucifixion.



*Don't worry about why problems exist in the world—
just respond to people's needs.*

VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

Love, to be true, must first be for our neighbor. This love will bring us to God. We receive more than we give when we serve the poor. This contact is what people need. They need our hands to serve them and our hearts to love them. Think of the loneliness of old people, without means, without love, with absolutely no one to care about them. There are many places where we can see this suffering, this hunger for love, which only you and I can satisfy. When we handle the sick and the needy we touch the suffering Body of Christ.



Never think that a small action done to your neighbor is not worth much. It is not how much we do that is pleasing to God, but how much love we put into the doing.

JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

Jesus wants to live the truth in us and through us. Speak the truth, think the truth, act the truth with God, with his church, with each other and with yourselves. Do not be surprised at each other's failure. Every day we ought to renew our resolution and rouse ourselves to fervor, as if it were the first day of our conversion, saying, "Help me, Lord God, in my good resolve and in your holy service, and give me grace this very day really and truly to begin, for what I have done till now is nothing." God's energy becomes ours, allowing us to perform things well. There is unity of our thoughts with his thoughts, unity of our prayers with his prayers, unity of our actions with his actions, of our life with his life.



We do nothing. He does everything. All glory must be returned to him. God has not called us to be successful. He called me to be faithful.

JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Are we convinced of Christ's love for us and of our love for him? This conviction is like the sun's rays, which cause the sap of life to flow and make the flowers of holiness blossom. This conviction is the rock on which holiness is built by serving Christ's poor and lavishing on them what we would love to do for him in person. If we follow this way, our faith will grow, our conviction will grow, and the striving for holiness will become our daily task. We can do something beautiful for God by reaching out to the poor.



God loves those to whom the can give the most, those who expect the most from him, who are most open to him, those who have most need of him and count on him for everything.

JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

One cannot expect to become a saint without paying the price, and the price is much renunciation, much temptation, much struggle and persecution, and all sorts of sacrifices. Just once, let the love of God take entire and absolute possession of your heart. Let it become to your heart like a second nature. Let your heart suffer nothing contrary to enter. Let it apply itself continually to increase this love of God by seeking to please him in all things and refusing him nothing. Let it accept as from his hand everything that happens to it and have a firm determination never to commit any fault deliberately and knowingly or, if it should fail, to be humbled and to rise up again at once—and such a heart will pray continually.



You may be exhausted with work, but unless your work is interwoven with love, it is useless. To work without love is slavery

JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

There are different kinds of poverty. Some people live and die in hunger. But there is another kind of poverty, spiritual poverty. This is far worse. People do not believe in God, do not pray. People do not care for each other. They are dissatisfied with what they have, do not know how to suffer, and give in to despair. Let Jesus empty and transform you and afterwards fill the chalice of your hearts to the brim, that you in your turn, may give of your abundance. Seek him trustfully without looking back, without fear. Believe that Jesus and Jesus alone is life. Serve Jesus, casting aside and forgetting all that troubles or worries you.



The more we empty ourselves, the more room we give God to fill us. When we have nothing to give, let us give him that nothingness.

JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

There is much suffering in the world—very much. And this material suffering is suffering from hunger, suffering from homelessness, from all kinds of diseases, but I still think the greatest suffering is being lonely, feeling unloved, just having no one. Total surrender to God must come in small details just as it comes in big details. It's nothing but that single word, "Yes, I accept whatever you give, and I give whatever you take." We do not strive for spectacular actions. What counts is the gift of yourself, the degree of love you put into each of your deeds.



Let us thank God for all his love for us, in so many ways and in so many places. Let us in return, as an act of gratitude and adoration, determine to love him.

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Our Lord on the cross possessed nothing. He was on the cross that was given by Pilate. The nails and the crown were given by the soldiers. He was naked and when he died, cross, nails, and crown were taken away from him. He was wrapped in a shroud given by a kind heart, and buried in a tomb that was not his. He chose poverty because he knew in his infinite knowledge and wisdom that it is the real means of possessing God, of conquering his heart, of bringing his love down to this earth. Let us try to come as close as the human heart can come to the Heart of Jesus and try to understand as much as possible his terrible pain and his thirst for our love.



Jesus, my suffering Lord, grant that today and every day I may see you in the person of your sick ones, and that in caring for them I may serve you.

JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

We ought to do our work for Christ who was poor, and for the poor who are Christ's, with a humble and devoted heart. In order to survive, love has to be nourished by sacrifices. The words of Jesus, "Love one another as I have loved you," must be not only a light to us but a flame that consumes the self in us. Love should be as natural as living and breathing. We put our hands, our eyes, our hearts at Christ's disposal so that he may act through us. This is God's wish for us—to serve through love in action, and to be inspired by the Holy Spirit to act when called.



We do not strive for spectacular actions. What counts is the gift of yourself, the degree of love you put into each of your deeds.

JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

Today I really felt a deep joy that Jesus can't go through the agony anymore, but that he wants to go through it in me. More than ever I surrender myself to him. Yes, more than ever I will be at his disposal. We impatiently await God's paradise, but we have in our hands the power to be in paradise right here and now. Being happy with God means this: to love as he loves, to help as he helps, to give as he gives, to serve as he serves. The best way to show your gratitude to God and people is to accept everything with joy. A joyful heart is the normal result of a heart burning with love.



God is in love with us and keeps giving himself to the world—through you—through me. May you continue to be the sunshine of his love to your people and thus make your life something beautiful for God.

PRAYER OF MOTHER TERESA

Dear Lord, the Great Healer,
I kneel before you,
since every perfect gift
must come from you.

I pray, give skill to my hands,
clear vision to my mind,
kindness and meekness to my heart.

Give me singleness of purpose,
strength to lift up a part of the burden
of my suffering fellowmen,
and a realization of the privilege that is mine.
Take from my heart all guile and worldliness,
that with the simple faith of a child,
I may rely on you. Amen.

