

VIA CRUCIS

Good Friday, April 14th, 2017

Procession and Commemoration of the Stations of the Cross Downtown Sites, Los Angeles, California

(Edward Roybal Federal Building,
255 E. Temple St.)

Reader 1: We gather today in the name of God: Creator, Redeemer, and life giving spirit.

PEOPLE: WE GATHER AND WE REMEMBER.

Reader 2: We gather today to remember that on this day 2000 years ago, Jesus of Nazareth was condemned to die by the religious and political authorities for proclaiming a Year of Jubilee: for exposing their policies of death and oppression, for teaching a path of healing and compassion, for placing the humble and the outcast at the center of God's kingdom-- For daring to walk a path in direct opposition to power and empire.

PEOPLE: JESUS STOOD UP TO READ THE LESSON AND WAS HANDED THE SCROLL OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH. HE OPENED THE SCROLL AND FOUND THE PASSAGE WHICH SAYS, "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME BECAUSE HE HAS ANNOINTED ME; HE HAS SENT ME TO ANNOUNCE GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR, TO PROCLAIM RELEASE FOR PRISONERS AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND; TO LET THE BROKEN VICTIMS GO FREE, TO PROCLAIM THE YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOR."

(Luke 4: 18-19)

Reader 1: We remember that on this day Jesus was brought into temples and palaces, courts and prisons, judged and condemned to walk another path-- the Via Crucis, literally, 'the way of torture'.

Reader 2: Today we too gather before the courts and prisons, the temples and palaces that are the seats of our empire. We remember how in these places Christ continues to walk the Via Crucis in the suffering of the poor, the war-torn, the homeless and the incarcerated.

PEOPLE: WE GATHER AND WE REMEMBER.

Reader 1: We remember that in these places policies are made regarding war, immigration and housing that bring forth life, or death.

PEOPLE: WE GATHER AND WE REMEMBER.

Reader 2: We gather today as a Christian community living in the United States. We gather in a spirit of repentance and prayer, repentance for our country's addiction to war making and rampant consumerism that devours the poor and the environment and prayer for a conversion from violence to wholeness.

PEOPLE: WE GATHER AND WE REPENT.

Reader 1: We remember that we, as citizens of this city and this country are complicit in Christ's and humanity's suffering through our silence and our unwillingness to give up a lifestyle of consumerism and empire.

PEOPLE: WE REMEMBER AND WE REPENT.

JESUS, GRANT THAT AS WE WALK WITH YOU TODAY THAT OUR EYES AND OUR HEARTS ARE OPENED. GIVE US THE GRACE TO REACH OUT TO YOU IN OUR SUFFERING BROTHERS AND SISTERS, AND GIVE US THE COURAGE TO REJECT THE PATH OF EMPIRE AND EMBRACE THE PATH OF LIFE. AMEN.

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Reader 1: The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death.

Reader 2: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: A simple carpenter, the son of Mary of Galilee, is condemned to death in the highest chambers of the land: in the temple precincts, in the palace of the King. He is labeled an agitator, a traitor, an enemy of the country, and his crucifixion is deemed a necessary sacrifice in order to maintain the religious and political power structures.

Reader 2: Our journey begins here at the Federal Building, a symbol of the government of the United States. We gathered here in the 1980's to protest the war our nation waged against the poor of Central America. We gathered here in 1991 during the First Gulf War when thousands of Iraqis were sacrificed because they were in the way of America's insatiable thirst for oil. During the 1990's we wept at this spot while over 500,000 Iraqi children died under U.S. bombs and U.N. sanctions. For the past 16 years we have continued to gather here as more than 6,880 Americans and well over half a million Iraqi and Afghan civilians have been sacrificed on an altar of lies.

Reader 1: In every soldier sent to war, in every civilian in the blood-drenched streets of Baghdad and Kabul, Christ is condemned to die again and again.

Reader 2: We gather when our nation chooses to sacrifice its sick, its hungry, its children and its integrity; when it chooses to pour our resources into the works of war.

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PEOPLE: THE LORD OPENS THE INDICTMENT AGAINST THE ELDERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THEIR OFFICERS: YOU HAVE RAVAGED THE VINYARD, AND THE SPOILS OF THE POOR ARE IN YOUR HOUSES. IS IT NOTHING TO YOU THAT YOU CRUSH MY PEOPLE AND GRIND THE FACES OF THE POOR? THIS IS THE VERY WORD OF THE LORD, THE LORD OF HOSTS. (Isaiah 3: 14-15)

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(S.E. corner of Los Angeles and Aliso Streets)

Reader 1: The Second Station: Jesus Takes Up His Cross.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: A wooden beam, --massive, rough-- is laid upon lacerated shoulders, sacred hands are bound in place. His body already is a mass of wounds: blood streaming down his face from the crown of thorns; skin ripped from his back, exposing raw flesh from the brutal lashings by the Roman soldiers. Jesus' body --the Incarnation, God become man-- has been mutilated beyond recognition.

Reader 2: We are now standing at Aliso Street. Aliso Street is named after El Aliso Viejo, an enormous sycamore tree that stood a block east of here for nearly 400 years. For the Tongva Indians who inhabited the village of Yang-na it was the "council tree" where tribal elders would meet.

Reader 1: After the U.S. occupation of Los Angeles in 1848 it became one of several "lynching trees". Francisco Cora, a 15 year old boy, was lynched here in 1861. During the Chinese Massacre of 1871, 17 Chinese men were hung from the branches of el Aliso Viejo and neighboring trees and porches.

Reader 2: As we begin our journey in remembrance of Christ's hanging on the cross at the hands of the Roman Empire, let us not forget the many who have suffered and died from Los Angeles to the Middle East at the hands of an expanding American empire.

PEOPLE: ARISE, O GOD, AND JUDGE THE EARTH; FOR THOU DOST PASS ALL NATIONS THROUGH THY SIEVE. (Psalm 82: 8)

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(Federal Building, Los Angeles St.)

Reader 1: The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: 2000 years ago a group of men condemned the Son of Man to die. Humanity fell as it failed to recognize the God incarnate who walked among them.

Reader 2: Before us we see representations of Science, Nature and Industry, a Tree of Life, chromosomes and human cells.

Reader 1: God planted in Eden the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge. When Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge their eyes were opened and they became “like gods knowing both good and evil”. As descendants of Adam and Eve we have become like gods inheriting the ability to unlock the secrets of the physical world which we use for both good and evil: to create, to heal and to destroy. Like Cain, we have also inherited the desire to kill.

Reader 2: Science and industry, specifically the arms industry, are only too happy to assist us in that desire. According to the US Congressional Record Service the United States is responsible for 44% of the global arms trade generating over 32 billion dollars in sales. Our domestic appetite for weapons is equally large. U.S. citizens possess 41.5% of the world’s civilian owned guns. Federal research facilities such as Lawrence Livermore Labs partner with the University of California and private industry to develop and expand our nation’s nuclear arsenal.

Reader 1: In contrast, the Christian story of salvation illustrates how our understanding of God’s presence among us is also ever expanding:

The Holy Spirit dwelt with Adam and Eve in Eden; accompanied the Hebrew nation through the desert in Sinai; was incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and finally, manifested herself, as St. Paul describes, in the Mystical Body, emphasizing her sacred presence in all life.

Reader 2: Spirit of Life:

PEOPLE: Heal us of the Sin of Cain

Reader 1: Spirit of Life:

PEOPLE: Teach us to use the fruits of the Tree of Knowledge in the service of Life.

Reader 2: Spirit of Life:

PEOPLE: Lift us from where we have fallen that we may bear witness to your living presence in all of creation.

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PEOPLE: THEN THE LORD SAID TO ME, “PROPHSEY TO THE BREATH; PROPHECY, SON OF MAN, AND SAY TO IT, ‘THIS IS WHAT THE SOVEREIGN LORD SAYS: COME, BREATH, FROM THE FOUR WINDS AND BREATH INTO THESE SLAIN, THAT THEY MAY LIVE.’ ” SO I PROPHESED AND MY BREATH ENTERED THEM; THEY CAME TO LIFE AND STOOD UP ON THEIR FEET.

(Ezekiel 37: 7-9)

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(Temple St.- View of Metropolitan Detention Center)

Reader 1: The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: The mother of the Just One meets her son in the midst of his suffering. Flesh of her flesh, she suffers the pain of his physical torments, the sword foretold by Simeon. Yet this pales when compared to the humiliating treatment she must witness as well, for the Son who is Love is marked an outcast, contemptible in the eyes of men and condemned to die. This seems to mock the angel's promise: "Blessed are you among women."

Reader 2: Ahead of us we see the Metropolitan Detention Center one of 4 Jails in downtown Los Angeles and one of thousands of incarceration facilities across the country. Just as Mary faithfully stood by her son during his trial and execution, thousands of mothers line up at jails and prisons throughout the land to stand by their imprisoned children.

Reader 1: The United States has a prison population of more than 2.2 million, 25% of the total world prison population. Another 4.7 million people are under court surveillance through parole or probation. 1.2 million prisoners are non-violent offenders, locked up because they are addicts, mentally ill or had an out-standing J-walking ticket. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has a congressional mandate to fill 34,000 beds per day with immigrant detainees, many whose only crime is searching for a better life.

Private prisons house 8 percent of our prison population making incarceration a lucrative business for the private companies that run them.

Reader 2: We remember the 41 prisoners still held at Guantanamo awaiting either repatriation or release to a host nation. Of these, 5 have been cleared for release, yet, are still in detention. Will death be their only hope of release?

Reader 1: America has become a Gulag State. Poverty has become a crime and prisons are an industry that devours the poor. Outside the prison gates the mothers faithfully keep vigil.

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PEOPLE: A VOICE WAS HEARD IN RAMAH, SOBBING AND LOUD LAMENTATION; RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN, AND SHE WOULD NOT BE COMFORTED, FOR THEY WERE NO MORE.

(Jeremiah 31: 15)

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(U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services)

Reader 1: The Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus to Carry His Cross.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: Fearful that Jesus will not survive the walk to Calvary, the soldiers order a bystander to help him carry the crossbar part of the way: A second Simon to replace Simon Peter, the disciple who denied him. A laborer from another place, one who does not know Christ or his works, he takes the suffering of another to himself, and, possibly, is transformed by the experience.

Reader 2: The building before us houses United States Citizenship & Immigration Services. Each day dozens of immigrants line up to process paperwork or attend hearings. However, for many immigrants there is no path to legalization. Since President Obama took office in 2008 over 2 million immigrants have been deported. The New York Times reports that two thirds of those deported had no criminal record at all or had committed only a minor infraction.

Reader 1: Since the new administration has taken over, Immigration & Customs Enforcement, ICE, has reversed a long standing policy of not arresting non-felon immigrants at schools, health centers and houses of worship. Last month, while dropping

his daughter off at school in Lincoln Heights, Romulo Avelica Gonzalez was arrested by ICE and now faces deportation.

Reader 2: Some parents, attempting to return home, lose their lives. Two months after David Lomeli was deported, his U.S. born children received a note from forensics officials who found his remains in the desert. It read, “Subject was found lying on his stomach with his head facing north”.

Reader 1: Are we, like Simon, willing to walk with our immigrant brothers and sisters as they struggle to remain with their families? Or will we turn away and go about our business ignoring the crucified ones among us?

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PEOPLE: WHEN AN ALIEN RESIDES WITH YOU IN THE LAND, DO NOT MOLEST THEM. YOU SHALL TREAT THE ALIEN WHO RESIDES WITH YOU NO DIFFERENTLY THAN THE NATIVES BORN AMONG YOU; HAVE THE SAME LOVE FOR THEM AS FOR YOURSELF, FOR YOU TOO WERE ONCE ALIENS IN THE LAND OF EGYPT. I THE LORD AM YOUR GOD.
(Lev. 19:33-34)

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(Molecule Man, Temple St.)

Reader 1: The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: It is such a small thing in the face of the horror. A moistened cloth, cool against the blistered forehead. Over in a moment and changing nothing of what will come. But she does it-- a gesture, courageous beyond imagining.

Reader 2: Veronica... *vera ikon*-- true image. A woman-- a second-class citizen in an oppressed nation-- challenged Roman authority with her act of compassion. Her reward was the image of Christ on her veil.

Reader 1: Before us we see another image. Humans reduced to molecules, shadows riddled with holes that bring to mind mutilation and humiliation recalling images from Abu Ghraib, Bagram, Guantanamo and other sites of war and torture.

Reader 2: After the events of Sept. 11, 2001, the United States committed itself to a doctrine of “perpetual war”. Our nation is still at war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Under the guise of a “war on drugs” we have been financing and arming conflicts in Colombia and Mexico. The United States continues to use un-manned drones to drop bombs on people in Yemen and Pakistan, and Somalia. Air strikes continue to kill civilians in Iraq. We must remember- bombs do not fall on targets. They fall on human beings, as human as we are, as human as Jesus was.

Reader 1: It is easy enough to meditate on the resurrected one who suffered 2000 years ago- but dare we see Jesus in our supposed enemies, in the de-humanized “other”? Dare we cry out “enough”? Can we, like Veronica, reach out in compassion and receive the image of Christ?

Reader 2: The radical message of Jesus is: Love your enemy; love your neighbor as yourself. We fail to do this at the cost of our own humanity and our own souls.

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PEOPLE: A MAN VERSED IN THE LAW STOOD UP, TESTING HIM, AND SAID: MASTER, WHAT SHALL I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE? JESUS SAID TO HIM: WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW AND HOW DO YOU READ IT? THE MAN ANSWERED: YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND IN ALL YOUR SPIRIT, STRENGTH AND MIND, AND YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. JESUS SAID TO HIM: YOU HAVE ANSWERED RIGHT, DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE. BUT THE MAN, WISHING TO JUSTIFY HIMSELF, SAID TO JESUS: AND WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

(Luke 10: 25-29)

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(Judge John Aiso Park, corner of Judge John Aiso and First Streets)

Reader 1: The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: Weakened by the heavy weight of the cross, Jesus falls and lies exhausted on the ground. There are no more Simons and Veronicas to comfort him. Abandoned by his followers, at this moment he suffers alone.

Reader 2: In 1941 our country fell under the sin of fear and paranoia when it interred thousands of Japanese Americans in concentration camps. The park we are in is named for Judge John Aiso and the monument before us is dedicated to the generation of Japanese Americans who were forcibly relocated to these camps.

Reader 1: As a young man Judge Aiso, along with many other Japanese American men, fought in the U.S army to prove their loyalty as U.S. citizens. In return their country kept their families locked behind prison walls.

Reader 2: Once again our country falls under the shadow of fear as we are told to be afraid of enemies at home and abroad who would destroy our freedom and our “way of life”. It is this fear that led to the rounding up of Arab Americans after 9/11 and to the “extraordinary rendition” and imprisonment of people around the world in Guantanamo, Bagram and other prisons.

Reader 1: It is this fear that leads our government to propose “travel bans” that would exclude visitors and immigrants from Muslim majority countries from entering our country.

Reader 2: It is this fear that prevents us from developing a just immigration policy, preferring instead to profit off of cheap labor, build walls on our borders and to separate undocumented parents from their U.S. born spouses and children.

Reader 1: It is this fear that makes us willing to tolerate war, torture and the sacrifice of other’s, and eventually our own, freedom.

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PEOPLE: HEAR MY VOICE, OH GOD, IN MY PRAYER: PRESERVE MY LIFE FROM FEAR OF THE ENEMY.

(Psalm 64)

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(Emergency Response Call Center- Los Angeles St.)

Reader 1: The Eighth Station: Jesus Speaks to the Women of Jerusalem.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1; Jesus turned to the women and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, don't weep for me! Weep rather for yourselves and for your children."

Reader 2: What does Jesus mean when he utters those ominous words: “Weep for yourselves and for your children”? We too are like the women of Jerusalem. We assume it will be someone else who suffers and not us, someone else whose cities are destroyed, someone else whose husbands and children are killed or disappeared. But it is not.

Reader 1: Around us are carved and etched scattered words and faceless numbers taken from the cries of help received at the city’s Emergency Response Call Center. These words connect us to the human lives –our neighbors- shattered by the violence that so frequently explodes across our city and our nation.

Reader 2: When will we comprehend that the violence we sow abroad is intimately linked to the violence we experience at home? For how long will we be willing to watch our children die? .

As long as we are in denial of our addiction to guns and our aversion to investing in healthy communities the killings will continue.

Reader 1: For Columbine:

PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY

Reader 2: For Virginia Tech

PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY

Reader 1: For Sandy Hook:

PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY

Reader 2: For Washington Navy Yard

PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY

Reader 1: For Roseburg, OR.

PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY

Reader 2: For San Bernardino

PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY

Reader 1: For Charleston S.C.

PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY

Reader 2: For Orlando, FL.

PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY

Reader 1: For Cincinnati, OH.

PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY

Reader 2: For Sherrisa Homer, Fred Barragan, Jesse Romero, and all who have died at the hands of police:

PEOPLE: WE PRAY TO THE LORD

Reader 1: For Debra Clayton, Keith Boyes, Jonathan De Guzman and all police who have lost their lives.

PEOPLE: WE PRAY TO THE LORD

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PEOPLE: LET YOUR TEARS RUN DOWN LIKE A TORRENT BY DAY AND BY NIGHT. GIVE YOURSELF NOT A MOMENT'S REST, LET YOUR TEARS NEVER CEASE. ARISE AND CRY ALOUD IN THE NIGHT; POUR OUT YOUR HEART LIKE WATER IN THE LORD'S PRESENCE. LIFT UP YOUR HANDS TO HIM FOR THE LIVES OF YOUR CHILDREN. (Lamentations 2:18-19)

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(Los Angeles Metro Jail "Whispering Bells" sculpture- Los Angeles St.)

Reader 1: The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD

Reader 1: Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, Fukushima. The world has now fallen three times under cross of nuclear energy.

Reader 2: Before us stands the sculpture "Whispering Bells" by Korean born artist Sook Jin Jo. The sculpture was inspired when the artist visited an ancient building in northern Japan. In an interview Jo recounted that she heard "several small bells ringing

beautifully...it was a moment of transformation spiritually...I wanted to share that experience with other people.”

Reader 1: Jo describes how throughout Japan, beginning on New Year's Eve and continuing into New Year's Day, bells in Buddhist temples are rung 108 times. Each toll of the bell, dispels one of the 108 desires that are a cause of human suffering.

Reader 2: Our desire to consume without limitation and our hubris in the pursuit of a toxic source of energy with no known way to safely dispose of the waste has been the cause of great suffering around the world from uranium miners in New Mexico to the people of Japan.

Reader 1: We must work towards a spiritual transformation to end our global culture's Faustian bargain with the nuclear industry lest we leave the Body of Christ to languish in a radioactive grave.

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PEOPLE: TODAY I CALL ON HEAVEN AND EARTH TO WITNESS AGAINST YOU: I AM OFFERING LIFE OR DEATH, BLESSING OR CURSE. CHOOSE LIFE THEN SO THAT YOU AND OUR DESCENDANTS MAY LIVE.

(Deut. 30:19)

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(City Hall East- Los Angeles Street)

Reader 1: The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD

Reader 1: Before us we see an image of the Annunciation. When the Angel Gabriel told Mary she would bear the Son of God she broke into song proclaiming:

God has taken power into his arm and scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has pulled down the mighty from their thrones and raised up the humble. He has filled up the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

In this brief moment, the world order, as we know it, was turned upside down.

Reader 2: Today the world order is decidedly right side up. Our nation's resources, like Christ's garments, are stripped from the poor and handed to the rich. Investors make millions in Los Angeles's overheated real estate market while an estimated 46,000 of our brothers and sisters make their homes in tents and on sidewalks throughout our county.

Reader 1: The federal government guarantees billions of dollars in loans to the nuclear industry, finances wars and grants wealthy individuals and large corporations new tax breaks while slashing programs for meals, housing and health care.

Reader 2: People are killed, houses and crops destroyed and government budgets are balanced on the backs of the poor, elderly and the disabled. In our silence, we are complicit.

Reader 1: Dorothy Day proclaimed, "Our problems stem from our acceptance of this filthy, rotten system." A system in which, she declared, "We are not performing the Works of Mercy but the Works of War. We can not repeat this enough."

Reader 2: Let us join Mary and Dorothy in proclaiming an end to this system, an end to an economy of war and the beginning of an economy of justice.

Reader 1: Let us join imprisoned activists Chelsea Manning, Rafil Dhafir, Norman Edgar Lowry Jr. and Leonard Peltier in proclaiming freedom from war, drones and nuclear weapons.

Reader 2: Let us lead our culture away from the Works of War and help bring Mary's radical vision into being.

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PEOPLE: HE HAS SHOWN YOU, O MORTAL, WHAT IS GOOD. AND WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE OF YOU? TO ACT JUSTLY, TO LOVE MERCY, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD. (Micah 6:8)

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(City Hall East, Main Street)

Reader 1: The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: Thick iron nails are pounded through his wrists; the cross bearing the savior of the world is raised and slammed into place, causing excruciating pain to the tortured body. The humiliation is complete: naked, helpless, the carpenter's son is raised up on the scaffolding reserved for political criminals. The charge "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" is nailed to the top of the cross.

Reader 2: The journey that ends at Calvary began three years ago at the river Jordan. When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan the Spirit of God was heard to say, "This is my son, my beloved, on whom my favor rests".

Reader 1: Water is a primal element of our Catholic faith. It is with water that we are baptized, accepting the responsibilities of our faith, cleansed and born into community. It is also water, along with blood, that poured from Christ's side as he died.

Reader 2: Before us is a dry fountain. One of many throughout the city turned off to conserve water. Perhaps the waters that nourished our baptismal vows have also run dry. One of our baptismal vows is to renounce, "the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God." Let us reflect upon this promise and ask for forgiveness for our failure to keep it.

Reader 1: For our addiction to oil and our willingness to desecrate our sacred, life sustaining waters to obtain it we pray:

People: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Reader 2: For our commitment to war and militarism that leads the U.S. and the world into deeper poverty we pray:

People: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Reader 1: For the tremendous profits that corporations such as Haliburton, Raytheon, Blackwater, and Triple Canopy reap off the spoils of war we pray:

People: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Reader 2: For the U.S. tax dollars used to destroy lives in Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Palestine, Yemen, Colombia, Honduras and Mexico we pray:

People: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Reader 1: For the times we ourselves act out of aggression or fear, creating in our communities the very ethos we desire to transform we pray:

People: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Reader 2: For all the ways in our daily lives that we are consciously or unconsciously complicit in the war machine we pray:

People: LORD HAVE MERCY.

Reader 1: Let us then renew our baptismal commitment:
Do we renounce the evil powers of his world, which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

People: WE DO.

Reader 2: Let us mark ourselves anew with water and the sign of the cross.

(pause)

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PEOPLE: THE SIXTH HOUR CAME. THERE WAS DARKNESS OVER THE WHOLE LAND UNTIL THE NINTH HOUR. AND AT THE NINTH HOUR JESUS CRIED OUT IN A LOUD VOICE, "ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTANI?" WHICH MEANS, 'MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?'

(Mark 15: 33-34)

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(City Hall East, Main St.)

Reader 1: The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross,

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: As he is dying he cries, "My God, My God!" then he offers up his spirit to the God who seems to have forsaken him. Life itself is dead.

Reader 2: Two thousand years ago it was Rome. Today it is the United States. The names may change but the fruits of empire remain the same: the denigration and destruction of the poor, the choice of death over life. We have witnessed on our pilgrimage this afternoon the human cost of our nation's choice. The crucifixion is not only an historical event, it is repeated again and again, day after day on our streets, in our prisons, on our borders and in the deserts and mountains of the Middle East.

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PEOPLE: A JAR OF VINEGAR STOOD THERE, SO PUTTING A SPONGE SOAKED IN VINEGAR ON A HYSSOP STICK, THEY HELD IT UP TO HIS MOUTH. AFTER JESUS HAD TAKEN THE VINEGAR, HE SAID, "IT IS FINISHED," AND BOWING HIS HEAD, HE GAVE UP HIS SPIRIT.

(John 19: 29-30)

All Participants Are Invited to Kneel for a Moment in Silent Prayer.

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Reader 1: The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down From the Cross.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: At sundown Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took the body of Christ down from the cross and prepared it for burial. Mary of Magdala and Mary the Mother of Joseph were watching and saw where he was laid.

Reader 2: The women... the paradigmatic disciples, faithful to the end, call us to be present to Jesus today, ministering to him in all of the dark places- prisons, hospitals, battlefields and downtown streets- performing the Works of Mercy and denouncing the Works of War.

Reader 1: We believe in an incarnate God who suffered and was executed to end victimization. It is up to us to bring that vision to reality.

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PEOPLE: HE HAS WORN AWAY MY FLESH AND MY SKIN, HE HAS BROKEN MY BONES; HE HAS BESET ME ROUND WITH POVERTY AND WEARINESS; HE HAS LEFT ME TO DWELL IN THE DARK LIKE THOSE LONG DEAD.

(Lamentations 3:4-6)

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(Edward Roybal Federal Building,
255 E. Temple St.)

Reader 1: The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Tomb.

Reader 2: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

PEOPLE: BECAUSE BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU REDEEM THE WORLD.

Reader 1: And so it is over, the stone is shoved forward and falls into place. Pilate and the High Priests return to their offices, secure in the knowledge of victory. Things are back to normal. Power does not lose. But something stirs in the sepulchral darkness-- the winding sheets tremble while we are at home, washing our hands.

Reader 2: It would be easy -realistic even- to give up, to say, "This thing is too hard for us, love is dead and violence has triumphed." But two thousand years later the death of Jesus Son of Mary, tortured and executed for crimes against the state, millions of people around the world call him Jesus the Lord and know the power of his resurrection in their lives. Those who were powerful- Pilate, Caiaphas, and Annas, are only remembered because their stories are touched by his. He who was weakest of all is victor. Hope is not easy. The triumph of life on the third day comes only after the Way of the Cross-, the agony of Calvary. But come it does, in ways secret and unimaginable.

PEOPLE: IN TRUTH I TELL YOU, A GRAIN OF WHEAT REMAINS A SOLITARY GRAIN UNLESS IT FALLS INTO THE GROUND AND DIES; BUT IF IT DIES, IT BEARS A RICH HARVEST. (John 12:24)

Reader 1: Each day, each moment our God calls us to choose our path: "I have put before you this day life and death... choose life!"

Let us pray:

For an end to all violence and war making, we pray...

PEOPLE: LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Reader 2: For the courage to resist the seductions of willed ignorance, of self centered complicity and cynical despair we pray...

PEOPLE: LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Reader 1: For forgiveness for our inevitable entanglement in an unjust empire by our taxes, our votes, our silence, our consumption, we pray...

PEOPLE: LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

Reader 2: For the divine foolishness to believe in our empowerment by resurrection hope in spite of the enormity of the cross of empire and the culture of death that creates and sustains it, we pray...

PEOPLE: LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

LEAD US FROM DEATH TO LIFE, FROM FALSEHOOD TO TRUTH.

LEAD US FROM DESPAIR TO HOPE, FROM FEAR TO TRUST.

LEAD US FROM HATE TO LOVE, FROM WAR TO PEACE.

LET PEACE FILL OUR HEARTS, OUR WORLD, OUR UNIVERSE.

Reader 1: Let us go in peace to make peace, to be peace in our world.

PEOPLE: AMEN.