

# VIA CRUCIS

**Good Friday, March 30th, 2018**

## **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. We gather in this spot, in front of the Edward Roybal Federal Building, to remember the Muslim, Indigenous, homeless, undocumented, Black, Women, LGBTQ, poor, elder, youth... communities of people condemned to die by Federal authorities. We remember, too, our community member Kaleb Havens, who is fasting and chained to a building to demand the city house those without secure housing in Los Angeles.

**PEOPLE: WE GATHER AND WE REMEMBER.**

**Reader 2:** We gather today to remember that on this day 2000 years ago, Jesus of Nazareth, also, 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 those same seats in 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 gather today as a diverse community of faiths living in the United States. We gather in a spirit of repentance and prayer: repentance for our country's incessant investment in violence, which devours the poor and the environment, and prayer for a conversion from

brokenness to wholeness.

**PEOPLE: WE GATHER AND WE REPENT.**

**Reader 2:** We remember that we, as citizens of this city and this country, are complicit with empire, with Christ's and humanity's suffering, by our silence, our acceptance of state-sponsored violence, and our unwillingness to give up our comforts, routines, habits, and lifestyles of consumerism.

**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 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 because of his words and actions, 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 government in the United States, which has a history of colonization, genocide, and imperialism. We have been gathering here since the 1980's to challenge those in power who have condemned countless peoples from countless nations to suffer and die through chemical and biological warfare, drone attacks, bombs, torture and more; done in the interests of war-profiteering, white supremacy, U.S. domination and more; sold to the public through lies, racism, fear. The list goes on.

**Reader 1:** We gather in this location specifically because we are standing under this trapwire technology. This device, a tool of state-sponsored surveillance, monitors and records all movement for future use against community members. This is a reminder of one of the many ways our government is importing warfare technology to track, monitor, incriminate and sometimes even kill people and social movements.

**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 – both abroad and at home.

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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.

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**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 of Good and Evil. 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 THE 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, BREATHE, FROM THE FOUR WINDS AND BREATHE INTO THESE SLAIN, THAT THE 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. The County Board of Supervisors has recently approved a \$3.5 billion dollar jail expansion to add to the 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:** At present, the United States incarcerates roughly 2.3 million people, about 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 state and 18% of our federal prison population making incarceration a lucrative business for the private companies that run them: Corrections Corporation of America, GEO Group and more.

**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 for release?

**Reader 1:** America has become a Gulag State. Poverty has become a crime – 1 in 5 people arrested by LAPD are homeless – 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. In the first year of Trump's presidency, ICE officers made 110,568 arrests, which is a 42% increase from 2015.

**Reader 1:** Since Los Angeles declared itself a Sanctuary City and California declared itself a Sanctuary State, the federal government has made a targeted effort to arrest and deport Angelenos and Californians. Raids at 7-11s, work sites, and elsewhere have increased, bringing with it the fear and anxiety of families already struggling to survive.

**Reader 2:** But some have found ways to resist. Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf warned the city of upcoming ICE raids. Immigration Enforcement estimated that this act kept 800 people from being arrested and likely deported. Are we, like Simon the Cyrene, like Libby Schaff, 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 MISTREAT 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 (a reality we still see today as made evidence by the #MeToo movement) -- challenged Roman authority with her act of compassion.

**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 went to 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, Pakistan, and Somalia. 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. Today, US Army veteran Miguel Perez Jr. sits in an immigration detention center in Wisconsin, awaiting deportation for a drug offense 8 years ago.

**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 continue to try to enforce “travel bans” that would exclude visitors and immigrants from Muslim majority countries from entering our country. It is this same fear that led to the building of border wall prototypes just south of here in San Diego.

**Reader 2:** It is this fear that prevents us from developing a just immigration policy, preferring instead to profit off of cheap labor, to build walls on our borders and to tear apart families.

**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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(Los Angeles Metro Jail “Whispering Bells” sculpture- 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 took time, amidst his suffering and walk to his death, to speak with the “Daughters of Jerusalem.” He reminds us that we cannot assume it will be someone else, or someone else’s children, who suffers.

**Reader 2:** And how does Jesus speak to us today? Students in the Los Angeles Unified School District are organizing against the criminalization that happens to them in our schools. Students in Parkland, FL, following the courageous and continued resistance by black activists, are demanding change in gun policy to reduce gun violence.

**Reader 1:** Before us stands the sculpture “Whispering Bells” by Korean born artist Sook Jin Jo. Like the faithful ringing of bells in the wind, there are thousands of voices around this country demanding to be heard, demanding change, and refusing to be silenced.

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

**Reader 1:** 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 Sutherland Springs, TX

**PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY**

**Reader 1:** For Sandy Hook:

**PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY**

**Reader 2:** For San Bernardino:

**PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY**

**Reader 1:** For Las Vegas:

**PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY**

**Reader 2:** For Charleston S.C.:

**PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY**

**Reader 1:** For Orlando, FL.:

**PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY**

**Reader 2:** For Cincinnati, OH.:

**PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY**

**Reader 1:** For Parkland, FL.:

**PEOPLE: LORD HAVE MERCY**

**Reader 2:** For Brandon Glenn, Kisha Michael, Marquintan Sandlin, Jesse Romero, Eric Rivera, Ezell Ford, and all who have died at the hands of police:

**PEOPLE: WE PRAY TO THE LORD**

**Reader 1:** For all others who have been victims of gun violence – in their homes, in their work, on the streets:

**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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(LAPD Parker Center, across from the Homeless Help Desk - 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:** We see before us another abandoned, city-owned building. Our brother, Kaleb, is chained to an abandoned building on Skid Row, one of 150 that are vacant in the area. Some are owned by the city, but most are owned by developers. These developers pay no taxes on them and intentionally keeping them empty while our homeless brothers and sisters linger on our cold streets. This problem is compounded by the city's 2040 zoning plan, which aims to decimate Skid Row's housing, supportive services, and community.

**Reader 2:** Kaleb, following the guidance and inspiration of so many others, is crying out to our city officials and the general public: "These abandoned buildings could be used to house the thousands of people living in tents and cars on our streets."

**Reader 1:** Break open the hearts of our city officials so that they may hear the cries of the powerless and be moved to house them. Break open our hearts not only to demand better of our elected officials but to do more as people of faith to house people: in our churches, our parking lots, and our homes.

**Reader 2:** We must work towards a spiritual transformation to end the crisis of homelessness; to raise up the lowly, and to find ways to transform abandoned buildings into housing. We must stop making excuses and allowing a vocal minority to ignore our brothers and sisters who live in the streets.

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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 her arm and scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. God has pulled down the mighty from their thrones and raised up the humble. God 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, gentrifying neighborhoods and displacing whole communities.

**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. The recent decision to roll back some of the reforms of the Dodd-Frank Act will again allow some of the largest banks to make risky bets with taxpayer-insured money as well as loosen requirements that ensure mortgage lenders monitor their discrimination against minorities.

**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, Dorothy, and soon to be beatified Oscar Romero 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 Leonard Peltier, Mumia Abu Jamal, Mutulu Shakur, Ana Belen Montes and more 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:** Before us is a mosaic honoring the many peoples and cultures in our world. It is so apparent how beneficial this diversity is, though to many, it is a source of fear and hatred. One of our baptismal vows is to renounce "the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God." As our nation seeks to vilify cultures, to criminalize communities and deport workers, let us reflect upon this promise and ask for forgiveness for our failure to keep it.

**Reader 1:** For the inhumanity of our nation's deportation policies, we pray:

**People: LORD HAVE MERCY.**

**Reader 2:** For our government, as ordered by Trump, which continues to tear families apart, we pray:

**People: LORD HAVE MERCY.**

**Reader 1:** For our addiction to cheap labor, resources, and products, which forces many to migrate from their homes in order to provide for their families, we pray:

**People: LORD HAVE MERCY.**

**Reader 2:** For the senseless building of the border wall between the United States and Mexico, which is projected to cost \$18 billion, we pray:

**People: LORD HAVE MERCY.**

**Reader 1:** For the \$15 billion dollars that is set to cover all other border expenses, while our brothers and sisters languish in the streets without homes, we pray:

**People: LORD HAVE MERCY.**

**Reader 2:** For all the ways in our daily lives that we are consciously or unconsciously complicit in our government's immigration policies, we pray:

**People: LORD HAVE MERCY.**

**Reader 1:** Just as we must renew our baptismal commitment, we must renew our commitment to renounce the evil powers of this world, which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God. Let us mark ourselves anew with this holy water.

*(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 choices. 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 sometimes 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:

**Reader 2:** For an end to all violence and war making, we pray...

**PEOPLE: LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.**

**Reader 1:** 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 2:** 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 1:** 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.**