

THE WAY OF THE CROSS *with* **BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI** in the context of Holy Week and the worldwide pandemic of 2020

developed by the **Compagnia del Tipi Loschi del beato Pier Giorgio Frassati** (the Company of Shady Characters) and the **Associazione Pier Giorgio Frassati Roma**



Join others around the world in praying this *Way of the Cross* on **Monday, April 6, 2020** (Pier Giorgio's Birthday) or at any point during Holy Week, wherever you are in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. Know of the global community that prays alongside you through the intercession of Pier Giorgio.

On the anniversary of his birth, this special prayer experience can be your "gift" to Frassati, "uniting in a spiritual bond, all the *Tipi Loschi* (Shady Characters) scattered all over the earth," as said by Pier Giorgio, in his letter to Laura Hidalgo on August 11, 1924, who also said:

**"I would like for us to pledge a pact that knows
no earthly boundaries, nor temporal limits: union in prayer."**

Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati (to I. Bonini), January 15, 1925

We also keep in mind the following words of St. John Paul II on the day of the beatification of Pier Giorgio Frassati in Rome on May 20, 1990, when he said to us:

**"Passionately eager to serve his brothers and consumed by charity
which led him to approach, in an order of absolute precedence,
the poor and the sick, [...] young Frassati is a master to follow!
With him the Gospel turns to welcoming solidarity, intense truth seeking,
as well as demanding commitment to justice. Prayer and contemplation,
silence and reception of the sacraments give tone and substance to
his varied apostolate, and his whole life, enlivened by the Spirit of God,
is transformed into a marvellous adventure. Everything becomes an
offering and a gift, even sickness and death.**

In the midst of our own experiences of "sickness and death" around the world, we join our prayers to the Lord, in this Lenten Season, with Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, St. John Paul II, and countless more around the world who seek refuge from the storms that assail us today.

Special thanks to the **Compagnia del Tipi Loschi del beato Pier Giorgio Frassati** (the Company of Shady Characters) and the **Associazione Pier Giorgio Frassati Roma**, who have prepared and translated this prayer experience into English (from the original Italian) and have shared it with colleagues around the world, so that they might encourage all people (and in a special way, youth and young adults who are watched over by Pier Giorgio as their patron) to take time for silence, stillness, and prayer.

Introduction

by Don Paolo Asolan

This year (2020), the birthday of Pier Giorgio falls on Monday of Holy Week, just after (the annual celebration of) World Youth Day (on Palm Sunday) – with a theme this year that is: "Young man, I say to you, rise!" (Lk 7:14) – and, in the dramatic context of a worldwide pandemic.

We will celebrate our friend by praying and meditating on the *Via Crucis* so that we might embrace all the suffering that surrounds us in the redeeming light of the Lord, the very suffering which might otherwise risk shrouding our lives in depression and the shadow of death.

In his (2020) [message addressed to young people](#), Pope Francis invites us not to turn our gaze from the mystery of death, which is present even today in many of the inauthentic ways of life of so many of our young people. Almost echoing one of Pier Giorgio's best known sayings, he writes: "There are those who get along..., thinking themselves alive while on the inside they are dead."

This is not simply about optimism and good will. Pier Giorgio followed Jesus even to the most extreme gift of himself, practicing charity as a way towards resurrection and the fullness of life. Seeing the Lord in the poor, the sick, and the needy of every kind, Frassati formed virtuous, generous, and joyful relationships. For this reason, his life was intense, rich, beautiful, and inclined toward the kind of initiative and vigor that make for true peace and authentic love. This is the life to which we are called: it begins here below only that it might be fulfilled above.

In these days in which each and every one of us experiences more or less viscerally that same creaturely weakness marked mysteriously by death, Pier Giorgio testifies to a great hope:

It is wonderful to be alive inasmuch as our true life is the life beyond; otherwise who could bear the burden of this life if there weren't a prize for suffering, an eternal joy; how could one explain the admirable resignation of so many poor creatures who struggle with life and often die in the breach if it weren't for the certainty of God's justice." (to Marco Beltramo, 15 January 1925).

These are words that seem to describe the world in the time of coronavirus... "He would visit the poor during the famous Spanish flu epidemic in 1918, never flinching from performing the most humble services, even the most demanding" (as testified by Giuseppe Gorgerino)... As we know, Pier Giorgio died because he himself had contracted a lethal virus.

"I knew that Pier Giorgio died by the silent work of a tiny germ that nests itself in the mucous membranes of the nose and throat and in the bloodstream. (...) As professor Ferdinando Micheli repeatedly affirmed to us, my brother must have contracted the illness during his visits to the poor in the most deprived parts of Turin" (Luciana Frassati, *My Brother Pier Giorgio: His Last Days*)

The serene pages on Pier Giorgio's death in 1925 written by his sister read almost like the stories of the sufferings of thousands of people around the world today – asphyxiation, oxygen tanks – and bring us close to his story, allowing us to feel (as always in fact) he is involved in our lives and struggles.

And so we pray with him and we entrust to him both our fears and our hopes.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

IN PRAYER WITH B1. PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI

IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS AND HOLY WEEK

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

Response: Amen.

Leader: Today, we retrace the *Way of the Cross* together with Jesus, listening to the words of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati whose birthday we also commemorate.

We are mindful not only of his zeal for life, but also the dignity with which he made a gift of himself in his suffering and in his death. His own “Via Dolorosa” inspires us as we meditate on the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ. So let us draw our prayers to God.

(pause)

Good and gracious Lord, we come to you today and ask for your intercession:

Reader 1: We pray for the sick and those suffering from the coronavirus,

Reader 2: We pray for young people called to renew their lives, which can become dull, disoriented, and indifferent.

Reader 1: We remember all those who are sick in any way and for all those who undergo unexpected sufferings and are without hope.

Reader 2: We pray also for their families during these days, who suffer alongside them.

Reader 1: We pray for all doctors, nurses, and all those who are, at this moment, “in the breach.”

Reader 2: We pray for first responders and those who are still working in the midst of this crisis.

Reader 1: We pray for all those in civil service, for government leaders around the world, in our country, and in each of our local communities, who continue to work on our behalf.

Reader 2: We pray also for ourselves and for all youth and young adults around the world.

Leader: In all this, we pray that this situation in which we find ourselves today might make us reevaluate our sense of time and the meaning of life, and that, by the light of charity and of the passion of God, we might pass through this time of trial so as to truly live out Easter, to truly rise with Christ and so lift ourselves more and more onto his full stature.

We ask all this through Christ our Lord.

Response: Amen.

FIRST STATION

JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak, Pilate said to them, 'Behold the man.'" (John 19:5)

Leader: Jesus came to his own, but his own received him not. Consider how Jesus, after having been scourged and crowned with thorns was unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the cross. He offered his life so that we might know life for all eternity. How do I respond when I am unjustly criticized, accused or blamed?

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

Human sorrows touch us, but if they are viewed in the light of religion and thus of self-surrender, they are not harmful, but helpful because they purify the soul of the little, and inevitable stains by which we men, due to our wicked nature, dirty ourselves many times. In this holy Lent, let us lift up our hearts, and always go forward for the triumph of the reign of Christ in society. (from a letter to Isidoro Bonini, February 27, 1925)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *At the Cross her station keeping.
Mary stood in sorrow weeping.
When her Son was crucified*

SECOND STATION

JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "When they had finished mocking him, they stripped him of the purple, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him out to crucify him." (Mark 15:20)

Leader: Jesus accepted the cross and transformed it into a sign of God's unconditional love for all humanity. Consider how Jesus, in making this journey to Calvary under the heavy weight of the cross, offered his suffering and pain so we would know, without doubt, that he is with us every time we experience pain and sadness.

Reader 2: A Meditation from the Writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

Our life to be Christian, it must be a continual renunciation, a continual sacrifice which however is not burdensome when only we think about what these few years passed in sorrow are, compared with a happy eternity, where joy will have no measure nor end, and where we will enjoy a peace beyond anything we could imagine. And so, young people, learn how to sacrifice from our Lord Jesus Christ. In order to atone for our horrible sins, he sacrificed himself as an innocent victim on Calvary, and he renews this wonderful sacrifice every day in every part of the world during Holy Mass.
(from a speech to the young people of Pollone, Italy)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *While she waited in her anguish,
Seeing Christ in torment languish,
Bitter sorrow pierced her heart.*

THIRD STATION

JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "He advanced a little and fell to the ground, praying that if it were possible, this hour might pass him by. He kept saying, 'Father, you have the power to do all things. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you would have it, not as I.'" (Mark 14:35-36)

Leader: Jesus fell under the weight of our sins. Consider his flesh torn by the scourges, his head crowned with thorns, and his crippling loss of blood. He was so weakened. He could barely walk, and yet he had to carry this terribly heavy burden on his shoulders. Lord, help me to stand up with courage and continue bravely on my life-journey each time I fall.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

My illness is such that no human intervention can stop it. Human interventions can give me remedies to alleviate the crisis, but they cannot destroy what causes it; only faith can be my hope and my comfort in the next life, so I ask you to pray a lot for me, so that every day I can increase my faith, and have the strength to bear the difficulties that in these latest years of my youth have been impeding my path.
(from a letter to Gian Maria Bertini, July 29, 1924)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *With what pain and desolation,
With what noble resignation,
Mary watched her dying Son.*

FOURTH STATION

JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER MARY

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother.' And from that hour onward the disciple took her into his home." (John 19:26-27)

Leader: Mary walked the agonizing Way of the Cross with her only Son. Consider how her heart was torn with grief, yet she never doubted God's love. Lord, strengthen my faith and my trust in you, so that when I suffer and grieve, however prolonged or severe, I will never doubt your love for me.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

In this earthly life after the affection for parents, and sisters one of the most beautiful affections is that of friendship, and every day I ought to thank God because he has given me men and lady friends of such goodness who are a precious guide for my whole life.

... Surely Divine Providence in his marvellous plans sometimes uses us miserable little twigs to do good and we sometimes not only don't want to know God but instead dare to deny His existence, but we who, by the grace of God, have the faith, when we find ourselves in the presence of such beautiful souls, surely nourished by faith, we cannot but discover in them an obvious sign of the existence of God, because one cannot have such a goodness without the grace of God. (from a letter to Marco Beltramo, April 10, 1925)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Christ above in torment hangs;
She beneath beholds the pangs,
Of her dying glorious Son.*

FIFTH STATION

SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY THE CROSS

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "As they led him away, they laid hold of one Simon of Cyrene who was coming in from the fields. They put a crossbeam on Simon's shoulder for him to carry along behind Jesus."
(Luke 23:26)

Leader: Simon didn't have any choice; he was forced by the Roman soldiers to help Jesus carry the cross. Consider the choices you have each day to help others who are burdened by crosses of sickness, loneliness, poverty and injustice. Lord, inspire me to share your love with others by willingly offering them a helping hand or a shoulder to lean on.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

On the day of your graduation, I felt the truth of St. Augustine's words when he says: "Lord, our hearts are restless until they rest in thee"; in fact, foolish is he who pursues the joys of the world because these are always fleeting and cause pain whereas the one true joy is that which we get from faith; and our beloved companions, particularly by this means, will always stay united, even if life's contingencies hurl us very far from each other. (from a letter to Isidoro Bonini, December 28, 1924)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Is there one who would not weep,
whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold?*

SIXTH STATION

VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: “The just will ask him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or clothe you in your nakedness.’ The king will answer them, ‘I solemnly assure you, whatever you did for one of the least of my brothers and sisters, you did for me.’” (Matthew 25:37-40)

Leader: A holy woman saw Jesus suffering, his face sweating and bleeding. She gave him a towel to wipe his face. He, in turn, gifted her with the image of his holy face. Consider this selfless gesture of love. Dear Jesus, help me, like Veronica, to reach out and assist those in need with kindness, patience, compassion and understanding.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

You wouldn't believe how pleased I was to receive your affectionate words and how comforting it was for me to know that you and my friends in the club are united with me in the bond of prayer at this time; for our only comfort is in our faith, which gives us strength to surrender ourselves to the Lord's will. (from a letter to Costantino Guardia Riva, August 30, 1923)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Can the human heart refrain,
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?*

SEVENTH STATION

JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "It was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured. He was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins. Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, and by his stripes we were healed." (Isaiah 53: 4-5)

Leader: For a second time, Jesus fell under the weight of our sins. Consider that for a second time he stood up again to take our sins to the very top of Calvary, and there win for us salvation and grace. Lord, give me courage and strength to get up again when I fall under the burden and weight of the crosses that I carry in this life.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

Every day that passes by convinces me all the more how ugly the world is, how much misery there is, and unfortunately good people are suffering while we who have been given many graces by God have, alas! paid Him back so poorly. It's a terrible admission which torments my brain every now and then while I am studying, I ask myself: shall I go on trying to follow the right path? Will I have the good fortune to persevere to the end? in this tremendous conflict of doubts the faith given to me in Baptism suggests to me with a sure voice: "By yourself you can do nothing, but if you have God as the center of your every action then, yes, you will reach the goal" and I'd like to be able to do precisely that and to take as a maxim the saying of St. Augustine: "Lord, our heart is restless until it rests in you." Unfortunately earthly friendships produce sorrow in our hearts because of the departure of those we love, but I would like for us to pledge a pact which knows no earthly boundaries nor temporal limits: union in prayer. (from a letter to Isidoro Bonini, January 15, 1925)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with bloody scourges rent*

EIGHTH STATION

JESUS COMFORTS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "A great crowd followed him, including women who beat their breasts and lamented over him. Jesus turned to them and said: 'Do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children.'" (Luke 23:27-28)

Leader: Consider the women who wept with compassion at seeing Jesus in such excruciating agony. But Jesus told them not to weep for him. Lord, dry my tears during life's most painful and heart-wrenching moments. Give me a sensitive heart, mindful of the sorrows of others, and ready hands to serve those in need in any way I can.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

Peace be in your soul, this is the wish which Robespierre offers to Perrault for the Holy Year, every other gift which one possesses in this life is vanity just as all other things of the world are vanity. It is wonderful to be alive inasmuch as our true life is the life beyond: otherwise who could bear the burden of this life if there weren't a prize for suffering, an eternal joy, otherwise how could one comprehend the admirable resignation of so many poor creatures who struggle with life and often die in the breach if it weren't for the certainty of God's Justice. There is a lack of Peace in the world which has distanced itself from God, but there is also a lack of Charity that is true and perfect Love. Maybe if all of us listened more to St. Paul, human miseries would be slightly diminished. (from a letter to Marco Beltramo, January 15, 1925)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Mary, fount of love's devotion,
Let me share with true emotion,
All the sorrow you endured.*

NINTH STATION

JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "Jesus said, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I solemnly assure you, unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it produces much fruit.'" (John 12:23-24)

Leader: At this point Jesus' weakness was extreme and the cruelty of His executioners was excessive. Consider that the soldiers viciously whipped Him to make Him move faster up Calvary when He scarcely had the strength to walk. Lord, open my eyes to see You suffering in the poor and needy today. Then fill my soul with charity and kindness to inspire me to generously respond to them.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

In my internal struggles I have many times asked myself why I should be sad? Why I should suffer, endure this sacrifice unwillingly? Have I perhaps lost the Faith? No, thank God, my faith is still steady enough and so let's strengthen, let us reaffirm what is the only Joy with which one can be satisfied in this world. Every sacrifice is worthwhile if only for that; then as Catholics, we have a love which transcends every other love and which after that owed to God is immensely beautiful, just as our religion is beautiful. Love which had as its advocate that Apostle who preached it daily in all his letters to the various faithful. Charity, without which says St. Paul every other virtue is worthless. (from a letter to Isidoro Bonini, March 6, 1925)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Virgin, ever interceding,
Hear me in my fervent pleading:
Fire me with your love of Christ.*

TENTH STATION

JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "Then they crucified him and divided up his garments by rolling dice for them to see what each should take." (Mark 15:24)

Leader: After being scourged, Jesus' clothing adhered to His torn flesh. How painful the removal of His garments must have been! But how much greater was His love, which accepted this humiliation without retaliation or threat of reprisal. Lord, when I suffer from the evil inflicted by others, help me to respond without violence, resentment or revenge.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

In today's struggle I cannot but thank God because He has willed in His infinite mercy to grant this sorrow to my heart so that by means of these arduous thorns, I might return to a life that is more interior, more spiritual. Until this age I was living too materially and now I need to refortify my soul for future struggles because from now on every day, every hour there will be a new battle to fight, and a new victory to conquer. A spiritual upheaval must take place in me. (a letter to Isidoro Bonini, January 29, 1925)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Mother, may this prayer be granted:
That Christ's love may be implanted,
In the depths of my poor soul.*

ELEVENTH STATION

JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified Jesus there and the criminals as well, one on his right and the other on his left. Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.'" (Luke 23:33-34)

Leader: Jesus willingly extended his arms and offered to the Eternal Father the sacrifice of his life for our salvation. And consider that he forgave those who nailed him to the wood of the cross. Lord, let me see in your cross the sign of my redemption. And soften my heart to forgive those who unconsciously or deliberately hurt me.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

Pope Pius X of blessed memory recommended to young people the practice of Holy Communion and I cannot but give thanks to God at every opportunity for having given me parents, teachers, all friends, all of whom have guided me through the main path of the Faith.

Imagine if in this moment in which my soul is going through this crisis, I had the misfortune of not believing; life would not be worth living for one more instant and only death would perhaps soothe every human suffering.

But, instead for the one who believes, the controversies of life are not an object of depression but serve to correct us and to recall energetically to walk once again the way perhaps abandoned momentarily. (from a letter to Isidoro Bonini, March 6, 1925)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *At the cross, your sorrow sharing,
All your grief and torment bearing,
Let me stand and mourn with you.*

TWELFTH STATION

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "It was around midday, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. Then the veil of the Temple was torn in two. Jesus uttered a loud cry and said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' After he said this, he expired." (Luke 23:44-46)

Leader: After three hours of absolute agony on the cross, Jesus gave up his life for all humanity. God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son, not to condemn us but to save us. Lord, fill me with your Spirit, that I may share your great love with others and witness to my faith in your goodness.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

"Dead" – what does this word mean? If you are giving "dead" its usual meaning, then I'm still alive unless my senses deceive me. But if we're talking about the word in its true essence then sadly not only am I dead but already resuscitated a number of times only alas! to die again. I long to set off along the straight and narrow path but at every step I stumble and fall; for this reason I beg you to pray for me as much as you can so that whenever Divine Providence desires, I will reach the end of that long, wearisome but straight path. (from a letter to Marco Beltramo, December 20, 1924)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Let me share with you His pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died.*

THIRTEENTH STATION

JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "Afterward, Joseph of Arimathea, secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus. And Pilate permitted it, so they came and took the body away." (John 19:38)

Leader: The body of Jesus was taken down from the Cross and placed in the arms of his afflicted mother, who received him with immeasurable tenderness. Lord, enliven me with hope and charity so that like our Blessed Mother, I may faithfully stand beneath the Cross without flinching until my last breath.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

I saw him before they put him in the casket. He was in a pitiful state; ... because he was already nearly decomposed... I reflected and thought that within a few years I will also be in that same state; I will then also arouse a sense of compassion mixed with disgust and yet I have sometimes been ambitious. And for what? Just for death, this great mystery, the only just one which spares no one, which will dissolve this body of mine and in a short time will turn it into dust. But beyond the material body there is the soul to which we must dedicate all our energy, so that it can present itself before the Supreme Tribunal without fault or at least with little faults, so that after having served some years in purgatory it will be able to go up to Eternal peace. But how does one prepare oneself for the great transition and when? Since one does not know when death will come to take him away, it is very prudent to prepare oneself every day as if one is going to die that same day; and so from now on I will try to make every day a little preparation for death, so that I shouldn't find myself unprepared at the point of death and have to regret the beautiful years of youth, wasted from the spiritual side. (from a letter to Antonio Villani, July 19, 1923)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Virgin, in your love befriend me,
At the Judgment Day defend me.
Help me by your constant prayer.*

FOURTEENTH STATION

JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Response: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: "Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in his own new tomb which had been hewn from a formation of rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and went away." (Matthew 27:59-60)

Leader: When we were baptized our sins were buried with Christ, so that we might be raised to a new life with Him. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, lead me, Lord, from the darkness of death to the bright light of new life in Your heavenly glory.

Reader 2: A meditation from the writings of Blessed Pier Giorgio:

Every day I understand better what a grace it is to be Catholics. Poor unlucky those who don't have a faith: to live without faith, without a patrimony to defend, without a steady struggle for truth, is not living but just getting along. We must never just get along but live, because even through every disappointment we should remember that we are the only ones who possess the Truth, we have a Faith to sustain, a hope to attain: our homeland. And therefore, let us ban all melancholy which can only exist when the faith is lost. (from a letter to Isidoro Bonini, February 27, 1925)

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee
Blessed art thou among woman,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the our of our death. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: *Jesus, when my life shall leave me,
Through your Mother's prayers receive me,
With the fruits of victory.*

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Leader: Lord Jesus:

Each year, on the occasion of the birthday
of your beloved Pier Giorgio, we turn to you.

In this way, we remain faithful to that union in prayer
which he considered the best gift that could be given to us,
the very same gift which today we offer to him and to you.

In this time marked by the coronavirus, we ask you for some gifts:

- the healing of the sick,
- the gift of science for doctors and for those appointed to safeguard our health,
- the gifts of counsel and of wisdom for those in authority,
- the virtue of prudence for all of us citizens.

We ask you also, in a particular way, for the capacity to be united together
as citizens of this earth, our common home, and for a yet more profound
understanding of our Christian roots, as Pier Giorgio often loved to remember.

In such a difficult and complicated moment, we know that,
only by remaining firmly united as citizens of our nation and the whole world
can we win this battle with science and awareness, and above all with faith and love.

Response: Amen.

