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**The Newsletter of the Northern New Jersey Tres Dias Community**

**The purpose (of TRES DIAS of NNJ)** is to glorify God through Jesus Christ by developing Christian leaders who will influence their environments to be more Christ-like.  The organization will use the Tres Dias method of the group reunion to sustain leaders in their environments.

March/April 2013

 **A message from the President**

Hello friends,

Hope you’re all doing well, and keeping in our Lord’s care. As I write this, it’s Holy Week. A time to slow down and remember the great blessing that God gave us in Jesus. My prayer is that we all will feel His presence in our lives and the sense of renewal that brings. This is also the beginning of spring. I had the chance to spend last week on vacation on Hilton Head Island, where it feels a little more like spring. What a wonderful thing to see the trees in bloom and bright flowers everywhere. A bit of a resurrection after a dreary winter!

It has been several months since you have seen a letter from me. The Agape has been delayed for a number of reasons, but we are hopeful that new technology and enhanced email address management will put us back on a regular schedule of communication. We do realize it’s vital to keep the community informed about things that are going on.

Many things have happened since my last letter. Super Storm Sandy came through and left her devastation behind. Yet God has prevailed and the stories of the many opportunities to show Christ’s love abounded through the aftermath, and will continue for a long time to come as the Jersey Shore continues its recovery. It’s good to hear about the excitement our shore friends feel after coming through the storm.

Although Women’s #107 didn’t occur on the weekend we had planned last fall, it obviously was God’s plan for the “best weekend” ever to occur in January. Carolyn Jackson was truly delighted and blessed that the date change only resulted in the loss of three team members. Eight new Pescadores were welcomed into the Community, all of whom were present at the January sequela. Praise God for his blessings! Bruce Sinclair was rector of the fall men’s weekend, which was early enough to not be disturbed by the storm. All the men involved with #110 did a fine job of pointing to the Lord and leading new Pescadores into a deeper walk. Good work everyone on Men’s #110 and Women’s #107!

Our new web-site is coming along. We have chosen a color scheme and a new logo. The design team, Mary Gallinot, Rich Cantwell, Dave McElroy, Paul Markowitz and I have been working diligently with our web development firm. We are presently writing the content for the different pages. We are seeking many new ways to keep our community connected. Expect to see the page up and running within the next month, God willing.

The Spring Weekends have begun to meet. Jim McCann is Rector for Men’s # 111 and Sonja Koeller is Rectrix for Women’s # 108. Please keep Jim and Sonja and their newly formed teams in prayer. Both could use a few more team members, so reach out to them if you would like to sign up. We will be holding the Spring weekends, and all weekends for the foreseeable future at Sacred Heart in Newton. We’ve got dates booked at Sacred Heart through 2016 (they fill up quickly, so we book 3 years in advance.) I challenge you to look around your churches, your places of work, your family, and see who God might be calling you to sponsor, not just for one special weekend, but for the rest of your life.

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, this Easter season, I wish you and yours a time of peace, love and great joy!

**DeColores, Wayne Reese, NNJ Secretariat President**

Dear Community,

I write this letter to you as I reflect back on Women’s # 107. This is the weekend that was meant to be “the best weekend ever” as it was in God’s perfect timing. The entire weekend was an exercise in trusting the Lord, right from the beginning, when the phone calls began. I turned up so much outdated information where people had changed addresses, e-mails, and phone #’s and had forgotten to notify the membership chair. Busy schedules and life in general also presented us with myriad challenges, and we had a lot of “coming and going”, even during the period of planning meetings. But the Lord always provides, and we ended up with a really spectacular team.

Then, when we were all set to go, Hurricane Sandy struck, making travel dangerous, and the weekend had to be postponed. But the Lord knows His plan. We settled on an alternate date, and, miraculously, we only lost 3 team members. We had one more team meeting to get our momentum going again.

The Lord had his hand on us. Auxes and Kitchen worked together in beautiful concert. We were truly blessed by their selfless cooperation. Also, the Table Leaders did a wonderful job of fostering relationships, and we ended up with 8 really excited and motivated new Pescadores. It was a beautiful lesson on the fact that things can’t mess up beyond God’s ability to use them. We saw this in action when several team members saw a message conveying God’s presence with us even in the trees that Sandy had felled. Look closely for the Cross in the picture below:



I truly do believe that what held us up all weekend is that we were suspended in a safety net of prayer. I had asked for prayer before we started; and the community responded. Of all the things we do to make a weekend – or our lives, for that matter – a success, prayer is the very most important. It binds us together, and it binds us to our Father. It’s like opening the door to His power and love. I’m sure every woman of Women’s # 107 joins me in thanking you for all of the prayer that was offered on our behalf.

Please continue your prayers for Women’s # 108 – which will be, I’m sure, “the best weekend ever”.

DeColores,

Carolyn Jackson

Women’s # 79

Letter to the Community from the team of Men’s 111

Dear Community,

Our verse for the weekend is Psalm 31:3 : “*for You are My Rock and My Fortress, Therefore for your namesake Lead Me and Guide Me.”*

Praise be to the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! We are well on the way with preparations for the upcoming weekend at Sacred Heart in Newton! We have been working hard for the Lord, preparing for the weekend. The plans are coming together for sure. First Congregational Church of Chester and Point Pleasant Baptist Church (PA) have graciously opened their doors for our Team Meetings. Thank you to both, your generosity is most appreciated. The rollistas have outdone themselves and the candidates will be hearing heartfelt talks with tears, laughter and most importantly word from our Lord. Our awesome kitchen team is already expanding our waistlines! Home cooked food? Every week? Oh yeah!

Men’s 111 will be held April 25th thru 28th. There is plenty of opportunity for YOU ALL to help. The most important of all is giving us the opportunity to minister to the needs of candidates, MANY candidates. Please consider all of the people you come in contact with as potential candidates. Discuss with them the weekend and prayerfully consider your sponsorship. Even those who have said “NO WAY” in the past may now be ready to accept the Lord and the weekend.

Our chiefs need your help too. Please call Chief Aux-John Crandall (973) 543-5341, Chief Kitchen-Kevin Mahoney (973) 713-3341 or Chief Music-Steve Jacobson (973) 727-5593 if you feel called to help. We need you! Most importantly, we need your prayers. We have already had many trials and hard times; your prayers are needed and most appreciated. Pray for our team and our candidates. Pray that our community will grow and that the word of our Lord will reach out to many new members. Pray that others will find that they too can find the Lord as their Rock and Fortress!

DeColores!! – The men of Men’s 111

John Crandall, Chief Aux Men’s #111

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Dear Brothers and Sisters of Tres Dias of Northern NJ,

“I lift my eyes toward the mountains, where will my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth” (Ps 121:1-2)

A year has passed since I said yes to serving the Lord as Rectrix for Women’s 108; and at long last, the weekend is almost here! I am both excited and anxious as I anticipate what God has in store for us. I am praying that He will reveal Himself not only to the precious candidates that He is preparing to join us but also for the precious team that He has provided to plan and serve them☺

But we can’t do it without your loving support. Would you please pray with us? We need your prayers and we also need your Palanca to help make God’s presence and His love known. This team of Women’s 108 is “Looking Up” to our Lord and Saviour to guide us, to provide for us and to be with us each and every step of the way as we loving serve Him and Women’s 108. Your participation is integral—God uses each of us to make His way known.

How can you help?

* Please send Palanca to the Candidates and the Team. Palanca for the Rollo room is also welcome. Please contact our wonderful Chief Aux, Kathy Leeming at 973-818-6655 to find out where and/or how to get them to us.
* Our Chief Kitchen, Lynn Moorhead, would greatly appreciate your assistance for Thursday night supper and weekend break food, so please contact her at 201-704-1051 for information on what and where to send.
* Both Kathy and Lynn would be ever so grateful for any Palanca help during the weekend. Please contact them if you can commit to coming to Sacred Heart in Newton to help with set up/tear down or anything☺
* Men, our Mananita is nothing without your strong voices to serenade the candidates. Please come to Sacred Heart at 7:00 am to gather—you know we’ll have some delicious breakfast treats for you☺
* Lastly, but not at all in the least, your presence at the closing would be a joy to us all, candidates and team alike. There is nothing more exciting than seeing a roomful of “family” when we close out, dare I say, “The Best Weekend Ever”!

Potential Sponsors, we have been praying for your friends and loved ones and trusting God that as you invite them to Women’s 108, they will not only be blessed but sense the joy of the Lord in a special way! We already have a team of dedicated prayers praying for each candidate and they would love to know their names ASAP. So please don’t wait to send in your applications. What a joy and a blessing to know that God has already prepared the way, so don’t hesitate to invite—she has been waiting for you to ask.

I am humbled and honored to be Rectrix for this coming weekend. I count it a privilege to serve our God in this way and I thank Him for the opportunity to be part of a community that shares my love of Him!

Praising Him for Tres Dias and for His Saving Grace,

Sonja Koeller

Rectrix, Women’s 108

**Please Pray for Team Members and Candidates of Men’s #111 and Women’s #108**!

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| **Team List: Women’s #108** | **Team List Men’s #111** |
| “I lift my eyes toward the mountains, where will my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth” (Ps 121:1-2) |  |

Rectrix Sonja Koeller Rector Jim McCann
Asst. Rectrix Jarene Pagliarulo Asst. Rector Danny McCullough
Spiritual Director Brigitte Pincelli Spiritual Director Rich Banas
Spiritual Director Howie Dalton Spiritual Director Brady McDaniels
Spiritual Director Adolf Pagliarulo Prayer Warrior Charles Falco
Prayer Angel Patty Dalton Chief Auxiliary John Crandall
Chief Auxiliary Kathy Leeming Chief Kitchen Kevin Mahoney
Chief Kitchen Lynn Moorhead Chief Music Steve Jacobson
Chief Music Diane Wade
Ideals Barbara Bauer Ideals Rich Cantwell
Church Carol Goodrich Church Kris Hoffman
Piety Yolanda Wisnet Piety John Crandall
Study Marcia Brands Study Danny Dornacker
Action Lisa Markus Action Papa Joe McCullough
Leaders Karen Hunt Leaders Glenn Bott
Environments Kathy Holt Environments Charles Falco
CCA Jeanine Michel CCA Wayne Reese
Reunion Groups Adina Schipper Reunion Groups Tom Bloodgood

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Table Leader Venus Pech Table Leader George Gilmore

Table Leader Meg Geist Table Leader Lee Haase

Table Leader Anne Harrington Music TBA

Music Kim Start Music TBA

Auxiliary Judy Fadden Auxiliary Tom Bloodgood

Auxiliary Andrea Gall Auxiliary Wayne Reese

Auxiliary Anne Tummey Auxiliary Johan Hedberg

Auxiliary Janette Guy Auxiliary Kevin Curran

Auxiliary Lilly Ayala Kitchen Albert Barker

Kitchen Auxiliary Mary Ann Scharf Kitchen Danny Dornacker

Kitchen Auxiliary Anna Reyes Kitchen Albert Barker

Kitchen Auxiliary Tanya Williams-Smith

**A note from our Treasurer, Rich Cantwell** ... From time to time folks point out that $250 for a weekend is a lot more than it used to be ... and that is certainly true. Fact is though, we actually run the weekends at a loss. We had a great thing going, cost-wise, in the good old Emmaus House days; I don't recall off the top of my head what weekends cost back then, but suffice it to say we were able to operate at much lower costs than today, and hence were able to charge quite a bit less. Today, it costs us $271 per head just for the facility. Add to that about $25/head prorated for fixed costs such as supplies, insurance, licensing fees, etc. and a weekend actually costs us about $300 per person. Further factor in a scholarship or two ... well you get the picture. It is only through contributions by faithful members of our community that we are able to keep the books in balance. Thank you for your generosity -  your financial support and ongoing prayers are not taken for granted!"

Dear Community,

The Agape newsletter is back! We are hoping that we have solved some of the distribution issues and now have an easier way to ensure regular and timely communication. Nancy Blood good has been working diligently to update the Membership list with current addresses, phone numbers and email addresses. If you have had changes, please be sure that Nancy gets your information.

Some of you have not seen an Agape in a long time because you don’t have an email address, or we don’t have a current one for you. You therefore, received this letter by mail. If you have an email, please send a note to LaurettaMarket@Comcast.net and we will update our records. We will also put you on the email distribution.

As Wayne informed you in his letter, we also will be posting a copy of the Agape on the new web page, which is “coming soon”. Our Tres Dias of Northern NJ community has many members. We are hoping to invigorate participation in community activities by encouraging attendance at Sequela’s, volunteering to serve on teams, and providing palanca on the weekends. Most of all it is your prayers that bring our community together.

If you have any suggestions for how we can enhance our communication, they are welcome! Please feel free to contact me directly

DeColores,

Laurie Market

Laurie Market

Editor – Agape Newsletter

(908) 391-4691



*Tres Dias of Northern NJ YahooGroups*

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Want to know more about what’s happening in Tres Dias of Northern NJ? If you are not one of the 410+ Pescadores who are already members of the Tres Dias of Northern NJ YahooGroups, please consider joining the group by emailing George & MaryAnn McGehrin at georgemaryann@hotmail.com. If you want to join, please include your full name, email address, your phone number, & what weekend you made (mm/yy & Number). Once you do this, you will be enrolled directly in the Tres Dias of Northern NJ YahooGroups directly by George & MaryAnn.

Just so you know, the Secretariat has adopted the following guidelines for your use of the Tres Dias of Northern NJ YahooGroups: The Tres Dias Prayer chain will be used only for Specific prayer concerns and requests, distribution of information about upcoming Secuelas, distribution of information about upcoming weekends & other information that has been approved by the Secretariat.

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!



Happy Spring Community!!

My name is Nan Acevedo and I made women's #65. I am currently your Tres Dias Facebook Administrator. This means that anything that you need to share whether it be trials, triumphs, prayers, concerns, joy, announcements, can be done on this site. From time to time I will get a message from our President, Wayne Reese to post something that needs to be addressed to the community outside of the current Yahoogroups. Please be aware that this is just a tool to communicate with other Tres Dias Pescadores within the community. It is by no means a substitute for the Tres Dias website in itself.

If you are a current Facebook user and want to reach out to someone who has a Facebook page and want to add them (Pescadores only please),  have them friend me and I will be happy to add them. If anyone feels uncomfortable using Facebook , by all means continue to use e-mail, phone or snail-mail, that is fine. If you have any questions please feel free to e-mail me (acevedonanette@yahoo.com) or private message me at the Tres Dias page.

God Bless you all and always in God's Love and Service,

Nanette Acevedo

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 **Secretariat meetings:**

* Thurs, May 9th: Jacksonville Chapel
* Thurs, June 13th: Rockaway Reformed Church

**Note: All are welcome and encouraged to attend Secretariat meetings. Meetings start at 7:30 and run until no later than 10:00 PM. For more information, please contact Wayne Reese at:** **wayne.reese@verizonwireless.com**

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Wayne Reese – President Edna Wene – Women’s Team Selection

Mary Gallinot – 1st VP Dean Hollister – Men’s Team Selection

Dave McElroy – 2nd VP Brigitte Pincelli – Women’s Spiritual Director Selection

Judy Fadden - Secretary Denny Wene (men) – Spiritual Director selection

Rich Cantwell – Treasurer Nancy Bloodgood - Membership

Lee Haase & Marcia Brands–Secuelas Neil Breen – Purchasing

Jim Leeming - Chair of Nominations Peggy and Bill Werszilla – Palanca

Meyer Pincelli – Education Tom Bauer – Member at Large

Bruce Kemmerer - Outreach Kris Hoffman – Member at Large

Laurie Market - Communications Carolyn Jackson – Member at Large

Allan Hunte - Housekeeping Paul Markowitz – Member at Large
Bruce Sinclair – Applications Janet Beam – Reunion Groups

* **Spring 2013 – at Sacred Heart, Newton**

**Apr 25 – 28, 2013: MEN’S # 111-Rector Jim McCann**

**May 2-5, 2013: WOMEN’S # 108-Rectrix: Sonja Koeller**

* **Fall 2013 – at Sacred Heart, Newton**

**Oct 3-6, 2013: MEN’S # 112: Rector Tom Bauer**

**Oct 31-Nov 3, 2013: WOMEN’S # 109: Rectrix: Tina Reese**

Candidate Applications, with the corresponding Sponsor Applications, should be submitted by mail or by email to the Chairperson of the Applications Committee. Hard copies are preferred, and should be accompanied by payment. Applications should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the start of the weekend, or as the Rector/Retrix might otherwise direct. In the event that application forms are required, please contact the Applications Chairperson, Bruce Sinclair at address: 848 Woodmere Drive, Cliffwood Beach NJ 07735 or through email at bduncans@verizon.net

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**7pm Food & Fellowship**

**7:30 Music & Meeting**

**Wear your nametag & Pilgrim’s Cross!**

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another (Hebrews 10:25a)

* **SATURDAY, APRIL 13 (same location as the March) High Bridge Methodist Church. This is an OPEN Secuela, so invite a friend!**

**This will be a special evening. Tres Dias Essentials Training will begin at 5PM and led by Mary Gallinot. At 6:00 there will a fund raiser dinner (a Thanksgiving meal in celebration of our Lord and Savior). This dinner will immediately follow the Essentials Training and is just before the Sequela. At 7:00 there will be more time for fellowship. At 7:30 the Sequela will begin! So come early! Learn more about Tres Dias, join the festivities as we raise scholarship money for our future candidates and then spend time encouraging and uplifting one another and praising our Lord at the Sequela.**

* **Saturday MAY 11th – St. Peter’s Episcopal Church - This Secuela will be  \*CLOSED to welcome the New Pescadores of weekends #111 & 109**
* **Saturday, June 15th in Staten Island at The Church That Never Closes. This is an OPEN Secuela, so invite a friend!**

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 **If your contact information changes: Please email Nancy Bloodgood at** tomnanc@embarqmail.com or call 973-875-8765 or mail information to 115 Wantage Ave. Branchville, NJ 07826. **Married couples: be sure to include home, work, email addresses for both husband and wife. Newly married women: maiden name will be helpful as a reference.**

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* If you’d like to have a presentation given to your Pastor regarding Tres Dias, please contact our Outreach Chairpersons, **Bruce Kemmerer (973-224-4268(C) or through email at** **brckem@yahoo.com****)** to set a time and date, or simply to find out more information.
* **Watch for our new web page** at: [www.tresdiasnj.org](http://www.tresdiasnj.org) for Northern NJ’s website. Check out [www.tresdias.org](http://www.tresdias.org) for the Int’l Tres Dias website.

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In His Service, Laurie Market, Editor

**Agape**

Bi-Monthly Newsletter of

Tres Dias of Northern New Jersey

C/O

**Laurie Market**

**7 Stewart Lane**

**Flemington, NJ 08822**

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Way of the Cross

 The “Way of the Cross” is such a special time on each weekend. Members of Secretariat had thought that it would be a blessing to create a collection of these mediations to share with you Easter season. Members of the Secretariat and other members of the Community contributed.

The “Way of the Cross” that Tres Dias of NNJ uses is an adaptation of the traditional “Stations of the Cross.” The “Stations of the Cross” are based on Jesus’ passion and death and walks through the final hours of our Lord’s life on earth. The “Way of the Cross” is based entirely upon Scripture and has a final addition of the Resurrection, which the traditional set of Stations does not. Both are useful as aids to help us focus on particular incidents in Jesus’ journey from the Last Supper in the upper room to the cross, the tomb, and the Resurrection.

 We hope and pray that these meditations will be of some value to you as you journey through your preparations for Easter.

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STATION 1

THE LORD’S SUPPER
Mark 14:13-15 Matthew 26:26-29 Luke 22:15-20

## We went into the city as Jesus told us to. We found the man with the water jug, just as He said we would. The man showed us the room just as Jesus had described. So we made the preparations for the Passover just as He asked. But during the meal, Jesus said two strange things. He said that one of us would betray him and he said that the bread and the wine were his body and blood.

## I’m confused. How could one of us betray him after all we have been through with him? And what does he mean when he talks about eating his body and drinking his blood?

## Oh Jesus, help me to NEVER betray you … and help me to understand the significance of your broken body and shed blood

![MC900039315[1]]()

STATION 2
JESUS AGONIZES IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE
Mark 14:32-42 Matthew 26:36-56 Luke 22:40-46

Our Passover Supper is over and Jesus has told us to follow him to the Garden of Gethsemane. It is an olive grove just outside Jerusalem where we have prayed many times before with Jesus. But tonight he seems especially distressed, troubled. When we arrive, Jesus says to the other disciples, “Sit here while I pray,” but he signals to us – Peter, James and John – to walk a little farther into the garden with him. We quietly obey. We walk with Jesus until he tells us, “Stay here and keep watch.” Jesus walks a short distance and falls to the ground. We can hear him cry out, “Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will but what you will.” Jesus continues to pray, but we are so tired, and we fall asleep. Now Jesus is at our side, nudging us to wake up. He says, “Could you not keep watch for one hour? The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” Jesus returns to his place of prayer. As we watch, sweat like drops of blood fall from his body to the ground. He is crying out to Abba. Weeping and crying out. We try to stay awake but it is so late and we are so tired. Jesus is again at our side, waking us. Now there is a hint of light in the sky. We must have been asleep for hours. Jesus just looks at us, then quietly says, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer.”

Jesus, you seemed to be so troubled as you prayed. Why were you sweating drops of blood? Why did you ask the Father to take a cup from you? Why did you say, “Not as I will but as you will?” I am sorry I kept falling asleep. I really am. You wanted us near you while you prayed. You seemed to be so troubled as you prayed. I am sorry I kept falling asleep. I really am. You wanted us near you while you prayed.

Jesus there are so many people in my life who are going through difficulties. But too often I am like the disciples who fell asleep when you wanted them near you for comfort. Too often I let my own needs keep me from spending time with the people who are going through difficulties – praying with them and listening to them just as you would. Lord Jesus, please help me get my priorities straight. Amen.

**![MC900039315[1]]()**

STATION 3

JESUS IS TAKEN PRISONER
Mark 14:43-52 Matthew 26:47-56 Luke 22:47-53

Jesus is telling us that his betrayer is close at hand. He says “Get up-Let us go”. What’s that noise? It sounds like a mob coming up the hill. I see men with torches, swords, clubs and who is that in the front? Judas! What’s he doing here? He left the Passover feast in such a hurry and now he leads this mob? He greets Jesus with a kiss on the cheek-I guess everything is fine. Wait, two men grab Jesus’ arms and start taking him away. No - that can’t be right. One of our brothers sees this and draws his sword and slashes at the servant of the High Priest. He cut his ear off-I can see the blood pouring down His face. But Jesus breaks away from his captors, not to run but to reach out and touch the servant’s ear. And it is healed. The Jesus turns and talks to Judas and the guards. I can’t hear what he is saying but if they are arresting him, they’ll probably be coming be coming for me next and so I better run while I still can.

I don’t understand what is happening. The High Priests saw Jesus every day, in the temple and the streets. They talked with Him all the time. Why are they coming now in the middle of the night to take him away like a common thief? And why is Judas with them? It almost seems like he was leading them. That makes no sense. He was with us from the beginning. Well forget Judas. I hope Jesus will be alright but I can’t follow to see where they are taking him. I have to worry about myself.

Lord Jesus. When the time comes for me to be called to follow you, let me not run away in fear. Let me walk beside you because I know that you will guide and protect me. Give me the courage to say “Yes, I belong to Jesus. He is my friend and I will never forsake Him.” Let me show the world that with you in my life, I can do all things, face all challenges, conquer all the world has to throw in my path.

**![MC900039315[1]]()**

STATION 4
JESUS IS SCOURGED

Mark 15:16-20 Matthew 27:27-31 John 19:1-3

 I don’t know how they will ever get the dark stains out of the robe they draped over you. Perhaps because it is purple they won’t show too much. The rough pieces of iron embedded in the leather whip that the Roman soldiers used have left your back a bloody ruin. Purple cloaks are expensive and uncommon; I’m surprised they used it – it’s sure to become covered with blood. I’m glad I won’t have to deal with it.

 Oh Jesus! How can I prattle on about stains in a cloak as you stand there, barely on your feet after the scourging, with even more blood running down your face from the cruel crown they have jammed onto your head. The soldiers wrapped pieces of cloth around their hands to protect them against the thorns, but you have no protection from either the thorns or from the cruel mocking, the jagged taunts that assail your ears even as your body is tortured. For one moment I thought I saw an errant ray of sunshine light up your crown of thorns so it looked as if it were made of gold, but it must have been my imagination trying to trick me into believing that this horror isn’t happening. Jesus, I am not one of the soldiers torturing you, but somehow I feel complicit in their actions.

 Jesus, please keep me from becoming like those soldiers. If I ever pick up a whip or such a crown let the sharp edges and points pierce my hands that I would know what it is that I am doing. Jesus, forget what I said about not wanting to deal with the cloak. If it were to come to me, I would hold it closely, stains and all, to remind me of your suffering that somehow, although I know not how, involves me.

**![MC900039315[1]]()**

STATION 5

JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Mark 15:6-15 Matthew 27:15-26 Luke 23:17-25 John 19:12-16

Jerusalem is so crowded today. All these out of towner’s are here for the Passover. But this crowd is unusually rowdy. Why all this commotion? Oh, I see, Pilate is announcing that he will perform his usual Passover custom of letting 1 prisoner go free. I wonder who it will be? I see the soldiers are bringing out Barabbas – oh, he’s that horrible barbarian who started the rebellion in the city and murdered innocent citizens. And wait, I can’t quite see the other man. Oh, it’s Jesus …of Nazareth. I heard him preach & teach about love & forgiveness. What has he done wrong? Now Pilate is asking, “Which one do you want me to release to you Barabbas or Jes..?” Pilate can’t even finish his sentence and the crowd is wildly shouting, “Barab-bas! Barab-bas!” I’m stunned. I open my mouth to say “Jesus, release Jesus”, but no sound comes out. The soldiers are loosening the bonds around Barabbas to let him go free. Now the crowd is yelling, “Crucify! Crucify!” This crowd has turned into a mob that wants to crucify Jesus. The mob is so loud that I can’t hear what Pilate is saying, but he’s washing his hands and going back inside. My head is saying, “No! Jesus is no criminal”, but I can’t speak. I’m so scared for my life.

Dear Jesus, I know that you are innocent. I truly hoped that Pilate would simply release you. Where are your followers? Is no one here to defend you? I’m to blame for what they are doing to you. I was silent – I didn’t speak out against injustice. I’m so sorry that you have to pay the price for me.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I humbly ask for your forgiveness. I was only thinking of myself & didn’t want to get involved. Please help me to be bold to speak out for you. Thank you, Jesus, for going to the cross for me. Amen. (blow out candle)

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### STATION 6JESUS RECEIVES HIS CROSSJohn 19:16-17

I see you accept the Cross in the midst of such mockery. You could have refused. What more could they have done to you? Yet you begin this journey, knowing full well where it will lead. I hear no words of complaint, no protestations of innocence, no cursing the injustice. And yet I am so prone to complain and whine about the most trivial things. Sometimes the things I face in my life are more than trivial.  Sometimes the troubles of life bear down on me. But I so easily fall into self-pity. I too often assume that I am the only one who bears a cross, or that my cross is larger and heavier than any others.

But I am not alone in that.  People all around me bear far more than I must bear. You accepted your cross without self-pity. O Lord, forgive me for forgetting that in my weakness I am driven to trust on you, and that in that trust my weakness becomes your strength.  Forgive my attitudes of self-pity that make me more repulsive than loving. I do not ask for crosses to bear.  But when they come, give me the strength to bear them as one who follows your example.

Dear Lord,I would like to think that I am ready to follow you who offer a Kingdom of peace and love for one another.  But am I?  Am I willing to yield my ideas of what the Kingdom should look like for the role of a servant?  Am I really so willing to give up my human preoccupation with power and control and accept a different kind of crown than I was expecting?

Help me. Amen

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STATION 7

JESUS IS HELPED BY SIMON OF CYRENE

Mark 15:21 Matthew 27:32 Luke 23:26-27

My name is Simon. I took my two sons from our home in Cyrene to spend some time in the country. But I had promised my wife we’d be home much earlier than this. I forgot about the crowds all in Jerusalem for the Passover. It seems like we’ll never get across this square by Pilate’s home. Maybe we can just slip around these people here and get across the street, then we’ll be on our way home at last. Ah, here we are at the street. Wait, is that soldier calling out to me? He is, oh no! He wants me to carry the cross for this condemned man, Jesus. No, I need to get home, my wife will be worrying about me. But I see that Jesus is beaten too badly to carry the cross himself. And he has such a peaceful look in his eyes, I just can’t say no. Okay, I’ll pick up the cross and carry it for you, Jesus. Whatever you want.

Dear Lord, I don’t understand any of this. Why is Jesus condemned to die, but he seems much more at ease with the situation than I am? Why am I so nervous about everything, lately? Help me, Lord, to accept the things I can’t change, and to trust your guidance in my life. Thank you, Lord! Amen.

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STATION 8

JESUS SPEAKS TO THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Luke 23:27-28

 Jesus, as you stagger under the weight of your cross, while the rough wood grates against your already raw and bleeding flesh, you are followed by a crowd of women, mourning and lamenting you. Turning, you speak, but not to comfort them or thank them for their concern. “Weep not for me” you say, “but weep for yourselves, for the days that are coming.”

 For the days that are coming? Does this current day have such a lack of pain, misery, and hate, that days yet to come will eclipse it in evil? The crowd moves on, the women’s voices fade to nothingness, and I, afraid to follow, stand alone, wondering what you meant by your words. I am suddenly fearful not just of the days to come, but of the remainder of this day as well. You are staggering slowly towards your death, but it is I who am terrified. I am so afraid of being left alone to face by myself the evil that abounds in this world, evil in which I myself have participated. Surely there is some hope to which I can cling.

 Lord, bring to my remembrance the words of hope you have spoken, the promises you have made. As I repent of my evil, create in me a clean heart, and in so doing remove my fear, so that I might follow you no matter where the path may lead. Amen.

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STATION 9

JESUS IS STRIPPED

Mark 15;20 Matthew 27:31 John 19:23-24

 Finally they arrive at the God-forsaken place where Jesus will be crucified. People dump their garbage very near the place known as Golgotha. Hurriedly, roughly, his clothes are stripped from his back leaving him naked in front of the crowd - naked, exhausted, humiliated. His torn, bleeding back is ready to be forced onto the rough wood of the cross.

 I stripped him. My job is to make sure that there is nothing left to a man to mark him as a man. To expose him. To humiliate him. Some of my men did so with more glee than others - wondering who would get his robe - a robe that despite the blood and the grime and the tears, might fetch a good price. Jesus just stands there - swaying. He accepts this indignity like no other man I have crucified. What is it about this man ?

 Dear Lord, I reach out and grasp greedily for so much, searching for what will satisfy. I do not know how to let go of things and let you in. Even when I want to bring healing and wholeness, I get caught up in deeds that bring the opposite. Forgive me.

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STATION 10

JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

Mark 15:22-32 Matthew 27:33-44 Luke 23:33-43 John 19:23-27

 Roughly, contemptuously, the soldiers thrust Jesus down onto his cross. Holding him down - some sit on him - they pound the nails through his hands and feet.

 The ring of the hammer on the nails, the sickening sound of flesh and bone crunching echo in my brain. I'll never, never ever forget this. Somehow this one crucifixion is different than all the others I've been to. The torture, for that's what it was, has not stopped.

 It still happens every day. From utter brutality to the unkind word that flays the soul -it still happens. But the nonchalance, the ease with which my soldiers threw the dice beneath his feet as if nothing were happening horrifies me today. But then, well then it was a blessed distraction to hear them chattering and laughing - and to not have to listen to the sounds of weeping as Jesus and the others hung on their crosses.

 O God, our God, I am the one who has forsaken thee, fled from the crosses you ask me to bear, turned to endless games and sport to numb our pain. That day you did not flee. Help me to turn to you, to embrace you and the yoke you have offered me. Amen

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STATION 11

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Mark 15:33-41 Matthew 27:45-56 Luke 23:44-49 John 19:28-30

Jesus, it’s been a long morning. The longest morning ever. Before the clouds gathered and dimmed the day, the sun had almost reached its peak so it must now be the sixth hour and I have been standing here watching you since …. since the sound of hammer blows pierced my ears even as the nails pierced your flesh. I almost left as I watched your blood drip down the freshly cut wood and stain it with a darker hue, but for some reason I remained. I hid in the crowd even as I have hidden in other crowds in other places, watching you and listening to you, but now I wait. I am waiting for your death. I have never wanted to watch a man’s death, yet ..…but wait, you are speaking again. I have not understood your previous words but perhaps this time you will call upon angels to release you. But no, you are beginning to recite the 22nd Psalm, but you don’t… finish…… You can’t. You’ve just died. No angels, no trumpets, no army of God. You just up and died. Your body hanging on the cross sags like a wax candle that has burned so hotly that it now droops from the heat of its flame. You accepted this. You accepted an avoidable death and I don’t understand why. I sense that it has something to do with me, but what? Why did you die? What has the death of one man have to do with me?

Oh God, I don’t understand. Why should my soul be in such a dark place because of the death of one man, a man I only watched but never really knew? What has the death of Jesus have to do with me? My God, do not leave me unanswered as you left Jesus on the cross. Lord, answer me. Amen.

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STATION 12

JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

Mark 15:42-46a Matthew 27:57-59 Luke 23:50-53a John 19:38

 Your work is done. You can come down from the cross now. It is time to rest. The show is over and the crowd has dispersed. Only a scattered handful of your followers and some Roman soldiers remain. But look, Joseph of Arimathea has asked Pilate for your body and has brought a clean sheet with which to wrap your bloody, lacerated body. A man of courage, he ignores the hard stares of the soldiers and offers you a compassion which you have not otherwise experienced on this terrible day. Joseph handles you tenderly, as if he is holding something precious, not the body of an executed criminal. To my surprise, the tears in my eyes match those in the eyes of Joseph and I am moved to help, but I find myself to be a coward, afraid to be identified with you lest somehow I find myself on a cross as well. Yet, somehow I find myself walking over to Joseph and asking if I can help. Joseph allows me to grasp one end of the sheet in which he has wrapped you and together we carry your body away from this terrible place. I know not where we are going, but I have a sudden conviction that I have witnessed not only an ending, but also a beginning. Is this what is meant by faith? I know not, but I ask you Jesus, wherever you may be, to grant me the courage to acknowledge you even when my fear tells me to run and hide, even when the Roman soldiers in my life look at me with hardness in their eyes.

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STATION 13

JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB

Mark 15:46b-47 Matthew 27:60-61 Luke 23:53b-56 John 19:41-42

 Oh Jesus, I can’t believe that you are dead. When I picked up your body, my heart sank and the spirit in me cried. Now as I wrap your body in linen cloth, I see all the abuse your broken body was subjected to…. You deserved none of it. You healed the sick and the lame… I saw a crippled man stand and walk with my own eyes! Why would they do this to you!

 Now that I have lain your body in the tomb and the stone is in place, I feel like I just buried all my hope behind that stone. Jesus, how can you leave us here like this! I feel so alone. I thought you were the messiah, the one that would save us

Jesus, you lived a life like no other. I never met a man like you. I believed you were the son of God himself. The things I saw and all the things you taught us I will never forget. I pray that my life will be always changed because of my relationship with you, and I pray that I will never forget you.

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STATION14
JESUS’ RESURRECTION
Mark 16:1-8 Matthew 28:1-9 Luke 24:1-12 John 20:1-10

It is very early the next morning. And here we are, walking in the dark toward our Lord’s tomb. Sunrise must be at least an hour away. We come with our oils and spices to anoint the body of our Savior. This will not be a pleasant task, but an honorable one, and we know it must be done. We are wondering who will roll away the stone. It is far too heavy for us to handle by ourselves. But wait! Look! The stone has alreadybeen rolled away. Who could have done this? And His body – it’s gone! A stranger is coming toward us. His white dress is so bright we can hardly make out his face. He sees how frightened we are and tells us not to be afraid. But how can we not be afraid? Someone has taken away our Lord! But the stranger explains that Jesus hasrisen from the dead and is already on His way to Galilee. We listen eagerly, wanting so desperately to believe what this stranger is saying. He tells us that *we* will see Jesus again, but first we should go quickly to tell the others what is happening. Something moves us to do just as the stranger tells us. Still afraid, but hoping that it’s really true, we hurry away from the tomb. We even begin to rejoice and delight in the possibility of it all! And suddenly, just as the first light of dawn brightens the morning sky, we see Him.

He had promised that He would be raised from the dead on the third day. So why am I so amazed? It really is Him! How could I have felt so hopeless, feeling like I had lost my very best friend? How could I have ever doubted that He would keep His word? That He *would* be with us always? That He would be with mealways?

Lord Jesus, as we remember how those first witnesses to your Resurrection fell at your feet and worshipped you, we long to know and feeland even to see the power of your presence among us now, in this very moment. There isstill weeping in the night that longs for the joy that is promised in the morning. There are still *stones* remaining in our paths that can only be rolled away by your mighty hand. But because of You, because of your Resurrection, we know it will be done! Because of you, we can believe in a love that is so much stronger than death. Because of you, our hope in any and all circumstances is neverin vain. We are fully confident that every ounce of joy we have ever known because of You will be fully restored. Thank you for giving us every reason to believe not only in our redemption from sin but also in our redemption from every form of darkness in our lives. Thank you for being so fully alive within us and among us – in our churches, in our homes, in this very room tonight.

Thank you for the privilege of being faithful witnesses to the power of your Resurrection in the world today! Amen.

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