



Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

Adding to your physical pain was the cruelly mocking indictment unfurled above your head: “Jesus Christ, King of the Jews.” So many times, I, too, have tried to expose the sins

of others for all to see, to mock them for the things they’ve done to me. Transform my vengefulness into loving forgiveness. When I am wronged, help me to turn those occasions into a greater good—a chance to bring others to you.



Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb

Jesus, now your friends have scattered, your body grows cold in the darkness of the tomb. Still, something is stirring here that draws the faithful ones back to you—first, Mary Magdalene, then Peter and the disciple whom you loved. They put

aside their fears and came to find a peace that is beyond all understanding. Give me hope in the face of what seems hopeless. Turn my disappointments and sorrows into the joy of being united, today and forever, with you.



THE WAY OF THE CROSS

MINUTE MEDITATIONS

Jesus Dies on the Cross

Jesus, you poured out your spirit completely and handed it over to the Father. Often, it’s the opposite for me. I tend to cling to the crosses in my life. I let them color my outlook. Free me from the power these crosses exert over me. Change my self-centered habits into

the kind of self-giving acts that you accomplished.

The Body of Jesus Is Taken Down From the Cross

Jesus, I can’t claim to know the heartbreak your mother felt holding your lifeless body in her arms. But I know about difficult endings: the loss of a job, the end of a relationship, the death of a loved one. Such situations can leave a hole in my spirit that feels as if it will never be filled. Help me to see difficult endings as an invitation to draw closer to the Father. Through the pain, teach me how to find new life in you.



Final Prayer

Jesus, in the shadow of your cross, I begin to see how true it is that your ways are not my ways. As I commemorate your passion and death, pour out your transforming grace into my life. Teach me to love you more deeply and, in loving you, to experience how you make all things new, how you invite me to holiness through my everyday fears and failures. Take my hand and help me to work together with you for good. AMEN.



You Make All Things NEW

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Opening Prayer

Jesus, even in the turmoil of your passion and death, you call me to see the hand of your Father at work. In surrendering all to his will, you made all things new—you made everything holy. Now, as I follow you on the path to Calvary, help me to learn from the fears and failures of my life and, working through them, to draw closer to you. Amen.

Jesus Is Condemned to Death

Jesus, Pilate reveals the best and the worst in humanity. He embodies political ruthlessness and is quick to crush whatever threatens his power. Yet even this hardened, cynical man finds something stirring in his soul when he encounters your selflessness, your truth. Turn my cynicism to good and teach me to live selflessly.



Jesus Meets His Mother

How Mary's heart must have ached to see you there! How desperately she must have wanted to make it all go away! I feel similar when those closest to me make what seem to be poor choices. Even if I know what's best for them, ultimately, I can't control the outcomes. Help me to become more like your mother, loving those closest to me as unconditionally as I can.



Jesus Carries His Cross

Jesus, the cross stood for failure, a life come to nothing. Because you had been loved deeply, you knew the cross was a lie. Still, you took up the heavy timber and trans-

formed every slight or humiliation. Help me to forgive all who hurt me and to abandon my desire for payback.



Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry the Cross

Simon's act of service symbolizes the body of Christ at work. As St. Paul wrote, "Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it"

(1 Corinthians 12:27). But my constant temptation is to believe that I am sufficient without others. Teach me the wisdom of being authentically human through giving help, through accepting it from others.

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Veronica offers you a seemingly small comfort, a chance to wipe the sweat and blood from your face. Yet by blessing her thoughtfulness with the image of your sacred face, you remind me that every act of kindness is a way of bringing your light into the world. Help me to spread your light. Keep me always ready to share my gifts, both large and small.



Jesus Falls the Second Time

Jesus, again and again, I find myself begging forgiveness for the same selfish sin. I gaze upon your courageous face and see the struggle there, as you stumble and rise once again on the way to Calvary. Help me to believe that with and through you, all things are possible. Turn my recurring faults into good. Use them, I pray, to pave my path to you.



Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

Jesus, these women felt diminished by your unjust fate, and they did what they could to oppose the evil. Help me to see

that I, too, am linked to those who are weakest and most vulnerable around me. Crumble my heart of stone and use the chunks for mortar for the building up of your kingdom here on earth.

Jesus Falls the Third Time

Whose image do I see in your bloodied cheek pressed against the paving stone? I see myself, beaten up by a string of misfortunes. But when you stumble and fall, you rise again. Your resoluteness contrasts sharply with my tendency toward self-pity and despair. Use the conflicts I experience to illuminate my darkness with the transforming power of your love.



Jesus Falls the First Time

Jesus, there are times when I feel a sense of purpose, almost as if your hand is guiding me. Then, inevitably, I stumble, and my faith is shaken. Was it that way for you? Did you wonder why

the small things tripped you up—even when you'd set out to do the Father's will? Grant me the grace to see the good in my setbacks.



Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

Jesus, I'd like to believe that I don't judge people by how they look or by the clothes that they wear, but I often do. In your nakedness at the foot of the cross, you call me to recognize the goodness in every child of God. When I am tempted to disparage others, help me to embrace them as you would—in loving affirmation.