

# **THE LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

**Ron Meyer, SVdP Voice of the Poor**

## **1. JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH**

Go to criminal court on arraignment day and watch the prisoners being brought in chains and uniforms to be arraigned for their accused crime. Most of them have no bond and, therefore, they will spend their entire time in prison. Under our system, they are innocent until proven guilty. They are just as innocent as Jesus Christ. While we are all responsible for our acts, whether we are rich or poor, it is much easier to be moral when you have the support of a family, an education and a good job.

## **2. JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS**

Go to the Pappas School for homeless children. Most of these children have no homes and take care of themselves. During a recent Christmas drive by the Arizona Republic, they requested that food be donated, but only food that did not need to be cooked because these children have no place to cook it. One of the more important items they needed were alarm clocks to wake themselves up to go to school. However, they had to be windup alarm clocks, not electric alarm clocks, because most of them do not live in places where there is electricity.

## **3. JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME**

Go to an AA meeting. Listen to people who tell their story of struggling to overcome their substance abuse problem. Most of them repeatedly fail in their attempt but still manifest hope that they can overcome their problem. They fall every day.

## **4. JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER**

Go to county jail at the time before visitation hours begin. See the women waiting to visit their children and husbands in jail.

## **5. SIMON HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS**

Jesus Christ cannot carry his cross alone. Just as Simon helps him carry his cross at the crucifixion, we must help carry the cross of homelessness, hunger, social injustice, etc. Spend a few moments meditating on what are we doing to help Christ carry his cross.

## **6. VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS**

Go to a St. Vincent De Paul dining room to see the face of Christ in the poor. Either work in serving the food or stand in line with the people. On one hand experience the poverty. On the other hand, see the joy of people who have nothing, but are so grateful to at least have a meal for that day.

**7. JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME**

Go to a battered women's shelter. Pray for those women and children who suffered abuse from one whom they loved or have loved. Also, pray for the fallen men who have succumbed to anger and cruelty as their response to life.

**8. JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM**

Go to the Maricopa County Health Department and see the frustration of persons diagnosed with illness, but have no health insurance and cannot qualify for AHCCCS. Go to the waiting room at the St. Vincent De Paul medical clinic and witness the women and children who are receiving medical help because they have no other recourse.

**9. JESUS FALLS A THIRD TIME**

Drive through the neighborhoods that are experiencing gang activity. See the gang graffiti representing a hopelessness that causes persons to turn to gangs for companionship and "family" that they cannot find elsewhere. Also, meditate on the threat and hopelessness that gang activity creates in the community.

**10. JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS CLOTHES**

Go to the homeless shelter for families and see men and women with their children stripped of all material means and are now staying in the homeless shelter for the bare essentials of life.

**11. JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS**

Go to the maternity ward at the Maricopa County Hospital and witness a crack baby going through withdrawals. The innocent of the innocent experiencing pain greater than most of us will ever experience.

**12. JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS**

Drive to an abortion clinic and pray for the innocent being killed. Also pray for the women who must live with the consequences of choosing abortion to solve their problem. Most women chose abortion as a last resort and not a first resort.

**13. JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS**

Drive to a playground of a grade school during recess and hear the joys and laughter of children. Through Jesus Christ, our sufferings can be turned into joy and salvation.

**14. JESUS IS LAID IN A TOMB**

Visit a church and pray.