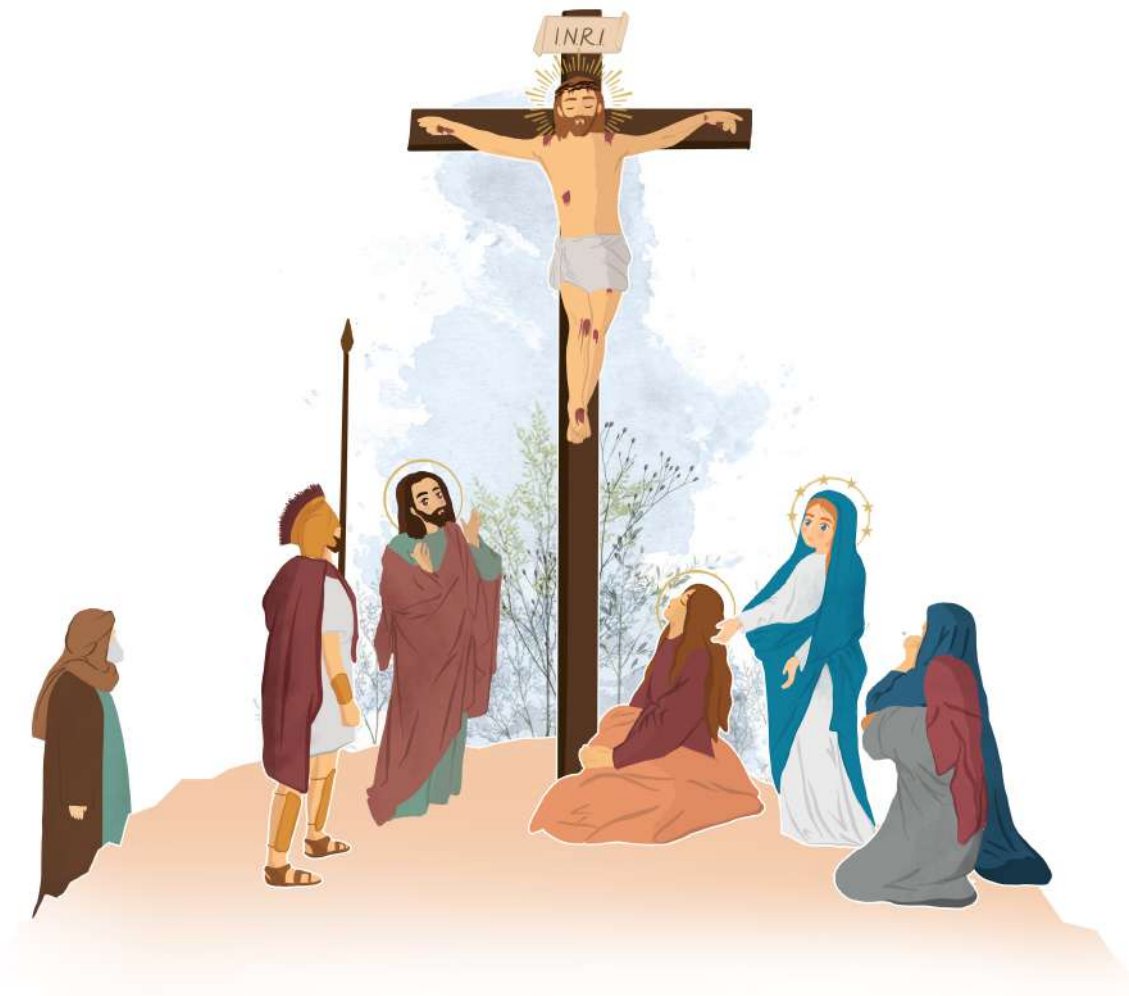


SEVEN MOMENTS WITH THE LORD



**WALKING WITH
JESUS AND
OTHER CHARACTERS
IN HIS PASSION**



WOMEN BENEATH THE CROSS

Beneath the Cross there was a small group of women. Whilst many of his disciples feared for their own life and fled away, these courageous women stayed as close as possible to Jesus. We too, in our lives, come across difficult moments. These women encourage us to keep going!

But they did not only stay close to Jesus during his passion. They had experienced Jesus' love for them and now they wanted to love him back by staying with him till the very end. These women teach us how to deal with suffering in life. In the Gospel according to John (19:25) we read:

“Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala.”

They must have suffered a lot, because to be so close to someone who is suffering is not an easy thing to do. Yet, we are called to follow in these women's footsteps.

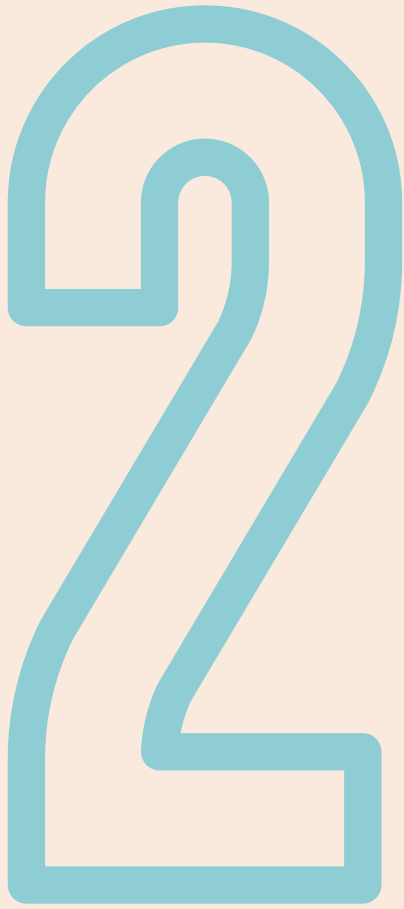
These women beneath the cross teach us that even when we are in circumstances in which it seems that we can do nothing, we can still in fact accomplish a lot by remaining close to those who are suffering. We too, like these women, are called to share with others God's love for us.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus,
we pray
for all those people
who are suffering.
We also pray
for all those people
who are not courageous
to help others in need.
Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be
We adore you, o Jesus, because
by your cross you have saved us.





NICODEMUS

Nicodemus is described as a Pharisee. The Pharisees were a group of Jews who were very attentive in keeping the Law, and many times they opposed Jesus throughout His life. Like the Pharisees, we too are sometimes very stubborn. Yet we also know that Nicodemus was a good man, who was always looking for Truth.

In fact, he went to speak to Jesus one day, and Jesus told him one of the most well-known verses in the Bible, as we read in the Gospel according to Saint John (3:16):

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.”

We also know that Nicodemus was a leader of the Jews. In fact, Nicodemus was one of the people who had to decide if Jesus should go in front of Pilate, and we all know what happened when Jesus went in front of Pilate. Pilate send him to be crucified. The choices we make, too, have a lasting effect on others: is this effect usually positive?

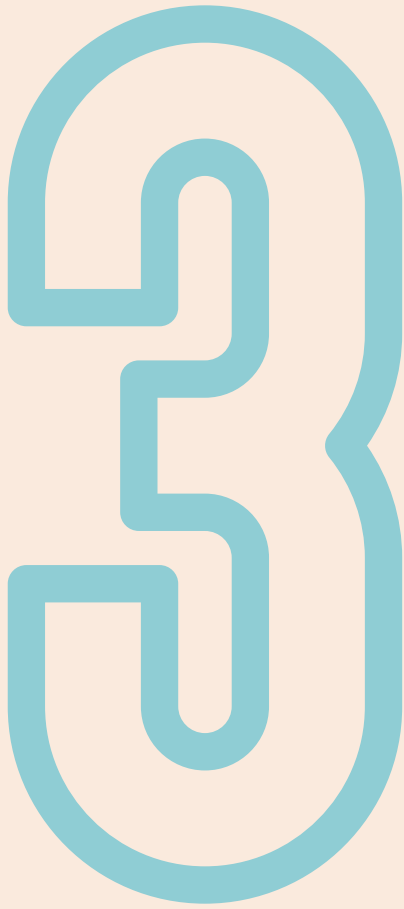
Nicodemus in the end believed that Jesus was the son of God. He not only helped to bury Jesus in a proper way but he is also described as a disciple of Jesus, and that means that he truly believed. We too are called to believe in Jesus, just as Nicodemus did.



PRAYER

Dear Jesus,
please help us
to believe more in you.
We also pray for all those
who because of their doubts
are not willing to accept
your love for them,
so they too
become your disciples.
Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be
We adore you, o Jesus,
because by your cross you
have saved us.



THE CENTURION

A centurion had to be a brave and strong soldier, and always ready to accomplish the orders he receives. He was also a strict and disciplined commander of some one hundred soldiers in the Roman Empire. We too, like the centurion, are asked to take our tasks - whether at school or at home, for example - seriously.

A particular centurion says a very important phrase; soon after he pierced the side of our Lord with his lance, we read, in Gospel according to Mark (15:39), that:

“When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he breathed his last he said, ‘Truly this man was the Son of God!’”

For sure, he was moved by the merciful and forgiving response of Jesus to the injustice that he was suffering at the hands of his own people whom he truly loved. We too are called to be kind to others. To be kind to others means to love others, and there is nothing which makes us more happy than when we love and help others.



If someone has been unkind to me, will I do something nice back to them? Can I offer my forgiveness in front of someone who has wronged me and who asks me for it? There are many other ways by which we can show our mercy to others; can I pray for the people whom I have wronged and for those who have wronged me?

PRAYER

Dear Jesus,
we pray for all workers,
so that they too,
like the centurion in the Gospel,
meet Jesus while working.
Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be
We adore you, o Jesus,
because by your cross you have
saved us.



MARY MAGDALENE

Her name was Mary. We call her 'Magdalene' because she came from a town called 'Magdala'. She was one of Jesus' closest friends. How did this friendship start? She was sick and Jesus healed her. Mary's life was changed forever after her healing.

Mary wanted to know Jesus and be close to him. And that is what she did! Mary is thus an important role model for us Christians: like Mary, we too are called to grow in our prayer lives. During Jesus' passion, the apostles were so afraid of being hurt that they ran away. Not Mary! She stayed with Jesus until his last moment. When Jesus rose from death, he appeared to Mary Magdalene first and asked her to tell the apostles that he was alive, as we read in the Gospel according to Mark (16:9-10):

"When he had risen, early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. She went and told his companions who were mourning and weeping."

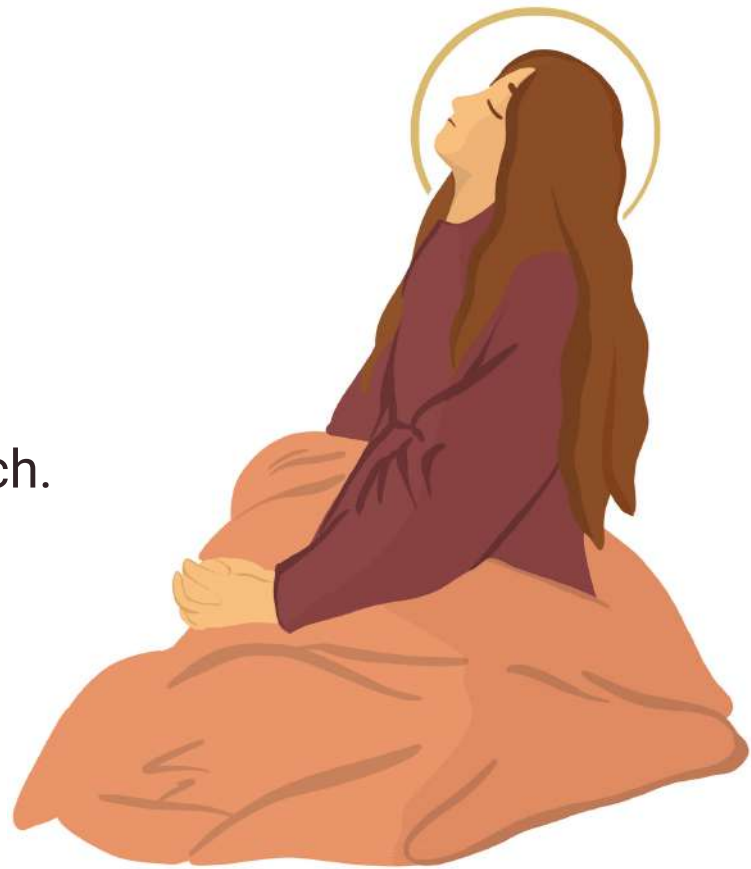
Mary followed Jesus even though he did not ask her to, and she stayed with him until the very end. From all the apostles and disciples, Mary Magdalene was the one who behaved as his best friend: she stayed with him and was overjoyed to tell the world that He is Risen! Let us all be like Mary Magdalene: let's be close to Jesus and practice what he preached.

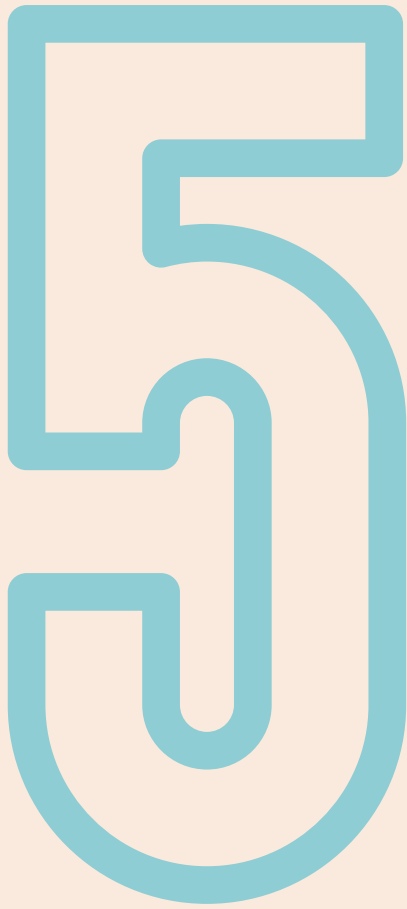
PRAYER

Dear Jesus,
we pray for our friends
and also for those
we do not like very much.
We pray that we too,
like Mary Magdalene,
be very good friends
to those around us.
Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be

We adore you, o Jesus,
because by your cross you have
saved us.





SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST

St John the Evangelist is known to be one of the apostles of Jesus. Names in Hebrew all have a meaning and the name John means that God is gracious. In our lives, as in the life of Saint John, God bestows upon us his graces. This is most seen in the Passion narratives.

In the Gospel according to Saint John, the expression “the beloved disciple” could refer, in fact, to Saint John himself. This expression led to many artists to paint Saint John always close to Jesus, attentive to what Jesus is saying.

As we read in the Gospel according to Saint John (15:12):

“This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.”

John wrote about how Jesus loves the world, and lived his life accordingly. This is our task, too: to pray to God to help us know what our vocation is, and to help us to live it.

How wonderful it is to be called a beloved disciple and to know Jesus intimately. May we too try to be close to the heart of Jesus and try to do what he asks from us, as Saint John did.



PRAYER

Dear Jesus,
we pray for our catechists,
teachers,
and leaders in the church,
so that they too,
like Saint John the Evangelist,
keep following you.

Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be

We adore you, o Jesus,
because by your cross you
have saved us.



OUR LADY

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was present in Jesus' life from its very beginning to its very end. Mary had accepted Angel's invitation to be the Mother of Jesus. She cared for Jesus as a young boy and as a teenager, and she followed him throughout his ministry. We too are called to follow Jesus, just as Mary, his mother, did.

Mary stayed with Jesus even during his Passion, crucifixion and death on the Cross. In the Gospel according to Saint John (19:26-27) we read:

"When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there 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 the disciple took her into his home."

Jesus gave us Mary as our Mother when he said to the beloved disciple: "Here is your mother." The disciple whom Jesus loved, represents all humanity and all the Church. He represents me and you, under the cross.

Mary is your mother, she loves you and she is always at your side. She is present in your joys and sorrows. Speak to her in the depth of your heart and ask her to stay always by your side as she stayed beside Jesus.



PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus,
for giving us your mother, Mary,
as our own mother
to protect us in our difficulties
and to teach us
how to love each other better.
Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be
We adore you, o Jesus, because by
your cross you have saved us.



JESUS ON THE CROSS

Let us imagine Jesus talking to us:

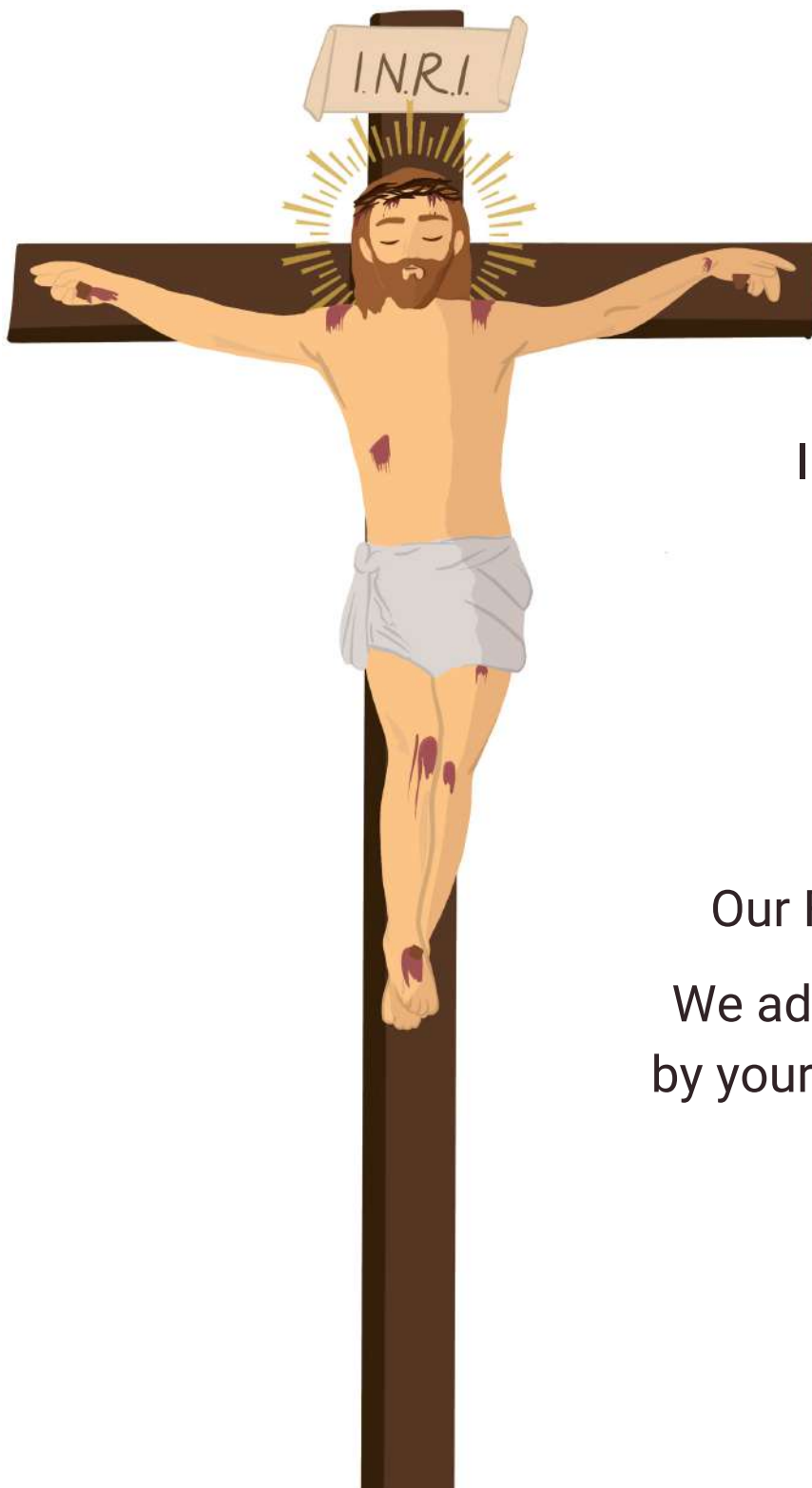
The journey that brought me here was a long one. I am not referring to the journey during which I carried the cross on my shoulders, but I'm referring to the journey of my whole life.

I remember myself as a young boy in Joseph's workshop. I remember being baptised in the river Jordan, and I also remember the names of many many people whom I helped and healed. Yes, I remember all of these and more... but why am I nailed to a cross?

I am nailed to a cross because humanity, though created by God, wanted to sin. I want to save humanity, to give all of humanity a second chance, as I did with a thief crucified next to me (Luke 23:42-43):

"Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied to him: 'Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'"

In this way, all that humanity needs to do is to believe in me and to love everyone else, whoever they are, starting from home and continuing in every place one finds oneself in.



PRAYER

Dear Jesus,
I am very sorry for sinning.
Help me, Jesus,
to follow you and
to be like you
by loving others.
Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be
We adore you, o Jesus, because
by your cross you have saved us.

be KIDS

