



# Meditations on the Way of the Cross – an Invitation to Daily Intimacy with Jesus

## LENT CYCLE A, 2020

**We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,  
because by your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

### INTRODUCTION

“Linger on the hill of Calvary. Rub a finger on the timber and press the nail into your hand. Taste the tinge of cheap wine and feel the scrape of a thorn on your brow. Touch the velvet dirt, moist with the blood of God. Allow the tools of torture to tell their story. Listen as they tell you what God did to win your heart.” He Chose the Nails by Max Lucado.

#### 1. JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

*He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults:  
when he suffered, he made no threats.*

*Instead, he entrusted himself to the One who judges justly...*

*Through his wounds we have been healed. 1 Pt. 2: 23-24*

“Bring forward the power people of the world: the men and women in command of nations and the corporate empires, the rock stars and entertainment stars wrapped in stretch limos, furs and jewels; the wealthy who move from one fabulous estate to the other; the chairpersons of the great boardrooms. Notice all the people who serve them, the people who make their beds and cook their food. In imagination, ask them to come, one by one, and stand next to [Jesus condemned to death]. What do you see in the contrast? What is the worth of it all?... Lift the curtain that tries to hide the poor and the suffering from us. See the homeless, the political prisoners, the street kids... the crowded families of Calcutta, the black shantytowns of South Africa, the children of war... refugees everywhere. Go to hospices and experience the last days of the dying. Gently lead them to [a place next to Jesus condemned to death]. What is your reaction? What is the worth of it all?” Images of Jesus by Alfred McBride O.Praem, pp. 196, 197

#### Ash Wednesday

*Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;  
in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense.*

*Thoroughly wash me from my guilt  
and of my sin cleanse me. Ps. 51: 3*

It was eternal mercy that brought Jesus to the court of Pilate and propelled Him to His death on the cross. For what mercy, in particular, are you most grateful to have received from Jesus? As He stands in the praetorium, beaten, betrayed and mocked, what do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office*

*Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325*

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

*Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations*

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

### Thursday after Ash Wednesday

*Jesus said to his disciples:*

*“The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected  
by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes,  
and be killed and on the third day be raised.” Lk. 9:22*

The cross of Christ is meaningless without the promise of the resurrection. Do you live your Christian life in hope of rising when you fall? When have you forgotten that piece of the story? What do you want to say to Jesus?



### Friday after Ash Wednesday

*For you are not pleased with sacrifices;  
should I offer a burnt offering, you would not accept it.*

*My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit;  
a heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not spurn. Ps 51:18-19*

Sure, the Father forgives us when we repent of betraying Jesus and ourselves and others, separating ourselves from our Eternal Father. How do you make amends for that? Have you ever simply blown smoke at the sins of your life? What does a contrite spirit look like in your life? What do you want to say to Jesus?



### Saturday after Ash Wednesday

*Jesus said... “Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do.  
I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners.” Lk. 5:32*

More amazing than the fact that a sinless Jesus was condemned to death is the fact that He was willing – HIS PURPOSE WAS – to die for us sinners. He didn't wait until we shaped up first and became more “worthy” of his sacrifice. No, He loves us to death while we were dirty with sin and deserving death ourselves. What do you want to say to Jesus?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
150 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC

973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

## 2. JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

*His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God,  
but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a slave,  
and became as human beings are. Phil 2:6-7*

“The cross is like our hearts – hidden from view but critical for our evaluation of the world. It should be the control center of our lives... The cross is not meant to make us sad. Jesus focused on the joy of Christianity. He said its outcome is like the woman in labor who forgets the pain because she is so overjoyed by the baby who is born. The cross is not opposed to joy. Its wisdom tells us not to begin with pleasure, but to delay gratification so that more lasting joy can be achieved. First the sorrow, then the joy: first Good Friday, then Easter Sunday.” Images of Jesus by Alfred McBride O.Praem, p. 198



### First Sunday in Lent

*For just as through the disobedience of the one man  
the many were made sinners,  
so, through the obedience of the one,  
the many will be made righteous. Rom. 5:19*

How is it that the cross, a barbaric means of putting criminals to death – a statement of power by oppressors – a horror meant not only to mete out justice but also to thwart rebellion – has become the symbol of our identity as Christians? Do you wear a cross, the instrument of Jesus’ righteous act of obedience? Do you do so deliberately? What do you mean to proclaim by wearing it? What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Monday Lent I

*Jesus said to his disciples:  
“When the Son of Man comes in his glory,  
and all the angels with him,  
he will sit upon his glorious throne,  
and all the nations will be assembled before him. Mt. 25: 31-32*

As Jesus carried His cross, He was carrying the seat of His power. Only through death on the cross laid upon His shoulders would He fulfill His mission of love and redemption. It would have been enough for Him to die on the cross. But instead, He carried it. Why do you think He put one foot in front of the other under such a heavy burden? What burdens do you carry? What do you want to say to Jesus?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office

Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC

973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

## Tuesday Lent I

*Thus says the LORD:*

*[My word] shall not return to me void,  
but shall do my will,*

*achieving the end for which I sent it. Is. 55: 11*

So many times, Jesus said He would die and then rise on the third day. The apostles couldn't accept those words. How then, could they accept the actual death on the cross? The cross Jesus carried was both death and life. This is beyond mere human understanding. The crosses you carry are very much the same. What do you make of this? What word is God speaking through the crosses you bear? What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

### 3. JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME UNDER THE WEIGHT OF THE CROSS

*Like one from whom we hide our faces, he was despised,  
and we took no account of him. Is. 53:3*

“The cross teaches us that in life there is failure and victory. We must be capable of tolerating defeat, of bearing our failures patiently, even those of our sins because He paid for us. We must tolerate them in Him, asking forgiveness in Him, but never allowing ourselves to be seduced by this chained dog. It will be good if today, when we go home, we would take 5, 10, 15 minutes in front of the crucifix, either the one we have in our house or on the rosary: look at it, it is our sign of defeat, it provokes persecutions, it destroys us; it is also our sign of victory because it is where God was victorious”. Pope Francis, Sept. 14, 2018

#### Wednesday Lent I

*Jesus said: “This generation is an evil generation;  
it seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it,  
except the sign of Jonah.*

*Just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites,  
so will the Son of Man be to this generation. Lk. 11: 29*

The sign of Jonah – what is this? Jonah tried to escape God’s mission for him, but his running away didn’t turn out too well. He was tossed out of his ship, swallowed up by a whale and spit out on the shore of the place God wanted him to be. Jesus didn’t run from His destiny. Rather, He set His face resolutely toward Jerusalem – where He suffered and fell under the weight of our sins, was swallowed up by evil and death, and triumphed in the end. His faithful and loving “yes” is the sign of Jonah redeemed. How do you face what God is asking of you? What do you want to say to Jesus?



#### Thursday Lent I

*Queen Esther, seized with mortal anguish,  
had recourse to the LORD.*

*She lay prostrate upon the ground, together with her handmaids,  
from morning until evening, and said:*

*“God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, blessed are you.”  
Help me, who am alone and have no help but you...” Est 12: 14-15*

Queen Esther lifted her eyes from the ground to the only One who could save her. Although surrounded by her handmaids, she felt totally alone. When you’ve hit bottom, you have a choice – to remain face down in the dirt, or to look up. Have you realized this choice when you’ve fallen under burdens of sin or illness or heartbreak? What difference does this choice make in your everyday? What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)*

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years



### Friday Lent I

*Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;  
LORD, hear my voice!  
Let your ears be attentive  
to my voice in supplication. Ps. 130: 1-2*

“Praying” is what we call conversing with God. What should we call crying out from the depths? As Jesus fell carrying His cross, He was sapped of energy, in pain and distress, feeling abandoned – in the depths. Surely, He cried out to His Father all along the route to Golgotha. Like Jesus, call out in supplication to the Father about the pain and distress in your life. If your life is peaceful right now, lift your voice on behalf of all your brothers and sisters who suffer. For whom do you pray? What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Saturday Lent I

*Jesus said to his disciples:  
“You have heard that it was said,  
You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.  
But I say to you, love your enemies,  
and pray for those who persecute you,  
that you may be children of your heavenly Father,  
for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good,  
and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. Mt. 5: 43-45*



Jesus lay in the dust with His cross weighing Him down, and what do you suppose He saw? Feet, dirty feet of the passersby and sandaled feet of the soldiers. Perhaps he saw a sword tip or a basket of food laid on the ground. What He didn't see were the faces of the people around Him. At that moment, He couldn't have identified anyone on the route as neighbor or enemy. From a humbled stance, let us treat all alike. The image of Jesus in the dirt may help humility grow. What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)  
Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations*

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years



#### 4. JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

*The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him;  
and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,  
"Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel,  
and to be a sign that will be contradicted (and you yourself a sword will pierce)  
so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Luke 2: 33-35*

"What was it like watching him pray? How did he respond when he saw other kids giggling during the service at the synagogue? When he saw a rainbow, did he ever mention a flood? Did you ever feel awkward teaching him how he created the world? When he saw a lamb being led to the slaughter, did he act differently? Did you ever see him with a distant look on his face as if he were listening to someone you couldn't hear? How did he act at funerals? Did the thought ever occur to you that the God to whom you were praying was asleep under your own roof?"

He Still Moves Stones by Max Lucado, "Twenty-five Questions for Mary" pp.43-44.

#### Sunday Lent II



*Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother,  
and led them up a high mountain by themselves.  
And he was transfigured before them; ... behold,  
a bright cloud cast a shadow over them,  
then from the cloud came a voice that said,  
"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased;  
listen to him." Mt. 17: 1, 5*

Mary knew that Jesus was the Son of the Father. Peter, James and John were just learning this – trying to put it all together. The voice made it clear. In light of the prior knowledge Mary had and the growing understanding of the apostles, the way to Golgotha must have been mind-blowing. Mary must have shouted out in her heart: God's ways are not our ways! Have you ever been in a situation when your heart screamed the same thing? The apostles ran and hid in confusion. Do you hide from the mystery of the cross? What do you want to say to Jesus? To Mary?

#### Monday Lent II

*Give and gifts will be given to you;  
a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing,  
will be poured into your lap.  
For the measure with which you measure  
will in return be measured out to you." Lk. 6 :38*

What was the measure with which Mary gave? Think on this. She gave her body, her reputation, her love, her obedience. She gave her only Son. There was nothing left in her besides the desire to do the will of the Father in ALL things. She gave it all. What are you being called upon to give? Can you do it? What do you want to say to Jesus? To Mary?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

## Tuesday Lent II

*The greatest among you must be your servant.  
Whoever exalts himself will be humbled;  
but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” Mt. 23: 12*

Who is great – if not Mary, the Mother of God? Given this quote from Matthew, she then is the humble servant of all. Pope Francis has great devotion to Mary, Undoer of Knots. Are there knots in your life that you can put into the hands of the handmaid of the Lord? What would you like to have her untie for you? What do you need to untie yourself? What do you want to say to Jesus? To Mary?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)  
Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations



## 5. SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS

*As they led him away, they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian,  
who was coming in from the country;  
and after laying the cross on him,  
they made him carry it behind Jesus. Lk. 23: 26*

“What do you ask of us, O Christ? Above all to carry one another’s burdens, and to entrust them to you in our prayer, which always remains poor. You welcome all who come to you with their burdens, and it is as if, anytime, anywhere, you welcomed them into your house in Nazareth. When we let ourselves be welcomed by you, the suffering Servant, the inward eye perceives, beyond our own confusion, a reflection of the Christ of glory, the Risen Lord.” Brother Roger of Taizé.



### Wednesday Lent II

*Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant;  
whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.  
Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve  
and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Mt. 20: 28*

Simon was an immigrant. Did he know anything about Jesus? Had word of Him reached the countryside where Simon was currently living? Had Simon been one of those who followed Jesus on the road, one of the thousands who had been fed by Him, one of the many who had been cured by Him? Regardless, was Simon confused and surprised to be dragged into the drama that surrounded this broken Man? As he took the cross upon his own shoulders, did Simon understand that he took it from the Greatest of all? Did Jesus’ eyes say, “You are serving me, but I am doing this for you”? What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Thursday Lent II

*Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD,  
whose hope is the LORD.  
He is like a tree planted beside the waters  
that stretches out its roots to the stream:  
It fears not the heat when it comes,  
its leaves stay green;  
In the year of drought it shows no distress,  
but still bears fruit. Jer. 17: 7-8*



Without water, we die. As we go through the difficult times of our lives, it’s imperative that we reach out to the Living Water that sustains us – that our roots are near the Source of Life. Charity is a root that sustains us – bearing one another’s burdens, praying for each other (those we know and love and those we don’t), offering a shoulder to those who are in need, being part of the systemic change that lifts crosses around the world. How green are your leaves? What do you want to say to Jesus?

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC*

973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years



### Friday Lent II

*They had weighed him down with fetters,  
and he was bound with chains,  
Till his prediction came to pass*

*and the word of the LORD proved him true. Ps. 105: 18-19*

Jesus had already fallen once – mouth full of dirt, blood in His eyes – the prediction of the prophets was unfolding as He fell. What did He think when the weight was lifted from His shoulders and someone else was carrying His cross? Have you been weighed down or bound with chains – of despair, of sorrow, of addiction, of pain, of worry... Did someone come alongside you? Remember your own Simon with gratitude. What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Saturday Lent II

*While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him  
and was filled with compassion. Lk 15: 20*

Compassion is more than feeling bad for another's distress or plight – it is desiring and working to alleviate it. Compassion is action. The father in Jesus' story of the prodigal son doesn't wait until his son makes the trek all the way to the house to which he was returning. The father goes to meet him – action – to deliver forgiveness and love. The fullness of our heavenly Father's compassion was His Son incarnate. Do you wonder if Simon was a willing assistant on the way of the Cross? Do you wonder if after being in contact with Compassion in the flesh, he grew in this virtue? Has being part of the Church – the Body of Christ – helped you grow in compassion? If so, how? If not, why not? What do you want to say to Jesus?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

## 6. VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

*Your face, Lord, I seek. Do not hide your face from me. Ps. 27: 8-9*

“Jesus, I love you with my whole heart, with my whole being. I have given him all, even my sins and he has espoused me to himself in tenderness and love.” Works of Love are Works of Peace, by Michael Collopy, “Meditation in the Hospital” – Mother Teresa

### Sunday Lent III

*And hope does not disappoint,  
because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. Rom. 5: 5*

Faith, hope and love go together. We learn nothing in the Scripture about Veronica, but tradition tells us she wiped the face of Jesus with her veil. Her faith must have been very strong to risk such a public display of love for a convicted criminal. Her love is obvious in the story of her ministry to Him. And if she heard and believed Jesus’ prediction of His death and resurrection, at least a kernel of hope must have been in her heart. How does your faith inspire you to risk out of love? What do you hope will come of your actions? What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Monday Lent III

*Athirst is my soul for the living God.  
When shall I go and behold the face of God? Ps. 42: 3*

True thirst can make a person a little crazy. Parched, we think of nothing besides slacking our thirst. We can even see water where it doesn’t exist. We will risk anything for life-giving water. In this country – in our overabundance – we don’t really know this desperate physical reality. But our souls sometimes do. Dryness of soul can sap our energy and threaten to destroy our spirits. Reaching out to Jesus and beholding His face in prayer, Scripture and acts of charity plunges us into a sparkling reservoir. How thirsty are you? How vividly do you see His face? What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Tuesday Lent III

*So let our sacrifice be in your presence today  
as we follow you unreservedly;  
for those who trust in you cannot be put to shame. Dn 3: 40*

Trust is a tricky thing. Generally, trust grows in adversity – when someone stands by us and proves their friendship, love and courage... for our sake. We trust that person. Without a history, trust can be misplaced. People can disappoint us and betray our trust. With God there is history. How many times has God come to your rescue? Jesus must have proven Himself trustworthy to Veronica because she followed Him along the path to death, trusting in His promises and His power and His love. May we do likewise. What do you want to say to Jesus?

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC*

973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

## 7. JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

*My palate is drier than a potsherd and my tongue is stuck to my jaw.*

*I am lying in the dust of death. Ps. 22: 15*

“I am struck by how sharing our weakness and difficulties is more nourishing to others than sharing our qualities and successes.” Community and Growth by Jean Vanier



### Wednesday Lent III

*However, take care and be earnestly on your guard  
not to forget the things which your own eyes have seen,  
nor let them slip from your memory as long as you live,*

*but teach them to your children and to your children’s children.” Dt. 4: 9*

Certainly, it’s problematic to sin. But to keep repeating the same sin is even more tragic. When this happens, seem to forget about those “near occasions of sin” and fall right into them again. It’s as if we “forget the things which our own eyes have seen and let them slip from our memory.” Jesus fell on His way to His death. And we do too. Our death is through sin, while our life is in Christ. Keep getting up. What do you want to say to Jesus?



### Thursday Lent III/ Solemnity of St. Joseph

*Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.*

*Of her was born Jesus who is called the Christ. Mt. 1: 16*

Saint Joseph, husband of Mary, wasn’t there to see Jesus rise in popularity, do so much good, be followed by thousands – only to be condemned to die and to be beaten until He was so weak that He fell again and again. Had he been there, the heart of Joseph would have died along with Jesus. To see his beautiful boy on the way to Golgotha would have killed him. But, by the time of the crucifixion, he slept in death awaiting Jesus who would liberate him. Jesus would come offering a pierced and strong hand to the man who raised Him. What do you want to say to Jesus? To Joseph?



### Friday Lent III

*Thus says the LORD: Return, O Israel, to the LORD, your God;  
you have collapsed through your guilt. Hos 14: 2*

Israel fell short so many times in their covenant with God. It took the Son of God to take on that fall and to rise again to repair the breach. So often we, too, continue to fall – to stumble – to collapse – to lose ground in our prayer or practice of the faith. Sometimes it’s temptation, but more often it’s apathy that is the rock that twists our soul’s ankle. Again, it takes the Son of God to draw us up and make things right. How has He done this for you? What grace brought you back? What do you want to say to Jesus?

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office*

*Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC*

*973-290-5325*

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

*Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations*

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

### Saturday Lent III

*[E]veryone who exalts himself will be humbled,  
and the one who humbles himself will be exalted. Lk 18: 14*

It's said that it's "only human" to want recognition. Yet, Jesus was the perfect human and there was no pride or desire for applause in Him. As He lay on the ground, hearing the jeers of the crowd, feeling the shoves of the Romans, knowing His friends had deserted Him, He was humbled in the moment, but would be exalted in resurrection. This is good to remember when we are overlooked, criticized, judged rashly, eating the dirt of condemnation and gossip. We are in good company. What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)  
Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

## 8. JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

*They will look on the one whom they have pierced  
and weep for him as for a first-born child. Zec. 12: 10*

“A woman’s value is not based on her material accomplishments, but simply on the beauty and harmony she brings to the world, just by her very being,” Pope Francis said. “While neither man nor woman is superior to the other, they play different roles,” the Pope said. “Man does not bring harmony...It is she who brings that harmony that teaches us to caress, to love with tenderness; and who makes the world a beautiful place.” CNA, Hannah Brockhaus, February 10, 2017



### Sunday Lent IV

*As Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. Jn. 9: 1*

In the story of the man born blind, his mother makes a cameo appearance. She and her husband are hauled in to testify about their son’s condition. Was he really blind? Who cured him? How can they explain these events? These questions were irrelevant to the parents. They must have been overcome with gratitude and awe that their son had been cured. Imagine what happened years before that day. The mother’s heart would have been broken as her blind baby was laid in her arms. She would have been a fierce protector as he grew and a strong shield as he would be ridiculed by other children. A mother’s love gets stronger in adversity. Think of the mothers in your life. Think of the mothers who met Jesus on the Way of the Cross. Think of the mothers standing in adversity today. What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Monday Lent IV

*I will rejoice in Jerusalem  
and exult in my people.*

*No longer shall the sound of weeping be heard there,  
or the sound of crying... Is 65: 19*

We don’t know the identity or history of the women Jesus met on His way to the Cross. Perhaps they were followers of His... but not necessarily so. They may have been random passersby who stumbled upon the spectacle of a condemned man on His way to death. Often, tears come easily to women when encountering suffering. Jesus tells them not to weep for Him. But evidently, they couldn’t help themselves. When have you, like the women of Jerusalem, wept for someone whose situation was dire? What stirred in you as you encountered that person? Do the prophet Isaiah’s words promising a time when there will be no more tears comfort you? What do you want to say to Jesus?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC*

973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations



## Tuesday Lent IV

*God is our refuge and our strength,  
an ever-present help in distress.*

*Therefore, we fear not,  
though the earth be shaken  
and mountains plunge into the depths of the sea. Ps. 46: 1-3*

In sickness and in fear, children usually gravitate toward a mother or mother figure. It doesn't matter if she is small in stature or quiet in nature and impotent against monsters and disease, the child is comforted in her embrace. Jesus called God "Abba", Father – or more accurately "Daddy." In the Old Testament God is also given female traits – Sophia (holy Wisdom), "I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother," and "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you". Matthew reports Jesus as saying, "How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings." Think how lovely it is that our Abba and our Jesus have feminine traits – the harmony that gives us comfort. What do you want to say to Jesus?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office

Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC

973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

## 9. JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

*In my own body I make up what is still to be undergone by Christ  
for the sake of His body, which is the Church. Col. 1: 24*

"The faith we proclaim tonight makes us see God present in all those situations where we think he is absent... He is present in the unwelcomed visitor, often unrecognizable, who walks through our cities and our neighborhoods, who travels on our buses and knocks on our doors." Pope Francis, July 27, 2018



### Wednesday Lent IV/ Solemnity of the Annunciation

*Then the angel said to her,  
"Do not be afraid, Mary,  
for you have found favor with God.  
Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son,  
and you shall name him Jesus." Lk 1: 30-31*

"Do not be afraid"? Fear is a reasonable response to an angelic apparition, especially one that announces that your entire life is to be capsized. Mary undoubtedly felt fear, a sinking feeling in the pit of her stomach, a chill on her skin that no "do not be afraid" could dispel. But it was the favor (grace) of God that brought her back from the abyss and gave her courage. Openness to that grace is key in your life too. When have you felt it? When have you fought it? When have you chosen to remain face down on the road rather than reach up for God's strength? What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Thursday Lent IV

*The works that the Father gave me to accomplish,  
these works that I perform testify on my behalf  
that the Father has sent me. Jn. 5: 36b*

The miracles of feeding, healing, expelling demons, calming nature, raising the dead all showed who Jesus was (at least one part of His identity). They showed His connection to the Father in power and might. However, as He lay prone on the ground, bloodied and in pain, we see another aspect of this Man. We see His humble self-giving that reflects the Father's generative creation and forgiveness. Let us learn from Jesus – all aspects of Jesus. What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC*

973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years



#### Friday Lent IV

*For if the just one be the son of God, he will defend him  
and deliver him from the hand of his foes.  
With revilement and torture let us put him to the test  
that we may have proof of his gentleness  
and try his patience. Wis 2: 17-18*

Jesus' gentleness and patience are demonstrated as we see him brought low. Patience is learned, and seen, in the midst of hardship, pain and struggle. But remember that God is always with us in our trials, as we see in our Jesus. Are you learning patience? How is this lesson being taught to you? What do you want to say to Jesus?

#### Saturday Lent IV

*Do me justice, O LORD, because I am just,  
and because of the innocence that is mine.  
Let the malice of the wicked come to an end,  
but sustain the just,*

*O searcher of heart and soul, O just God. Ps. 7: 9b-10*

Have you ever fallen to your knees, seeking justice against those who do evil – against you, your loved ones, those who are victims in the world. We want a JUST God who metes out due reward and punishment. But be careful. Consider: What do WE deserve? Aren't we sinners? Justice and MERCY are the hallmark of our God. We fall and beg for mercy – not for what we deserve, but for what Jesus won for us through His cross and resurrection. Ponder justice and mercy – what has your prayer been requesting – for yourself? for others? What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)  
Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations*



## 10. JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS CLOTHES

*They are staring at me, glaring: they divide my garments among them  
and cast lots for my clothing. Ps. 22: 17-18*

“Lord Jesus, you were stripped of your garments, exposed to shame, cast out of society. You took upon yourself the shame of Adam, and you healed it. You also take upon yourself the sufferings and the needs of the poor, the outcasts of our world. And in this very way you fulfill the words of the prophets. This is how you bring meaning into apparent meaninglessness. This is how you make us realize that your Father holds you, us, and the whole world in his hands. Give us a profound respect for man at every stage of his existence, and in all the situations in which we encounter him. Clothe us in the light of your grace.” Copyright © CNA All rights reserved



### Sunday Lent V

*He cried out in a loud voice,  
“Lazarus, come out!”*

*The dead man came out,  
tied hand and foot with burial bands,  
and his face was wrapped in a cloth.*

*So Jesus said to them,  
“Untie him and let him go.” Jn. 11: 43-44*

Bound in death, the result of the sin of Adam and our own sins, Lazarus was raised and set free. Contrast this with Jesus, sinless, clothed in goodness and love, and then stripped of everything and nailed to a cross of shame. In His Resurrection He was exposed for what He truly was – THE SON OF GOD. From what sin, attachment, burial bands do you need to be unbound? What change in your choices are necessary to expose you as the Child of God that you truly are? What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Monday Lent V

*Teacher, this woman was caught  
in the very act of committing adultery.*

*Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women.*

*So what do you say? Jn. 8: 4*

Terrifying – this woman’s sin was exposed for all to see. Caught in adultery, a sin of the flesh, she was stripped naked of any pretense, pride, and respectability. Although it takes two to commit adultery, it seems her lover wasn’t found culpable. Although her accusers were obviously voyeurs in catching her “in the act”, it seems they considered themselves innocent of any wrong-doing. Only the woman was stripped, exposed and condemned. And – here’s the good news – only she was recipient of the gratuitous forgiveness of Jesus. What sin brought you to the feet of the Lord? What does gratuitous forgiveness feel like? What do you want to say to Jesus?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325*

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

## Tuesday Lent V

*When you lift up the Son of Man,  
then you will realize that I AM,  
and that I do nothing on my own,  
but I say only what the Father taught me.  
The one who sent me is with me.*

*He has not left me alone,  
because I always do what is pleasing to him." Jn. 8: 28-29*

The Son of God needed no garments before the Incarnation. He was splendidly robed in His Being – in His unity with the Father in heaven. It was only after He came down – becoming one of us – inheriting the shame of the Garden after the Fall – that He was clothed in other than glory. What is the nakedness to which you aspire? If the soldiers ripped away your protective covering, what would be revealed? Are you ready to be clothed in Christ's robe? What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)  
Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations



## 11. JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

*I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me. Gal. 2: 19b-20*

“What kept him from resisting? This warrant, this tabulation of your failures. He knew the price of those sins was death. He knew the source of those sins was you, and since he couldn’t bear the thought of eternity without you, he chose the nails.” He Chose the Nails by Max Lucado, p. 170.



### Wednesday Lent V

*Jesus said to those Jews who believed in him,  
“If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples,  
and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Jn.8: 31-32*

How odd that in order to set us FREE, Jesus was NAILED to the cross. His bondage bought our liberation. His pain made possible our glory. The true Word banished the results of all our lies. As you look upon the nails of the cross, what do you want to say to Jesus?

### Thursday Lent V

*Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is worth nothing;  
but it is my Father who glorifies me,  
of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’  
You do not know him, but I know him.  
And if I should say that I do not know him,  
I would be like you a liar. Jn. 8: 54-55*

Just what is it that Jesus knows of the Father? Certainly, mercy and forgiveness, power and gentleness, faithfulness and agape – unbounded love. All this was proclaimed from the throne of the cross as the Son of God hung – not held there by nails, but by love – by His mission to show us the heart of the Father. What are you attached (nailed) to? Do your nails lead to the glory of knowing God? Or do they keep you stuck in yourself and your addictions? What do you want to say to Jesus?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC*

973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations





### Friday Lent V

*I hear the whisperings of many:*

*“Terror on every side!*

*Denounce! let us denounce him!”*

*...But the LORD is with me, like a mighty champion:*

*my persecutors will stumble, they will not triumph. Jer. 20: 10a-11b*

No matter what “they” say, God is with us – as truly as God was with Jesus as He took our punishment for sin and conquered death. Culture may say that rugged individualism is freedom, that we are our own persons, self-made and self-sufficient. But Jesus tells another story – and His resurrection gives Him ultimate credibility. Think of the whisperings in your own life that may have held you back in fear. Think about the way you live – depending on God your Champion or on yourself. What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Saturday Lent V

*So the chief priests and the Pharisees*

*convened the Sanhedrin and said,*

*“What are we going to do?*

*This man is performing many signs.*

*If we leave him alone, all will believe in him,*

*and the Romans will come*

*and take away both our land and our nation.” Jn. 11: 46-48*

The signs Jesus performed were holy, loving, good, God-signs. Yet, they engendered fear in the chief priests and Pharisees. Why? They weren't bad people. They were trying to hold on to the gifts God had given them – their land and nation. They were holding on so tight to these gifts that they were practically nailed to them. And in being so nailed they missed the greatest Gift of all. Resolve to spend time this day with Jesus, looking at your own priorities. What do you want to say to Jesus?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
*by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate*

*Sisters of Charity Outreach Office*

*Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC*

*973-290-5325*

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

*Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations*

## 12. JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

*When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "It is finished."  
And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit. Jn. 19: 30*

"According to John, the last words Jesus spoke from the cross were 'It is finished.' Whether he meant 'finished' as brought to an end, in the sense of finality, or 'finished' as brought to completion, in the sense of fulfillment, nobody knows. Maybe he meant both." Wishful Thinking by Frederick Buechner, p. 44.

### Passion Sunday

*Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
something to be grasped. Phl 2: 6*

God is the life-force of all things, because God is Life itself. Therefore, Jesus, true God and true man, was Life as well. And Life died. For us. We can't comprehend this any more than we can truly understand Resurrection. We can't grasp this kind of love. We can't come to terms with the mystery. But we can be grateful – so very grateful that Love Incarnate didn't grasp equality with God, but rather grasped us. He holds you lovingly to His heart. This is the completion of His work. What do you want to say to Jesus?

### Monday of Holy Week

*The large crowd of the Jews found out that he was there and came,  
not only because of him, but also to see Lazarus,  
whom he had raised from the dead.  
And the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus too,  
because many of the Jews were turning away  
and believing in Jesus because of him. Jn. 12: 9-11*

Poor Lazarus. He actually had to die twice. Once is more than enough for the rest of us. Yet, Lazarus was also raised twice. Our faith tells us that. Do you wonder how Lazarus faced death the second time – do you suppose it was different than the first? What a wonderful chuckle he must have had with Jesus in heaven as they reminisced about Lazarus' second death – one more than Jesus had! And the cause of that second death was, of all things, evangelization – he was a martyr for Christ. "Many were turning away and believing in Jesus because of him." Would anyone say that about your witness to Christ? What's in your heart as you inch closer to your own death? What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

## Tuesday of Holy Week

*My children, I will be with you only a little while longer.*

*You will look for me, and as I told the Jews,*

*'Where I go you cannot come,' so now I say it to you." Jn. 13: 33*

It's not up to us when we will end this life on earth – or how. But the fact remains that we all will die “in a little while”. The rest of our lives should be spent looking for Jesus, following Him, loving Him in the “least of His brothers and sisters.” In the end, He will come back for us. How are you getting ready? What do you want to say to Jesus?



## Wednesday of Holy Week

*The Lord GOD is my help,  
therefore I am not disgraced;*

*I have set my face like flint,*

*knowing that I shall not be put to shame. Is. 50: 7*

Two thousand years ago, the cross of Christ was not the piece of gold jewelry, the beautiful statement in our sanctuaries, the bumper sticker on our cars that it is today. It was a horrible, dishonorable, grotesque form of torture and death. This is what Jesus freely chose to endure for you and me. And by our belief in the Resurrection, we attest to the fact that He has not been put to shame, but rather has triumphed. May it be so. How do you live as a witness to His triumph? What do you want to say to Jesus?



Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

### 13. THE BODY OF JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

*If we become united with Christ through a death like His,  
we will certainly be united with Him in His resurrection. Rom. 6: 5*

“If you are not humbled in the presence of Jesus, you do not know Him. You were so lost that nothing could save you but the sacrifice of God’s only begotten Son. As Jesus stooped for you, bow in humility at His feet. A realization of Christ’s amazing love has a greater tendency to humble us than even a consciousness of our own guilt. Pride cannot live beneath the cross. Let us sit there and learn our lesson. Then let us rise and carry it into practice.” Evening by Evening by Charles H. Spurgeon, p. 157

#### Holy Thursday

*Brothers and sisters:*

*I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you,  
that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over,  
took bread, and, after he had given thanks,  
broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you.*

*Do this in remembrance of me.”*

*In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying,*

*“This cup is the new covenant in my blood.*

*Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”*

*For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,  
you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes. 1 Cor. 11: 23-26*



The body of the Lord was taken down from the cross and laid in the lap of His mother. It was surely cradled, loved, bathed in tears and given every respect possible. It was held with the reverence due Him as Son of Mary and Son of God. The body of the Lord is given to us to hold each time we receive the Eucharist – not only to be revered, but also to be consumed as food for the journey. We are to become what we eat. “If you, therefore, are Christ’s body and members, it is your own mystery that is placed on the Lord’s table! It is your own mystery that you are receiving! You are saying ‘Amen’ to what you are: your response is a personal signature, affirming your faith. When you hear ‘The body of Christ’, you reply ‘Amen.’ Be a member of Christ’s body, then, so that your “Amen” may ring true!” (St. Augustine, Sermon 272) What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325

[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

#### 14. JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB

*When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be handed over.*

*Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it [in] clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock.*

*Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed.*

*Mt. 27: 57-60*

“On the wings of imagination, travel in space and time to the various cemeteries and graveyards where those you love are buried. Visit each of their tombs, carrying not flowers but the promise of Christ that all who are one with him in love and faith shall rise from death. At each of their graves, proclaim your firm belief, and not simply a hope, that each of them also shall have a glorious Easter Sunday.” The Lenten Labyrinth by Edward Hays, p. 123.



#### Good Friday+

*Now in the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried.*

*So they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day; for the tomb was close by. Jn. 19: 41-42*

We have traveled with Jesus along His journey of life and along His journey to death. On Good Friday, we turn a terrible death on its head by calling the day “good”. Why? Because we know that His suffering and the death were Divine means to an end. They provided a pathway to the empty tomb where we are risen with Him to everlasting life. We return with Him to the Garden of our first parents and begin again to live the dream the Father always had for us... the dream of eternal bliss in heaven. Jesus paid the price for the ticket there. What do you want to say to Jesus?



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years

## 15. JESUS IS ALIVE!

*From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised. Mt. 16: 21*

“Lord, help us to see in your crucifixion and resurrection an example of how to endure and seemingly to die in the agony and conflict of daily life, so that we may live more fully and creatively. You accepted patiently and humbly the rebuffs of human life, as well as the tortures of your crucifixion and passion. Help us to accept the pains and conflicts that come to us each day as opportunities to grow as people and become more like you. Enable us to go through them patiently and bravely, trusting that you will support us; for it is only by dying with you that we can rise with you.” A Gift for God: Prayers and Meditations, by Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

### **Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil**

*If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more death no longer has power over him. Rom 6: 8-9*

“On the morning of the first day, the women will see that their concern for the dead body and its preservation was all too human a concern. They will see that Jesus is not to be held captive by death, but lives anew – now he is truly alive for the first time. They will see that God has preserved Him from decomposition in a definitive way, possible only to God, and has thereby preserved Him from the power of death. Nevertheless, in the loving care of these women, Easter morning – the Resurrection – is already proclaimed.” Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week, by Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI, p. 229.

ALLELUIA!



*Meditations on the Way of the Cross*  
by JoLynn Ryan Krempecki, Seton Associate  
Sisters of Charity Outreach Office  
Sister Maryanne Tracey, SC  
973-290-5325  
[www.scnj.org](http://www.scnj.org)

Facebook: Sisters of Charity Vocations

Boundless Charity:  
Mission Moving Forward

Sisters of Charity  
of Saint Elizabeth  
160 Years