

Third Station **Mark / Helaine**

Jesus Falls the First Time

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

What do you carry? They say that we shouldn't compare crosses – that everyone is carrying something particularly heavy for them. They also say the relics of Jesus' cross would fill a ship if they were all collected in one place. My cross may not always seem so big. It's made up of my griefs, my individual sufferings, my struggles to accept my own limited humanity. And yet I fall under it all the time. Jesus shares my experience even there, even in stumbling over uneven ground and falling. Even Jesus, who walked on water, healed the incurable, and brought life to the dead...fell. What was Jesus carrying that day? Was he carrying the weight of the world in that cross, the combined weight of everyone's crosses throughout history, or was the weight of his own very personal cross his focus in that moment?

Reflection Questions: What are the times in your life that you have stumbled under the weight of your burdens? How is Jesus inviting you to stand back up?

Leader: We pray...

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

Sing: Adoramus te Christe...

Fifth Station

Helaine / Mark

Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry the Cross

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

He's curious about all the commotion, the screaming. His name is Simon. He's from Cyrene, in northern Africa. He sees a man, bloodied and sinking under the weight of a cross, on his way to a horrible death.

The soldiers force him to help the condemned criminal. Imagine how close this brings Simon to Jesus. They are cheek to cheek. They look into each other's eyes. Simon will never forget that look, those eyes that communicate at a level much deeper than words: pain, but also gratitude.

Just like with Simon, crosses are sometimes forced upon us. They too are the cross of Jesus who continues to suffer wherever his beloved brothers and sisters suffer. When the cross is laid upon our shoulders, Jesus is very close to us, as he was to Simon. We, too, can look into the eyes of Jesus and share an intimacy that is only possible when suffering is shared.

Reflection Questions: Who is someone in your life or in your community who is suffering right now? How can you help share that individual's burden?

Leader: We pray...

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

Sing: Adoramus te Christe...