VIRTUAL DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE
with Bishop Larry J. Kulick
In our Catholic Tradition, there is a long history of making pilgrimages. A pilgrimage is a prayerful movement to a holy place. Reflection, prayer and singing often accompany the movement of pilgrims to the place of pilgrimage.

It is not just the destination that inspires holiness. The act of pilgrimaging, itself, reminds us that we are pilgrims journeying through this life. We are reminded to “have our hearts and eyes fixed on the world to come.”

Often pilgrimages are made to holy places to re-trace the footsteps of Jesus. Many times they are special places dedicated to the lives of Mary and the Saints.

Holy Thursday Pilgrimages have in many communities, become a local tradition. On this evening it is customary for parishes to remain open for prayer. “The faithful should be encouraged to adore the Blessed Sacrament for a suitable period of time during the night.” The purpose of a pilgrimage this night is to keep watch and pray as we reflect on the Paschal Mystery -- Christ’s Passion, Death and Resurrection. This pilgrimage allows us time to pray in the presence of our Eucharistic Lord. It also reminds us that our parishes and local communities are “Holy Places.”

The reflection that you find in this booklet can be used on a pilgrimage, or quietly prayed in one Church. These reflections center on the Gospel events from the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane through Peter’s denial.

Mary, for us as Catholics has always held a special place of honor in our faith. The second part of each reflection in this booklet gives recognition to her special role in God’s plan of salvation and her model of perfect discipleship.

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INTRODUCTION

HYMN

Stay With Me

Stay with Me. Remain here with Me. Watch, and pray.
Stay with Me. Remain here with Me. Watch, and pray.
Stay with Me. Remain here with Me. Watch, and pray.

READING

John 14:15-21

“If you love me, you will obey my commandments. I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, who will stay with you forever. He is the Spirit, who reveals the truth about God. The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you and is in you.”

“When I go, you will not be left all alone; I will come back to you. In a little while the world will see me no more, but you will see me; and because I live, you also will live. When that day comes, you will know that I am in my Father and that you are in me, just as I am in you.”

“Whoever accepts my commandments and obeys them is the one who loves me. My Father will love whoever loves me; I too will love him and reveal myself to him.”

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: All powerful God, Your Son, Jesus Christ, by accepting His cross, has freed us from sin and death. Bless us this evening as we keep watch with him. Allow us to be your faithful and loyal disciples. Strengthen and protect us in our weaknesses, doubts and fears and raise us up with Christ your Son, who lives and reigns forever and ever.

Response: Amen
FIRST STATION

HYMN Stay With Me

First Meditation - Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

Leader: Jesus said: “My heart is nearly broken with sorrow.”

Response: “Stay here and keep watch with me.”

Reader: Then they came to a place named Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples: “Sit here while I pray.” He took with him Peter, James, and John, and he began to be troubled and distressed. Then he said to them: “My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch.” He advanced a little and fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass by him. He said: “Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me, but not what I will but what you will.” (Mark 14:32-36).

Leader: Mary was united with her son throughout His life and ministry. She witnessed his acceptance and rejection by his followers. It is very hard for a mother to watch her son suffer.

Years earlier Mary had accepted God’s will when she agreed to the call to become the mother of Jesus. Mary is seen as the perfect disciple because she said “yes” to God. Jesus accepts God’s will for him in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus is our Savior and Redeemer because he said “yes” to God. Do we say “yes” to God?

Leader: Lord Jesus, who prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane,

Response: Have mercy on us!

HYMN

Were you there when he prayed: “Thy will be done?”

Were you there when he prayed: “Thy will be done?”

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble!

Were you there when he prayed: “Thy will be done?”
SECOND STATION

HYMN: Stay with Me  

Second Meditation - Jesus is Betrayed by Judas

Leader: Oh Lord, defend my cause,

Response: Rescue me from deceitful and impious men.

Reader: One of the twelve whose name was Judas Iscariot went off to the chief priests and said: “What are you willing to give me if I hand Jesus over to you?” They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and from that time on he kept looking for an opportunity to hand Him over. (Matthew 26:14-16). Judas arrived accompanied by a great crowd with swords and clubs. They had been sent by the chief priest and elders of the people. Judas had arranged to give the crowd a signal, saying: “The man I shall embrace is the one; take hold of Him.” He immediately went over to Jesus and said to him: “Peace Rabbi,” and embraced him. Jesus answered: “Do what you are here for, friend!” (Matthew 26:47-50a).

Leader: Betrayal is a difficult thing to deal with. Betrayal especially by a good friend is the most difficult. At this hour the greatest lesson learned is that even in the most despairing of times, the most troubling of moments, the most frightening of events we must always trust in God. He is always faithful to his servants. God will never betray or abandon us. Joseph experienced a sense of betrayal when he learned that Mary was with child. The words of the angel to Joseph, “Do not fear about taking Mary as your wife.” were a message from God. It was sent to calm this anxious moment and assure this new family of God’s protection and guidance. Jesus, too, hears God’s words of comfort at this most fearful point in His life. In times of sorrow, disappointment and depression, do we hear God’s words of comfort and guidance?

Leader: Lord Jesus, betrayed by Judas,

Response: Have mercy on us!

HYMN

Were you there when Jesus was betrayed?

Were you there when Jesus was betrayed?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble!

Were you there when Jesus was betrayed?
THIRD STATION

HYMN    Stay with Me

Third Meditation - Jesus is Arrested

Leader: The Lord will be the champion of the helpless,

Response: He will free the poor from the grip of the powerful.

Reader: At that moment they stepped forward to lay hands on Jesus, and arrest Him. Suddenly one of those who accompanied Jesus put his hand to his sword, drew it, and slashed at the high priest’s servant, cutting off his ear. Jesus said to him: “Put back your sword where it belongs. Those who use the sword are sooner or later destroyed by it.” (Matthew 26:50b-52). Addressing himself to them, Jesus said: “You have come out to arrest me armed with swords and clubs as if against a brigand. I was within your reach daily, teaching in the temple precincts, yet you never arrested me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.” With that, all deserted him and fled. (Mark 14:48-50).

Leader: Jesus came not to separate and divide, but to heal and restore those who are wounded by sin. At the end of his ministry, he is met with what he opposed the most. Jesus is treated as a criminal and arrested. He is taken into custody, escorted by armed soldiers carrying swords. The sword is a violent weapon. It inflicts pain, suffering and death. At this moment we remember the words of the prophet Simeon to Mary: “This child is destined to be the rise and fall of many in Israel and your heart will be pierced with a sword, so that the heart of many may be laid bare.” We must not allow an atmosphere of hatred, prejudice and violence to overtake our lives and actions. Are we able to reconcile our differences with others in a spirit of love and peace? Do we act as Jesus and Mary when our hearts seem to have been pierced?

Leader: Lord Jesus arrested and humbled for our sins,

Response: Have mercy on us!

HYMN

Were you there when they led Our Lord away?
Were you there when they led Our Lord away?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble!
Were you there when they led Our Lord away?
FOURTH STATION

HYMN  Stay with Me

*Fourth Meditation - Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin*

**Leader:** Now the time has come for this world to receive its sentence;

**Response:** Now the Prince of this world will be driven out.

**Reader:** The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they found none. The high priest rose before the assembly and questioned Jesus, saying: “Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?” But he was silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him and said to him: “Are you the Messiah, the son of the Blessed One?” Then Jesus answered: “I am; and ‘you will see the son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.” They all condemned him as deserving to die. (Mark 14:55, 60-61, 62, 64).

**Leader:** The chief priests were fearful of the authority with which Jesus taught. They were afraid they would lose control. They feared the Kingdom that Jesus was preaching about. No one really understood that Jesus was referring to the Kingdom of God. His entire ministry was centered on building this Kingdom. The chief priests thought that Jesus was speaking of an earthly royal Kingdom. They searched for a way to condemn Jesus. Jesus knew and accepted what was about to happen to him. Mary pondered many things in her heart as Jesus’ ministry grew. She did not understand many things that were happening but she put her trust in God. There are many situations in our lives that we cannot control. We must put our trust in God. Sometimes we do not always understand why things are happening in our lives. Do you remember to pray and put your trust in God?

**Leader:** Lord Jesus condemned by the Sanhedrin,

**Response:** Have mercy on us!

HYMN

Were you there when Jesus was condemned?

Were you there when Jesus was condemned?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble!

Were you there when Jesus was condemned?
FIFTH STATION

HYMN Stay with Me

Fifth Meditation - Jesus is Denied by Peter

Leader: My servant, the Just One,

Response: Will justify many by taking their sins on himself.

Reader: While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the high priest’s maids came along. Seeing Peter warming himself, she looked intently at him and said: “You too were with the Nazarene, Jesus.” But he denied it saying: “I neither know nor understand what you are talking about.” So he went out into the outer court. Then the cock crowed. A little later the bystanders said to Peter once more: “Surely you are one of them; for you too are a Galilean.” He began to curse and to swear: “I do not know this man about whom you are talking.” Immediately a cock crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had said to him. He broke down and wept. (Mark 14:66-67, 68, 70-71, 72).

Leader: Peter was fearful of what might happen to him if he admitted knowing Jesus. When Peter denied Jesus he heard the cock crow and a very strange feeling overcame him. Peter was deeply saddened by what he had done. Mary never denied being the mother of Jesus. She was very proud of her son. It was Mary, who asked Jesus to perform his first miracle at the wedding feast at Cana. Mary always stood by Jesus and supported him.

Do we deny people in our lives whom we should support by our presence and understanding? Do we remain good and faithful servants to Our Lord?

Leader: Lord Jesus denied by Peter,

Response: Have mercy on us!

HYMN

Were you there when Our Lord was Betrayed?

Were you there when Our Lord was Betrayed?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble!

Were you there when Our Lord was Betrayed?
Night Prayer

HYMN

Stay With Me
Jacques Berthier

Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray.

Presider

O, God come to my assistance

All

Lord, make haste to help me.

Presider

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

All

As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

HYMN

What Wondrous Love

What wondrous love is this,
O my soul, O my soul?
What wondrous love is this, O my soul?
What wondrous love is this
that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse
for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul?

PSALMODY

Antiphon

Presider

For our sake Christ was obedient, accepting even death.

All

For our sake Christ was obedient, accepting even death.
Psalm 91

Safe in God’s sheltering care

*I have given you the power to tread upon serpents and scorpions*

*(Luke 10:19)*

All

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High and abides in the shade of the Almighty says to the Lord: “My refuge, my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!”

It is he who will free you from the snare of the fowler who seeks to destroy you; he will conceal you with his pinions and under his wings you will find refuge.

You will not fear the terror of the night nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the plague that prowls in the darkness nor the scourge that lays waste at noon.

A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand fall at your right, you, it will never approach; his faithfulness is buckler and shield.

Your eyes have only to look to see how the wicked are repaid, you who have said: “Lord, my refuge!” and have made the Most High your dwelling.

Upon you no evil shall fall, no plague approach where you dwell. For you has he commanded his angels, to keep you in all your ways.

They shall bear you upon their hands lest you strike your foot against a stone. On the lion and the viper you will tread and trample the young lion and the dragon.

Since he clings to me in love, I will free him; protect him for he knows my name. When he calls I shall answer: “I am with you.” I will save him in distress and give him glory.

With length of life I will content him; I shall let him see my saving power.
Antiphon

*All*  
*For our sake Christ was obedient, accepting even death.*

Reading:  
*Revelation 22:4-5*

They shall see him face to face and bear his name on their foreheads. The night shall be no more. They will need no light from lamps or the sun, for the Lord God shall give them light, and they shall reign forever.

Presider  
*Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.*

*All*  
*Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.*

Presider  
*You have redeemed us, Lord God of Truth*

*All*  
*I commend my spirit.*

Presider  
*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:*

*All*  
*Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.*

Antiphon  

*All*  
*Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep, that awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, rest in his peace.*

Gospel Canticle  
*Luke 2: 29-32*

Presider  
*Lord, now you let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled; My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people; a light you reveal to the nations and the glory of your people Israel.*

Antiphon  

*All*  
*Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep, that awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, rest in his peace.*
Prayer

Presider  Lord, we beg you to visit this house and banish from it all the deadly power of the enemy. May your holy angels dwell here to keep us in peace, and may your blessings be upon us always. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Conclusion

Presider  May the all-powerful Lord grant us a restful night and a peaceful death.

All  Amen.


All  Hail Holy Queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this exile show us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

HYMN:  What Wondrous Love

To God and to the Lamb
I will sing, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb,
who is the great I AM,
While millions join the theme,
I will sing, I will sing;
While millions join the theme, I will sing.