



# **Stations of the Cross ...in the city of Milwaukee**





## **The First Station: Jesus Is Condemned to Death**

**Location:** The Courthouse, 9<sup>th</sup> and Kilbourn

**Leader:** We praise you, Oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee

**Leader:** Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. (Matthew 27: 22-23, 26)

We find ourselves at the Courthouse, a place where we hope to find justice and right judgment. Too often instead, we find injustice and condemnation. Those with money get excellent legal defense and often walk free. Those without money get little help and are often sentenced to time behind bars and the subsequent difficulties of lost work, broken families, and lost hope.

Jesus, himself, stands among the poor and powerless before the judgment of a rich and powerful country and legal system. He has already experienced profound solidarity with so many on this earth, by being beaten and tortured. Now he is wrongfully condemned to punishment by death. His commitment to entering our lives completely begins its final steps. He has said "yes" to God and placed his life in God's hands.

**Reflection:** As we follow Jesus in this final surrender, and contemplate with reverence each place along the way, as he is broken and given for us, we must ask ourselves:

- Where do we stand? Do we stand, with Jesus, on the side of the poor, the powerless, the condemned of our world?
- Or do we stand on the side of the rich, the powerful, and the judges of others?

**All: “Thoroughly wash me from my guilt, and of my sin cleanse me.” (Psalm 50: 3, 4)**

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### **The Second Station: Jesus Carries His Cross**

**Location:** The Milwaukee County Jail, 8<sup>th</sup> and State

**Leader:** We praise you, oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. (Matthew. 27:27-31)

Across the street we see the new jail constructed for our city. As we consider the individual cells and the lives held within them, let us reflect on the crosses of our prison system:

- In 2010, approximately 7.3 million adults (that's 1 in every 31 adults) were either behind bars or on probation or parole (Pew, 2015). They bear the cross of being locked away in a cage where abuse and inhumane treatment are often the norm. Additionally, black men are more than 7 times as likely as white men to be incarcerated (Pew, 2015). Persons in prison or on probation or parole: 1 in 11 black adults (9.2 percent), 1 in 27 Hispanic adults, and 1 in 45 white adults (2.2 percent). Wisconsin has the highest rate of African American men in state prison and local jails (1 in 8 or 12.8%). Over half of African American men in their 30s and early 40s from Milwaukee County have been in state prison.
- Those who have spent time in prison end up earning annually about 40 percent less money after they are released compared to before they went to prison. They bear the cross of the stigma of being criminals who no one wants to hire. They bear the cross of ongoing poverty and the inability to break out of that cycle. An estimated 70 million people in the United States

have a prior arrest or conviction record, or nearly 1 in 3 adults. And a racially biased criminal justice system and mass incarceration have severely impacted communities of color. It's time for bold solutions. To elevate the dignity of all workers, adopt fair-chance employment policies and practices that give people with records access to jobs. Ban the Box. (NELP, National Employment Law Project).

- 2.7 million Children in the U.S. have an incarcerated parent. These children bear the cross of growing up in homes where they won't experience the presence, love, and support of both their parents. (Pew, 2015)

**Reflection:** We bear crosses in our lives, too. And Jesus bears the cross with us. Jesus meets us in our carrying of the cross and walks with us, suffers with us. We are not alone.

- What crosses do you bear in your life?
- Where do you see Jesus meeting you and carrying the cross with you?

**All: "Jesus came into this world that we may have life and have it in abundance." (1 John 10:10)**

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### **The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time**

**Location:** St. Ben's Community Meal, 9<sup>th</sup> and State

**Leader:** We praise you, oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** "Lord when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you in prison and visit you?" And the King will say to them in reply, "Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers [or sisters] of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25: 37-40)

Now we are at St. Ben's Community Meal Program. Here, a meal is served six nights a week – Sunday through Friday. St. Ben's celebrated 45 years in 2015 having been established in 1970. In those 45 years, more than 4,000,000 meals were served with numbers only increasing. This is Milwaukee's biggest potluck dinner. Strapped with burdens of mental illness, addiction, poverty, homelessness, depression or unemployment, the people who come to St. Ben's are looking for help and a place where they are known and loved.

Jesus falls under the weight of the cross. On the way to his death, we remember he falls three times. He can't take it. He is totally overwhelmed and exhausted. The weight is too much to bear.

**Reflection:** We all fall at times. Things get in the way: stress, overconfidence, selfishness, fear, pride, ambition, narrow-mindedness. We struggle to get back up. No matter who we are, we all fail. We are human. Jesus has been there. He has been down that road.

- Where do you find brokenness in your life?
- What are those times when you have fallen and needed help?
- Who has helped you?

All: "Each one of us has our own load to carry," we should also "help bear one another's burdens." (Galatians 6: 2, 5)

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### **The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother**

**Location:** Joy House, 19<sup>th</sup> between Wells and Kilbourn

**Leader:** We praise you, oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** “Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, “Woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.” (John 19:25-27)

We are at Joy House, where women’s lives are transformed. For good. Women with children or expecting children are welcomed here. Abuse, divorce, death of a spouse, drug addiction, job loss, there are all sorts of reasons women end up homeless. Of Milwaukee’s 100,000 adults living in poverty, 71% are women. They’re often single moms with young kids. Many have no place to turn. Often, they are victims of domestic violence. But for those who find their way to the Milwaukee Rescue Mission-Joy House, they’ll be welcomed with unconditional love. At Joy House, they’ll find safe shelter, hot, nutritious meals and life changing help to rebuild their lives and get back on their feet. The women receive educational assistance, community outreach, counseling, life skill training, finance management, parenting skills, job training, and the list goes on. Joy House addresses daily horrors for these women by empowering them to find new life and a fresh start.

Our Mother Mary has also experienced the trials of womanhood to its full extent. From the moment she said “Yes” to God and became the Mother of Jesus she went against the norms of society. Joseph wanted to divorce her, she had to bring her child into this world in a stable, and she was faced with raising the Son of God. She stood by his side and was present at all the major events in Jesus’s life. She was present for his first miracle at the Wedding in Cana and she was present at his Crucifixion. Jesus recognizes his Mother’s strength and gives her to us as our

Mother from the Cross. Similarly, Joy House sees the potential of these women and encourages them to move forward.

**Reflection:** Loving God, please give all the mothers in the world, especially those facing hardships like the mothers here at Joy House, the strength they need to continue their journeys. Help all mothers to find peace in their hearts and may our Mother Mary continue to watch over them and walk with them.

- How can we continue to support our own mothers and those mothers in need?
- What kind of a relationship do I have with Mary? How could a closer relationship with her benefit me and other women I know?

**All: “They who find you find life and win favor with the Lord.” (Proverbs 8:35)**

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### **The Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry His Cross**

**Location:** Pathfinders Emergency Youth Center, 1614 East Kane Place

**Leader:** We praise you, oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** As they went out, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; this man they compelled to carry his cross. (Matthew. 27:32)

We are standing in front of Pathfinders. Pathfinders envisions a community where every youth has the opportunity to live a safe, healthy, and successful life. As Wisconsin's oldest and one of Milwaukee's most comprehensive and effective service providers for runaway, throwaway, and homeless young people, Pathfinders employs a "Housing First" model, in which it strives to stabilize a young person's housing as quickly as possible – and then provide additional services that will fulfill other needs. Pathfinders specializes in providing focused learning to reduce teen pregnancy, HIV/STIs, infant mortality, and child abuse.

It works with youth to ensure safety and healing, reunite with their family of origin when appropriate, and recruit and engage adult community members to help create a family of choice. Pathfinders exemplifies the support of Simon of Cyrene by supporting the marginalized in society to take ownership of their lives as a community. Pathfinders sees the potential in all, and helps to unlock that potential through empowering their futures.

**Reflection:** Loving God, we all carry crosses in our lives. Please give us courage and compassion so that we may help free others of their burdens, and so that we may allow others to help us.

- Who has helped me see and act on my potential?
- Whom have I helped in their struggles?

**All: "The doctrine of the cross is foolishness to those who perish, but to those who are saved, that is, to us, it is the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:18)**

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### **The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus**

**Location:** YWCA and Benedict Center (3<sup>rd</sup> and Reservoir), Martin Luther King Memorial (3<sup>rd</sup> and Vine)

**Leader:** We praise you, oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** Suddenly a woman comes out of the crowd. Her name is Veronica. Her care for Jesus is apparent as she takes a cloth and begins to wipe the blood and sweat from his face. She can't do much, but she offers what little help she can.

Racism has existed in our country for almost as long as Europeans have been here, and the toll it has taken on people of color – brown, black, Native American, and others – is undeniable. People of color have been and continue to be oppressed and marginalized. The **YWCA** seeks to educate and empower people of color, especially women, to break out of the bonds of racism and achieve self-sufficiency. They also seek to educate and empower white people to fully

understand their history, take control of their present, and use their power to change the future.

The effects of racism and prejudice are long-standing and far-reaching, and **The Benedict Center** works to address two specific manifestations of these effects, namely human trafficking and prostitution. Women who work with The Benedict Center are nurtured, supported and loved, and all of the effects of this life (for example drug addiction, incarceration, poor education, abuse, poverty and homelessness) are addressed, giving the women the tools they need to achieve a better life and future, both for themselves and for their children.

We also stand in the shadow of the statue commemorating the life of one of our country's greatest treasures, organizers and fighters for justice, **Martin Luther King, Jr.** As many of you know, he devoted his entire life towards achieving equality for all people and striving for peace in our country and world.

Just as Veronica offered solace and support to Jesus, these organizations and this man's legacy support some of our community's most abused and marginalized people. While we cannot permanently eliminate the evils of racism, we can effect change, one life at a time.

**Reflection:** Loving God, please open our hearts, minds and mouths to see and acknowledge instances of oppression and empower us to act and speak out for justice and equity in solidarity with all of our sisters and brothers in Christ.

- Do I really see people as I pass them on the street? Or are they just a part of the landscape? Do I acknowledge them with a smile or greeting?

**All: "In dealing with my neighbor I must resemble Jesus who said that He came into the world, not to be served but to serve" (Mark 10: 45)**

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### **The Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem**

**Location:** Sojourner Family Peace Center, 619 West Walnut Street

**Leader:** We praise you, oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** Established in 1975, the mission of Sojourner Family Peace Center is to **transform lives** impacted by domestic violence. Primary goals are to ensure the safety of victims of family violence and provide a pathway out of violence for victims and abusers through opportunities to make positive and lasting changes for themselves and their children.

Sojourner Family Peace Center serves over 9,500 clients each year and provides an array of support aimed at helping families affected by domestic violence achieve safety, justice and well-being.

Sojourner aims to create peaceful communities in which domestic respect and a life free from violence is the right of every woman, man and child. It provides services for both offenders and victims, including a shelter for up to 46 women and children.

**Reflection below alternate site.**

(Alternate site: THE DOMINICAN CENTER FOR WOMEN, 2470 West Locust Street

The Dominican Center works with the Amani neighborhood residents and partners to build a better future. Adult Education, Housing, and Building Neighborhood Capacity, are all facets of a single mission: to enhance the dignity, safety, security and economic self-sufficiency of each Amani resident.

Without an education, finding a job is problematic. Without a job, homeownership is not feasible. Without ongoing financial growth, neighborhood development is not possible.

The weaving together of all of the above elements is what makes the Dominican mission successful.)

**Reflection:** Loving God, you know what it means to speak and have no one listen. You always listened to those who were denied a voice, like the women of Jerusalem and women who are not supported in their education. Give courage to all women who are marginalized and vulnerable in our world today. Help us to listen to the voices that society does not recognize. Help us to stand with those who are marginalized and recognize how they can contribute to building a world full of peace and love.

- How can I speak for someone who does not have a voice?
- How can I use my education to help someone who does not have the opportunities that I have?

**All: “The one who is of God hears the word of God.” (John 8:47)**

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### **The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments**

**Location:** Legal Services for Immigrants – Catholic Charities, 731 West Washington

**Leader:** We praise you, oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull), they stripped Jesus of his clothes. They divided his garments among them by casting lots to see what each should take.

It is easy to be taken advantage of when you are a “stranger” in another country. Threats of deportation, unscrupulous landlords, and employers and attorneys looking for their own financial gain while preying on the fears of undocumented immigrants are a commonplace occurrence. Catholic Charities provides legal counsel and assistance for those that society often sees as the “stranger” in our midst.

For new immigrants to this country, the road to citizenship can be a daunting journey. Our government is based on documents and documentation – much different than many Latin American cultures where it is often difficult to secure even basic forms. Legal Services to immigrants typically works with newcomers to our country who are seeking to become citizens or to reunify with family members living in the United States. It also assists individuals who are trying to secure asylum or temporary protection in the U.S. In addition, VAWA, the Violence Against Women Act, was created in 1994. It gives immigrant victims of domestic violence a mechanism in which to gain lawful residency in the United States. VAWA protection is extended to anyone in an abusive situation, male or female, who is married to a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident. A good portion of Catholic Charities’ VAWA work is trying to keep parents together with their children who were born here and are now citizens.

### **Reflection**

- Who are the people in our midst who have had everything taken away from them?

- Jesus knows what it is like to be helpless and poor. Poverty in our world leaves many alone and abandoned. How have you felt abandoned and empty?

**All: “He was counted among the wicked.” (Mark 15:28)**

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### **The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross**

**Location:** Joshua Glover Mural, I-43 and Fond du Lac (Old St. Mary as alternate site) (2 min. video from WTMJ 4 and 5 min. video from Racine; historical marker in Cathedral Square)

**Leader:** We praise you, oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. "All of this happened to fulfill the words of scripture: They will look upon Him whom they have pierced." (Luke 23:33; and John 19:36-37)

Sometime between 1810 and 1830, Joshua was born in the United States of America. At some point in the past, Joshua's ancestors were taken from their African homeland and sold into slavery. In 1850, there were over 3 million black slaves in the southern United States. Slavery had existed for hundreds of years. As a slave, Joshua had no rights. It was against the law for anyone to teach him how to read and write. He could be beaten or even killed for no reason at all.

On New Year's Day in 1850, Joshua's first master sold him to a man named Benammi Stone Garland. He was from St. Louis, Missouri. Joshua was Garland's slave for two years. Joshua did many things around Garland's farm. He split logs into rails and put fences around the pastures. He tended the farm animals. Joshua also worked in the fields and orchards, planting and harvesting crops. Then one night in 1852, he escaped.

No one knows exactly how Joshua escaped or what paths he took. What we do know is that he headed north to Wisconsin. Wisconsin was a free state where there was no slavery. It must have taken weeks to get from St. Louis to Racine, Wisconsin on foot. Soon after he arrived, Joshua got a job, found a place to live, made some friends and settled down. He was finally free.

But a law called the “Fugitive Slave Act” wouldn’t let him be. The Fugitive Slave Act allowed for escaped slaves to be recaptured and taken back south.

In March 1854, slave catchers found out where Joshua was living. Led by Benammi Garland, they surprised Joshua in his cabin at night. After a short fight, they threw him in the back of a wagon. They drove through the foggy night to Milwaukee, where they put Joshua in jail. They planned to take him back to St. Louis in the morning, but they never got the chance.

Abolitionists led by a man named Sherman Booth stormed the jail the next morning. They battered down the door to Joshua’s cell and put him in a buggy. He was on his way to freedom. He spent over a month traveling from safe-house to safe-house along the Underground Railroad. The Underground Railroad wasn’t a real railroad. It was a system of homes abolitionists used to help escaped slaves make their way to freedom.

Joshua spent many nights in fear that he would be captured again. Many men and women risked everything they had to defy the Fugitive Slave Act and keep Joshua safe. After nearly 40 days on the run, Joshua was put aboard a steamer headed to Canada. He was finally free.

Joshua lived the rest of his life in Canada as a free man. He did what free men and women around the world do. He found a job. He found a place to live. He made friends. He got married. He lived the life he chose for himself.

Here at this mural, we see a man who was shamed and exploited in ways that are unimaginable. However, he made a choice to live free or die trying.

Jesus suffered Crucifixion, a slow and painful form of capital punishment. Crucifixion was intended to be an especially humiliating form of punishment, intended to terrify the witnesses into complying with the law. The crucified person probably died from asphyxiation; eventually exhausted by pulling himself up to breathe, he would give in and die.

**Reflection:** Although slavery is no longer a reality, we recognize that our world still suffers from oppression and many injustices. Loving God, the nails of Jesus’ cross represent all of the injustices that we feel we cannot change, that limit our movements toward a more loving world. Help us to recognize the dignity of your people, and end the injustices that damage us all. Gift us in ways that support human life and respect all. Cleanse us of our wrong doings, so we can love like Jesus did.

- What am I enslaved to: Consumerism? Alcohol, drugs or sex? My own will?
- Do I think I am better than others? Do I put others down?

**All: “The Apostle Paul exhorts us to present our bodies as a sacrifice, living, holy, pleasing to God.” (Romans 12:1)**

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### **The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross**

**Location:** Red Arrow Park, Kilbourn and Water

**Leader:** We praise you, oh Jesus, and we thank you

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit”; and when he had said this he breathed his last. (Luke 23:34, 44-46)

Jesus was a law-breaker, but not a criminal. He was innocent, executed between two criminals, and in the midst of a jeering crowd.

We are now at Red Arrow Park. Dontre Hamilton, a homeless and mentally ill man who suffered from schizophrenia, was fatally shot and killed here by Christopher Manney, an officer for the Milwaukee Police Department at the time.

On April 30, 2014, Dontre was sleeping on a park bench, when two officers approached him twice during different times of the day to question his intentions in the park. After two civil conversations, the police officers left as Dontre was doing nothing wrong or illegal. A while later, Officer Christopher Manney arrived at the same scene to find Dontre sitting on the bench. He tried to pat Dontre down, but he refused. Dontre tried to keep the officer from touching him by grabbing Officer Manney’s baton from him. When the officer couldn’t get his baton back in his possession, he drew his gun. He began to fire, not just once or twice to disarm Dontre, but 14 times. Officer Manney claims that Dontre was beating him with the baton, however, witnesses nearby say that they never saw Dontre act in a violent way even once. When the autopsy results were complete, the family released the information to the public. Besides the

14 bullet wounds, the autopsy also notes that Hamilton suffered blunt force injuries to his chin, scalp and neck and had bruises on his upper arm, and that Hamilton had no drugs in his system.

**Reflection:** Loving God, our world is chaotic at times. In this world, still today people are executed, tortured, beaten, excluded, and kept in the shadows. Injustice is prevalent. You entered into the mystery of death and injustice, and poured in light so that love would prevail. You went through this darkness to sanctify it. In the midst of experiencing the most horrific violence and torture, you found inside words of forgiveness and love. You give us a profound example of love. Help us when we witness acts of violence, to react with compassion, forgiveness, and mercy and not with fear, anger, or retaliation. Help us realize the profound love you had for all of humanity when you entered death.

- What actions can I take during times of chaos and injustice without resorting to violence?
- Do I forgive when others hurt me? What would I need to do to find forgiveness within and extend it to my “enemy”?

**All: “Lord, You said that once You were lifted up from the earth, You would draw all people to yourself.” Draw me to Yourself and make me radiate Your love to all I come in contact with. (John 12:32)**

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**The Thirteenth Station: The Body of Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross**

**Location:** The Women's Care Center, 1441 N Farwell

**Leader:** We praise you, Oh Jesus, and we thank you.

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** After Jesus was put to death, he was gently taken from the cross. His suffering and pain had ended, and he was put in the lap of his mother. His dirt and blood were wiped away and he was treated with love.

Mary knew the great pain of losing a child. She gently and lovingly cared for the son she had lost. She was quite alone on this journey as many of Jesus' followers had abandoned him. Many had turned their back on Jesus' message of life and love. Some returned. If only they could have valued him while he was alive.

We are now at the site of The Woman's Care Center. This facility works to help support woman who are in crisis and find themselves pregnant. They see the inherent value and dignity in all people and work to help women so that they know they are loved. They have helped thousands of women through their pregnancies and provide care and support for their children after they have given birth. They stand in contrast to the abortion clinic across the street where many children die before they are given a chance to be born. The Woman's Care Center stands as a beacon of hope to many women who face very difficult circumstances in their life. By providing free ultrasounds for women in crisis they are able to see the life of their unborn children in the womb. Ninety percent of women who see their unborn child chose not to have an abortion.

**Reflection:** O Mary, Mother most sorrowful, the sword of grief pierced your soul when your child, Jesus, lied lifeless in your arms.

- What are some of the obstacles and hurdles women face when they find that they are pregnant? Do they feel abandoned?
- Mary knew the pain of losing a child. What can we do to see the value and goodness in all human life? How can we ease the pain of women in crisis?

**All: "Is it nothing to all you who pass this way? All who pass by here, see if there is a sorrow as great as mine." (Lamentations 1:2)**

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### **The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb**

**Location:** Calvary Cemetery, 55<sup>th</sup> and Blue Mound (Old St. Mary as alternate site)

**Leader:** We praise you, Oh Jesus, and we thank you.

**All:** Because by your great love, you have saved Milwaukee.

**Leader:** Joseph of Arimathea took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed. (Matthew 27:59-60)

The body of Jesus is taken to a “borrowed tomb.” The huge stone over the tomb is the final sign of the permanence of death. Jesus is gone. His followers mourn the loss of their beloved friend.

We have arrived at (see here) the Calvary Cemetery, which is the oldest existing Roman Catholic Cemetery in Milwaukee. This cemetery is the final resting place for many of the city’s early



influential figures such as Frederick Miller, founder of the Miller Brewing Company; Solomon Juneau, co-founder of the city of Milwaukee, and its first mayor, William Cary, elected to the US House of Representatives representing Wisconsin's 4<sup>th</sup> district; and many more. The cemetery was designated a Milwaukee landmark in 1981.

**Reflection:** Let's take a moment of silence for reflection, mourning, and grieving the losses and brokenness we have experienced in our own lives.

***Pause***

Please feel free to name, aloud or in the silence of your heart, the people you have lost, through death or brokenness. ***Pause for naming***

**Leader:** Lord, we pray for the souls of those mentioned here today and for all of the others who have passed away from this Earth and are now resting peacefully in the fullness of your love and mercy. We pray also for the families of those who have lost loved ones, that they may find peace here on Earth through your love and the warm embrace of those who surround them.

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### **Waiting for the Resurrection**

**Leader:** After they laid Jesus' body in the tomb, "the Sabbath was about to begin. The women who had come from Galilee with him followed behind, and when they had seen the tomb and the way in which his body was laid in it, they returned and prepared spices and perfumed oils. Then they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment." (Luke 23:54-56)

On the Sabbath, they rested. They waited. They hoped. They didn't know what to expect. All they knew was that their teacher, their friend was gone.

As we sit here, we are waiting. We are waiting for new life to come from the many deaths, the many losses in our lives, and the darkness of winter. We are looking forward to the new life of spring. We trust and we hope. We wait for the Resurrection, in our city, in our lives, in our hearts.

**Reflection:** God, help us to live in the hope that new life always follows death and darkness. Help us to trust in you.

**All:** "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." (John 14:18)