



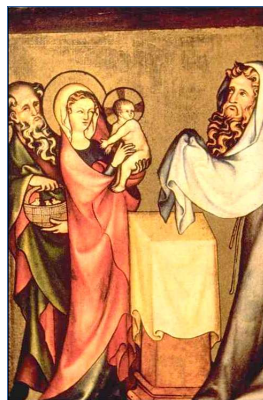
PRAYERS FOR THE VIA MATRIS - SERVITE PRIORY

OPENING PRAYER

All: Merciful Father,
your Son Jesus Christ gave his life on the Cross,
that we might be saved from sin and death:
open our souls to the Holy Spirit of Life,
as we reflect on the sorrows of Mary.
May we benefit from this time of reflection and prayer
so that our following of Christ
in both suffering and joy,
may become richer
through the example and prayers of our Lady.
This we ask through Christ our Lord, Amen.

1ST SORROW: THE PROPHECY OF SIMEON

All: Holy Mary
as you were invited by the Angel
to share in the birth of Christ,
so through holy Simeon you were called
into the mystery of the Saviour's
suffering and death.
We honour your integrity and faith,
O Virgin Mary,
for you listened to the words of prophecy
and pondered them in your heart:
for you did not refuse to open yourself
to a sword of sorrow,
but rather preferred the pain of Truth,
and shared the Way of Christ
wherever it would lead you.
Pray for us to be pure in heart,
ready to suffer for what is right.



2nd SORROW: THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

All: Holy Mary,
as you were invited to share
in the joy of Christ's birth,
so, through oppression and violence,
you were called to share in His humiliation.
We honour your courage, O Virgin Mary,
for you suffered homelessness and persecution
in your steadfast closeness to Christ.
The enemies of truth,
who had previously exiled the patriarch Joseph
and the upright King David,
were now enraged in violence
against the humble Messiah.
Pray for us to be strong in Truth,
and compassionate in the midst of conflict.



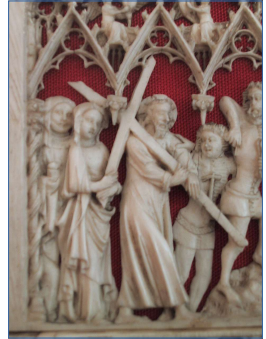
3rd SORROW: THE LOSS OF JESUS IN JERUSALEM

All: Holy Mary:
as you were invited to be
the joyful Bearer of the Son of God,
so you were called
to relinquish your child into manhood,
that He might face the hardship of the world
and go forth on the Father's mission.
We honour your obedience and faith,
O Virgin Mary,
for you listened to the Word of God,
who is Christ,
and accepted His mission
to give Himself over into the hands of sinners.
Pray for us
to lose our selfishness in suffering
rather than keep the Father's gifts to ourselves.



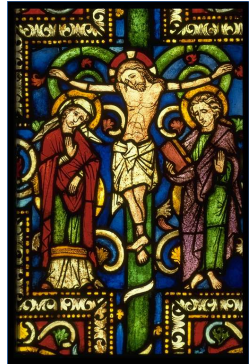
4th SORROW: THE MEETING ON THE ROAD TO CALVARY

All: Holy Mary,
as you were invited to share in Christ's mission
of healing and reconciliation,
so you were called to see Him
unjustly condemned and attacked
and cut off from the land of the living.
We honour your steadfastness,
O Virgin Mary,
for you entered fully into His Way of the Cross,
and did not hide from human suffering
even though you were free from sin.
Pray for us to take up the Cross of Christ
and to carry one another's burdens.



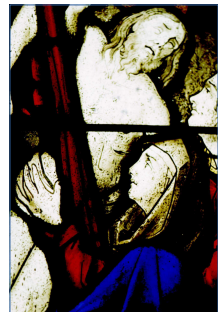
5th SORROW: THE CRUCIFIXION

All: Holy Mary,
as you were invited to the loving joy of Cana,
when the Hour of Christ had not yet come,
so you were called to stand by the Cross
and share in the saving Hour of His death.
We honour your trust,
O Virgin Mary,
for you stood firm in belief
that the toil and labour of Jesus on the Cross
would give birth in Water and Blood
to the Church, His living Body.
Pray for us,
named by Christ as your children,
to give ourselves completely to the Father.



6th SORROW: JESUS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

All: Holy Mary,
as at Bethlehem you gave God's Son
to the world in living hope,
so on Calvary you received
His shattered body back again
from Humankind still unredeemed.
We honour your sinless love,
O Virgin Mary,
for your gift to God's children
was hurled back at your feet,
yet you answered with forgiveness and peace.



**Pray for us to enter into grief
with silent trust in the power of God
and with forgiveness in our hearts.**

7th SORROW: THE BURIAL OF JESUS

***All:* Holy Mary,
as you were invited to be the living earth
which gave forth the Saviour,
so you were called to bury
His crucified body in the earth
after His sacrificial death.
We honour your holy motherhood,
O Virgin Mary,
for you shared most intimately with Christ
in giving forth Life to the world.
Pray for us, members of His living Body,
to rise up in the Life of the Spirit,
for the glory of God the Father
and the well-being of all God's People.**



CLOSING PRAYER

***All:* God our Father,
we thank you for the example
of the blessed Virgin Mary,
and commend ourselves to her motherly prayers.
For she urges us to enter
into the mysterious Passover of Christ,
to overcome Death, passing over to Life;
to over Sin, passing over to Goodness;
to overcome Selfishness
passing over to Communion and Love;
to overcome Terror, passing over to Peace.
Encouraged by Mary,
may we take up the cross of Christ without fear
and bear the burdens of others with compassion.
So may the life of your Holy Spirit
be revealed for all your People.
We ask this, Heavenly Father, in the Holy Spirit,
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**