

Walking Prayer Meditation

Prayer Gardens of St. Dominic

Introduction: This prayer service was created to give a walking prayer meditation on the life and death of Christ to those who visit these beautiful gardens. Each of the four sculptures represent an important part of the life of Jesus. After completing the sculptures in the Prayer Gardens, walk around the north part of our campus and finish your mediation by praying to the resurrected Christ. This depiction is located at the front of our Parish Athletic Facility at our north entrance.

We begin as we begin all prayer:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Station One - The Holy Family

Mediation: All families start out in much the same way: the parents get married, they establish



their home, and then they welcome in the first child. It happened just a little differently for Joseph and Mary. God had a different plan. The plan required faith and trust on behalf of Mary, and on the behalf of Joseph. What is the same is the love they have for each other, for their unborn child, and for God. Eventually, Joseph brought his family back to Nazareth, where Jesus would have to learn all the things that you are learning. He would have to learn how walk, talk, eat with a utensil, drink from a cup, clean his room, how to tie a knot, how to read from Scripture, and learn what it means, just like you. Like you, he had the love and safety of his family to live and grow in so he could be the man he was destined to be. The man who would save us from our sins.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke (Luke 2:39-52)

When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them.

He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord, Jesus Christ.

Let us pray: Oh my Jesus, you grew up with such a loving family around you. Help us to be mindful of how important our families are to us. Help us to be patient and kind to one another, both in our houses and as a family of faith. Thank you for the gift of family and community. Amen.

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory be...

Station Two – Jesus with Children

Meditation: When you really pay attention to the Gospels, it is very clear that Jesus loved people.



He especially loved children. Jesus asks us to come to him like a child. What does that mean? It means we are to come with an open heart, an open mind, ready to listen, and with a great amount of trust that He loves us and would never let anything bad happen to us.

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark
(Mark 10:13-16)

And people were bringing children to him that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he embraced them and

blessed them, placing his hands on them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord, Jesus Christ.

Let us pray: Oh my Jesus, we are so thankful to you for loving us so much. Help us to be able to come to you with all of our worries and our hopes. Thank you for surrounding me with our fellow parish family and for all those you send to love and care for us. Amen.

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory be...

Station Three – The Crucifixion

Meditation: Every time we look at this image, we can see so many different things. The cross is a terrible punishment for anyone to bear. The cross is a blessing for those who believe in Jesus as the Son of God. It is almost as if Jesus had the last say over those who thought they knew better.

What should have been tragic is actually triumphant. He is our Lord! He is our King!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke (Luke 23:33-43)

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. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." They divided his garments by casting lots. The people stood by and watched; the rulers, meanwhile, sneered at him and said, "He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the Messiah of God." Even the soldiers jeered at him. As they approached to offer him wine they called out, "If you are King of the Jews, save yourself." Above him there was an inscription that read, "This is the King of the Jews."



Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord, Jesus Christ.

Let us pray: O my Jesus, on that dreadful day when all our hope seemed lost, you offer paradise to us as you offered to St. Dismas the good thief.

Help us to have the courage to stand by you in your suffering and death, as you stand by us. Let your sacrifice be accepted by us knowing that through your death and resurrection ...you have saved the world. Amen.

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory be...

Station 4 – The Pieta

Mediation: Can you imagine the sadness of a mother who holds her innocent son? I am sure Mary asked herself several questions, such as "What has he done to deserve a death like this? What have I done to deserve such sadness?" From the moment Mary was visited by the angel Gabriel and gave her magnificent fiat, up to this day when she holds her son once more in her arms, she stayed true to her word. She never wavered in faith: "Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord may it be done to me according to your word."

Now those words are the only hope we can place in God. That even in death, even when all seems lost and darkness has covered the earth, we hold to the promise first modeled by Mary - not my will but your will be done.

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke (Luke 23: 44-56)

*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. *The centurion who witnessed what had happened glorified God and said, "This man was innocent beyond doubt." When all the people who had gathered for this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their breasts; but all his acquaintances stood at a distance, including the women who had followed him from Galilee and saw these events.*

Now there was a virtuous and righteous man named Joseph who, though he was a member of the council, had not consented to their plan of action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea and was awaiting the kingdom of God. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. After he had taken the body down, he wrapped it in a linen cloth and laid him in a rock-hewn tomb in which no one had yet been buried. It was the day of preparation, and 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.



The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord, Jesus Christ.

Let us pray: O my Jesus, the yes that Mary uttered to bring Jesus into the world is to be echoed by my yes to be His hands to everyone we meet. As Jesus laid down His life for me, I should be ready to lay down my life for Him. Help me to have Mary's courage. Help me to keep Jesus close all the days of my life. Thank you, Jesus, for loving me so much. Amen

Our Father.....

Hail Mary

Glory be....

Final Mediation: It is joy-filled to pray in God's creation. While we are apart, let this Garden serve as its rightful place, as a focus of our prayer and parish family. Thank you for walking these garden stations. May almighty God bless you.