

8. On his second day under the tree, Jesús hears women's voices and sees three middle-aged women pasturing sheep. They are kind and offer him tamales and water. He doesn't want to take it, but they insist, telling him that they have children, too. Nothing ever tasted so good!

Reflection/Prayer

9. Jesús travels for another five days, reaches the border and is spotted by an army patrol. They threaten to kill him but he begs them to spare his life. Luckily, one of the soldiers tells the others that Jesús reminds him of his kid brother and convinces them to let him go; they throw him a piece of bread. "Why kill him, he'll probably die in the desert!"

Reflection/Prayer

10. Jesús crosses the hills and he sees a town up ahead. He hopes that he can get some food as he has had nothing to eat for two days. But he is spotted by a group of bandits driving a Jeep and they chase him. They take his sneakers, his Ace bandage, his empty mochila and his jacket. In the collar they find the \$40 he had sown there. They are happy with this loot. They strip off all his clothes to make sure he isn't hiding any more money. They consider taking his pants, but then decide that they are not worth it. They drive off and leave him.

Reflection/Prayer



Stations 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15

Continue to reflect on Jesús's Journey and imagine for yourself how these last stages develop, mindful that at this very moment someone is traveling this Via Dolorosa.

Concluding Prayer

Jesus, through this devotion of the Stations of the Cross, we not only encounter you on the Via Dolorosa, but we also encounter all our brothers and sisters who walk the pathway of suffering and death, daily. Give us the grace to see them, the compassion to companion them on their journey, and the faith to believe that hope and new life are the promise of your resurrection. Amen.

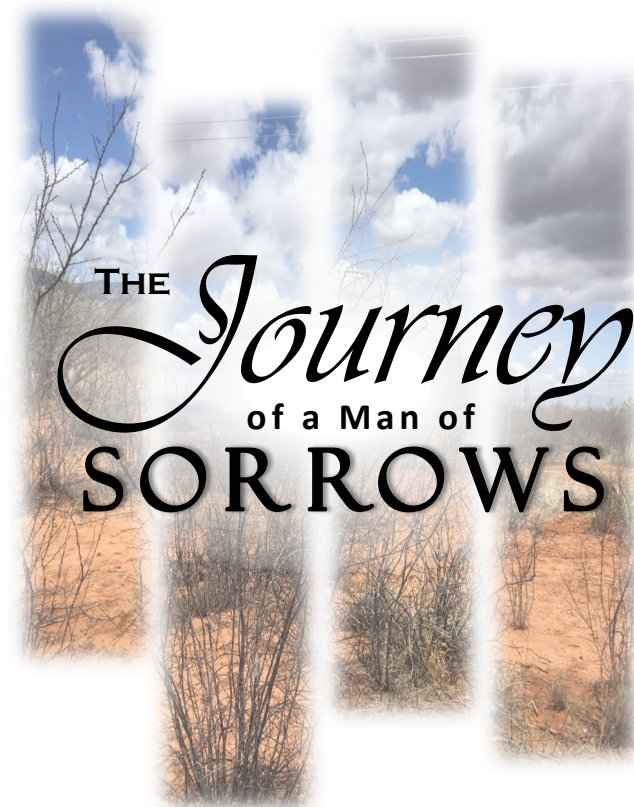


School Sisters
of Notre Dame

Atlantic-Midwest Province

Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Department

Contemporary Stations of the Cross



Peg Regan SSND : Immigration Committee

Introduction

The traditional Stations of the Cross devotion is a prayer designed to help us contemplate the journey of suffering, death, and resurrection undertaken by Jesus of Nazareth over two millennia ago. Today, through many different people throughout our world, Jesus once again takes up his cross and travels the difficult journey from death to life.

This *Journey of a Man of Sorrows* is a contemporary Stations of the Cross which invites us to reflect on the journey of an immigrant toward “el Norte.” As you pray it, reflect on this tortuous journey undertaken each day by immigrants striving to find a better life. After each “Station” take several moments to reflect on the narrative and pray for Jesús Morales (and those in similar circumstances) with the prayer that rises from your heart.

Background

Jesús Morales is seventeen and lives in a small city in Honduras. When he was twelve, his father was killed by one of the rival gangs. Two years later his older brother was killed, and a cousin was killed by the corrupt police force for suspicion of gang membership.

1. Jesús gets word that a gang wants him to join. If he refuses he will be killed. If he agrees he will have to kill someone as part of his initiation.

Reflection/Prayer

2. Jesús senses that this “cross” will take him away from all that he loves. He will have to face border crossings, bandits, and an arid desert as he travels toward “el Norte.”

Reflection/Prayer

3. As he hides out, he contemplates his travel options: go it alone, go with a “coyote,” try to find others planning the same. While he is considering his options, the gang shows up and beats him within an inch of his life as a warning.

Reflection/Prayer

4. As he recovers Jesús is resolved about what he must do. He sneaks into his mother’s house and tells her that he must try to escape. His mother is broken-hearted; she has lost her husband and her older son. She struggles to support herself and her daughters, nine and eleven years old. Jesús assures her (with a confidence he does not feel) that he will be safe and that he will send her money to help support her and his sisters.

Reflection/Prayer

5. Jesús goes to see Simon, a friend of his father, who has a small business and pays a large protection fee to one of the gangs. Although he can barely support his own family, he gives Jesús money, some food, and a used pair of sneakers for his journey.

Reflection/Prayer

6. Soon, Jesús sets off on back roads, cuts through fields, and climbs hills heading to the border. As he stops by a stream for water, he meets an old woman by the name of Veronica. She had a son go “el Norte” but she never heard from him again. She wonders if he died in the desert, was killed by the cartel smugglers, or perhaps just became ill and died from a snake bite. She hopes it was in the desert, as she has seen photos of crosses placed along the road in memory of those who didn’t make it. She promises to pray for Jesús that he will make it safely.

Reflection/Prayer

7. Jesús continues walking for eight more days. He stumbles and slips down a ravine. He twists his ankle and can’t walk but manages to crawl to a tree for shade. He is glad that he packed an Ace bandage in his mochila. He pulls off a branch and fashions it into a walking stick. It makes him feel like an old man, but he is glad to have it.

Reflection/Prayer