

*YOUR*  
**WALK**  
*JOURNEY*  
**WITH**  
*WITH THE*  
**HIM**  
*LORD*

**ST. FRANCIS XAVIER  
CHURCH  
MISSISSAUGA**

# **STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

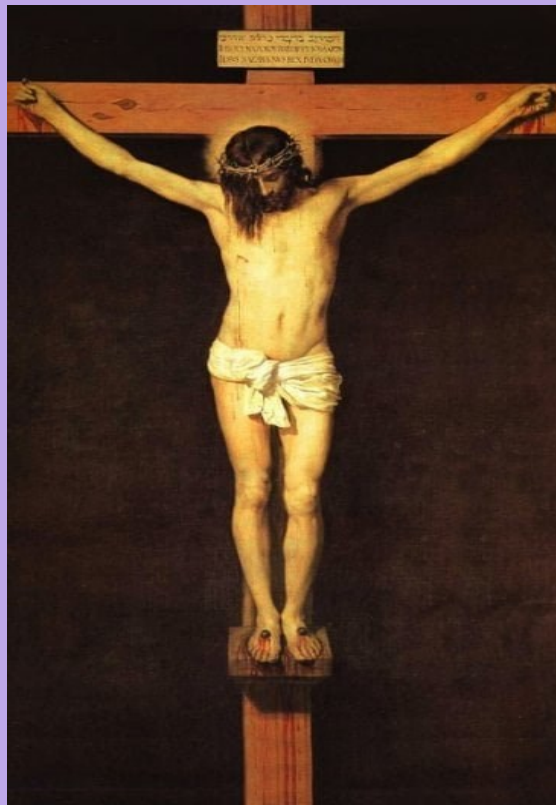
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# **THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

## **EVERYONE'S WAY OF THE CROSS**



**CLARENCE ENZLER**



## **ACT OF CONTRITION**

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you  
and I detest all my sins.

Because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell,  
but most of all because I offend you, my God,  
who are all-good and deserving of all my love.

I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace,  
to confess my sins, to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.

# EVERYONE'S WAY OF THE CROSS

## CLARENCE ENZLER



### INTRODUCTION

**Christ Speaks:** These fourteen steps,  
that you are now about to walk  
you do not take alone.

I walk with you.  
Though you are you, and I am I,  
yet we are truly one – one Christ.

And therefore, my way of the cross  
two thousand years ago, and your “way”  
now, are also one.

But note this difference.  
My life was incomplete until I crowned it  
by my death. Your fourteen steps, will  
only be complete when you have  
crowned them, by your life.

**Hymn:** Verse

## 1<sup>st</sup> Station: **Jesus is condemned to death**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ,  
and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have  
redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

### **Christ Speaks:**

In Pilate's hands, my other self, I see my  
Father's will. Though Pilate is unjust,  
He is the lawful governor  
and he has power over me.

And so the Son of God obeys.  
If I can bow to Pilate's rule,  
because this is my Father's will,  
can you refuse obedience,  
to those whom I place over you?

### **I Reply:** (*All*)

My Jesus, Lord, Obedience cost you your life.  
For me It costs an act of will – no more -  
and yet how hard it is for me to bend.

Remove the blinders from my eyes,  
that I may see that it is you whom I obey,  
in all who govern me. Lord, it is you.

### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn:** Verse



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Station: **Jesus carries His Cross**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)



### **Christ Speaks:**

This cross, this chunk of tree,  
is what my Father chose for me.  
The crosses you must bear,  
are largely the products of your daily life.  
And yet my Father chose them, too, for you.

Receive them from his hands.  
Take heart, my other self,  
I will not let your burdens grow,  
one ounce too heavy for your strength.

### **I Reply: (All)**

My Jesus, Lord I take my daily cross.  
I welcome the monotony, that often marks my day,  
discomforts of all kinds, the summer's heat, the winter's cold, my disappointments, tensions, setbacks, cares.  
Remind me often that in carrying my cross,  
I carry yours with you. And though I bear a sliver only of your cross,  
You carry all of mine, except a sliver, in return.

### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Station: **Jesus falls the first time**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

#### **Christ Speaks:**

The God who made the universe,  
and holds it in existence,  
by his will alone, becomes a man,  
too weak to bear, a piece of timber's weight.

How human in his weakness is the Son of God.  
My Father willed it thus.  
I could not be your model otherwise.  
If you would be my other self,  
you also must accept without complaint,  
your human frailties.

#### **I Reply: (*All*)**

Lord Jesus, how can I refuse?

I willingly accept my weakness, my irritations and my moods, my headaches and fatigue, all my defects of body, mind, soul.

Because they are your will for me, these "handicaps" of my humanity, I gladly suffer them. Make me content with all my discontents,  
But give me strength to struggle after you.

#### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse





## 4<sup>th</sup> Station: **Jesus meets His sorrowful Mother**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross,  
you have redeemed the world. (Rise)

### **Christ speaks:**

My mother sees me whipped,  
She sees me kicked and driven like a beast.  
She counts my every wound.  
But though her soul cries out in agony,  
no protest or complaint,  
escapes her lips or even enters her thoughts.  
She shares my martyrdom --  
and I share hers. We hide no pain, no sorrow,  
from each other's eyes. This is my Father's will.

### **I Reply: (All)**

My Jesus, Lord,  
I know what you are telling me,  
To watch the pain of those we love, is harder than to bear our own.

To carry my cross after you, I, too, must stand and watch  
the sufferings of my dear ones --  
the heartaches, sicknesses and grief of those I love.  
And I must let them watch mine, too. I do believe --  
for those who love you, all things work together unto good.

### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse



## 5<sup>th</sup> Station: **Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry His Cross**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

**Christ speaks:** My strength is gone;  
I can no longer bear the cross alone.  
And so the legionaries, make Simon give me aid.



This Simon is like you, my other self.  
Give me your strength.  
Each time you lift some burden from another's back, you lift as with  
your very hand, the cross' awful weight, that crushes me.

**I Reply:** (*All*)

Lord make me realize,  
that every time I wipe a dish,  
pick up an object off the floor, assist a child in some small task,  
or give another preference in traffic or the store;  
each time I feed the hungry, clothe the naked,  
teach the ignorant, or lend my hand in any way –  
it matters not to whom – my name is Simon.  
And the kindness I extend to them I really give to You.

**Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse

## 6<sup>th</sup> Station: **Veronica wipes the face of Jesus**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

**Christ Speaks:** Can you be brave enough,  
my other self, to wipe my bloody face?  
Where is my face you ask?  
At home whenever eyes fill up with tears,  
at work when tensions rise,  
on playgrounds, in the slums,  
the courts, the hospitals, the jails –  
wherever suffering exists – my face is there.  
And there I look for you,  
to wipe my blood and tears.

**I Reply:** (*All*) Lord, what you ask is hard.  
It calls for courage and self-sacrifice, and I am weak.  
Please, give me strength.  
Don't let me run away because of fear.  
Lord, live in me and act in me and love in me.  
And not in me alone -- in all of us—  
so that we may reveal, no more your bloody,  
but your glorious face on earth.

**Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse



## 7<sup>th</sup> Station: **Jesus falls the second time**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

### **Christ Speaks:**

This seventh step, my other self, is one that tests your will. From this fall learn to persevere, in doing good. The time will come when all your efforts seem to fail, and you will think, "I can't go on."

Then turn to me, my heavy-laden one,  
and I will give you rest.  
Trust me and carry on.

**I Reply:** (*All*) Give me your courage, Lord.  
When failure presses heavily on me,  
and I am desolate, stretch out your hand,  
to lift me up. I know I must not cease,  
but persevere in doing good.

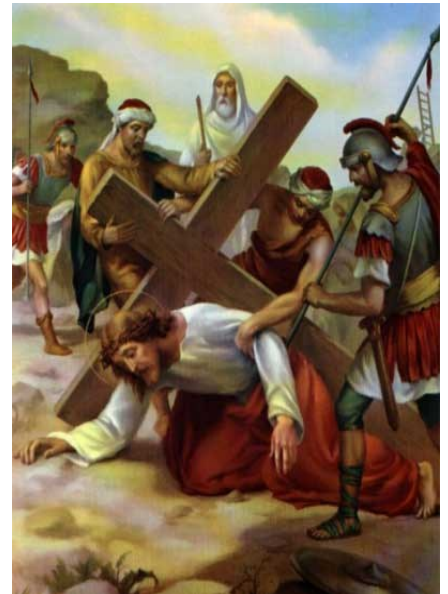
But help me, Lord.  
Alone there's nothing I can do.  
With you, I can do anything you ask. I will.

### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse



## 8<sup>th</sup> Station: **Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (Rise)

### **Christ Speaks:**

How often had I longed to take,  
the children of Jerusalem,  
and gather them to me.  
But they refused.  
But now these women weep for me,  
and my heart mourns for them --  
mourns for their sorrows that will come.  
I comfort those who seek to solace me.  
How gentle can you be, my other self?  
How kind?

### **I Reply: (All)**

My Jesus, Your compassion, in Your passion is beyond compare.  
Lord, teach me, help me learn.  
When I would snap at those who hurt me with their ridicule,  
those who misunderstand, or hinder me with some misguided helpful-  
ness, those who intrude upon my privacy-- then help me curb my tongue,  
may gentleness become my cloak. Lord, make me kind like you.

### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse



## 9<sup>th</sup> Station: **Jesus falls the third time**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

### **Christ Speaks:**

Completed drained of strength,  
I lie, collapsed, upon the cobblestones.  
My body cannot move.  
No blows, no kicks, can rouse it up.  
And yet my will is mine. And so is yours.

Know this, my other self,  
your body may be broken,  
but no force on earth and none in hell,  
can take away your will. Your will is yours.

### **I Reply: (*All*)**

My Lord, I see you take a moment's rest,  
then rise and stagger on.  
So I can do, because my will is mine.  
When all my strength is gone, and guilt and self-reproach,  
press me to earth and seem to hold me fast,  
protect me from the sin of Judas – save me from despair!  
Lord, never let me feel that any sin of mine, is greater than your love.  
No matter what my past has been I can begin anew.

### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse



## 10<sup>th</sup> Station: Jesus is stripped of His garments

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

**Christ Speaks:** Behold, my other self,  
the poorest king who ever lived.  
Before my creatures I stand stripped.  
The cross -- my deathbed – even this is not my own.  
Yet who has ever been so rich?  
Possessing nothing, I own all – my Father’s love.  
If you, too would own everything,  
be not solicitous about your food, your clothes, your life.

**I Reply:(All )**

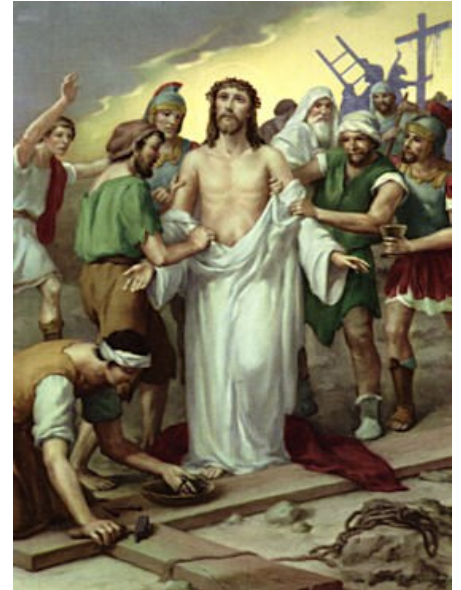
My Lord, I offer you my all -- Whatever I possess, and more, myself.  
Detach me from the craving for, prestige, position, wealth.  
Root out of me all trace of envy of my neighbor,  
who has more than I.  
Release me from the vice of pride,  
my longing to exalt myself, and lead me to the lowest place.  
May I be poor in spirit, Lord, so that I can be rich in you.

**Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse



## 11<sup>th</sup> Station: **Jesus is nailed to the Cross**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

### **Christ Speaks:**

Can you imagine what a crucifixion is?  
My executioners stretch my arms;  
they hold my hand and wrist against the wood  
and press the nail, until it stabs my flesh.  
Then, with one heavy hammer smash,  
they drive it through – and pain  
bursts like a bomb of fire in my brain.  
They seize the other arm;  
and agony again explodes.  
Then raising up my knees so that my feet are  
flat against the wood, they hammer them fast, too.

### **I Reply: (*All*)**

My God, I look at you and think:  
Is my soul worth this much?  
What can I give you in return?  
I here and now accept for all my life,  
whatever sickness, torment, agony may come.  
To every cross I touch my lips.  
O blessed cross that lets me be -- with you -- a co-redeemer of humanity

### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse





## 12<sup>th</sup> Station: **Jesus dies on the Cross**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

### **Christ Speaks:**

The cross becomes a pulpit now-

“Forgive them, Father.....

You will be with me in Paradise...

There is your mother...There...your son.

I thirst...It is complete.”

To speak I have to raise myself,  
by pressing on my wrists and feet,  
and every move engulfs me,  
in new waves of agony.

And then, when I have borne enough,  
have emptied my humanity, I let my mortal life depart.

### **I Reply:** (*All*)

My Jesus, God, what can I say or do?

I offer you **my** death with all its pains, accepting now,  
the time and kind of death in store for me.

Not by a single instant would I lengthen my life's span.

I offer you my death for my own sins, and for those of all humanity.

My God! My God! Forsake us not. We know not what we do.

### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse



**13<sup>th</sup> Station: The body of Jesus is taken down from the Cross and laid in the arms of His Mother**



**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

**Christ Speaks:**

The sacrifice is done. Yes, My Mass is complete; but not my mother's and not yours, my other self. My mother still must cradle in her arms, the lifeless body of the son she bore. You, too, must part from those you love, and grief will come to you. In your bereavements think of this: A multitude of souls were saved by Mary's sharing in my Calvary. Your grief can also be the price of souls.

**I Reply: (All)**

I beg you, Lord, help me accept the partings that must come – from friends who go away, my children leaving home, and most of all my dear ones when you shall call them to yourself. Then, give me grace to say: "As it has pleased you, Lord, to take them home, I bow to your most holy will, and if by just one word I might restore their lives against your will, I would not speak." Grant them eternal joy.

**Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn** Verse

## 14<sup>th</sup> Station: **The body of Jesus is laid in the Sepulcher**

**Leader:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (*Genuflect*)

**People:** Because by Your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (*Rise*)

### **Christ Speaks:**

So ends my mortal life.  
But now another life begins for Mary,  
and for Magdalene, for Peter, for John,  
and you. My life's work is done.  
My work within and through my church,  
must now commence.

I look to you, my other self.  
Day in, day out, from this time forth,  
be my apostle – victim — saint.

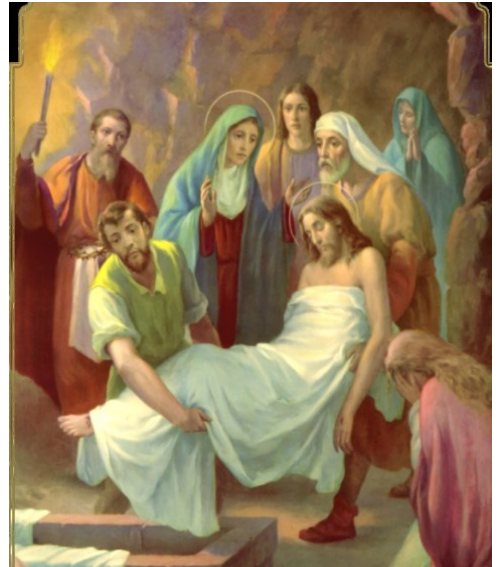
**I Reply:** (*All*) My Jesus, Lord,  
You know my spirit is as willing, as my flesh is weak.  
The teaching you could not impart, the sufferings you could not bear,  
the works of love you could not do, in your short life on earth,  
let me impart, and bear, and do through you.  
But I am nothing, Lord, Help Me!

### **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus crucified.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**Hymn:** Verse





## **Conclusion:**

### **Christ Speaks:**

I told you at the start, my other self,  
my life was not complete ,until I crowned it by my death.  
Your "way" is not complete, unless you crown it by your life.

Accept each moment as it comes to you,  
with faith and trust, that all that happens has my mark on it.  
A simple *fiat*, this is all it takes; a breathing in your heart,  
"I will it, Lord."

So seek me not in far-off place, I am close at hand.  
Your workbench, office, kitchen, these are altars  
where you offer love.

And I am with you there.

Go now!

Take up your cross,  
and with your life, complete your way.



*The Way of the Cross*

*as composed by*

*St. Alphonsus Liguori*

## **The Way of the Cross**

**Saint Alphonsus De Liguori**

This work is published for the greater Glory of Jesus Christ through His most Holy Mother Mary and for the sanctification of the militant Church and her members.

### **PUBLISHER**

[www.eCatholic2000.com](http://www.eCatholic2000.com)

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## **THE WAY OF THE CROSS**

Kneeling before the altar, make an Act of Contrition, and form the intention of gaining the indulgences, whether for yourself or for the souls in Purgatory.

### **PREPATORY PRAYER**

My Lord Jesus Christ, Thou hast made this journey to die for me with love unutterable, and I have so many times unworthily abandoned Thee; but now I love Thee with my whole heart, and because I love Thee, I repent sincerely for ever having offended Thee. Pardon me, my God, and permit me to accompany Thee on this journey. Thou goest to die for love of me; I wish also, my beloved Redeemer, to die for love of Thee. My Jesus, I will live and die always united to Thee.

## FIRST STATION

### JESUS IS CONDEMED TO DEATH

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and  
we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross, Thou  
hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider how Jesus, after having been  
scourged and crowned with thorns, was  
unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the  
Cross.

**People:** My adorable Jesus, it was not Pilate, no, it was my sins that con-  
demned Thee to die.

I beseech Thee, by the merits of this sorrowful journey, to assist my soul  
in its journey towards eternity. I love Thee, my beloved Jesus; I repent  
with my whole heart for having offended Thee. Never permit me to sep-  
arate myself from Thee again.

Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me: Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.



## SECOND STATION

### JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider how Jesus, in making this journey with the Cross on His shoulders thought of us, and for us offered to His Father the death He was about to undergo.

**People:** My most beloved Jesus, I embrace all the tribulations Thou hast destined for me until death. I beseech Thee, by the merits of the pain Thou didst suffer in carrying Thy Cross, to give me the necessary help to carry mine with perfect patience and resignation.

I love Thee, Jesus my love; I repent of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader: *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.***

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die

For very love of me:

Ah! let me bear Thee company; I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.





## THIRD STATION

### JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

**Reader.** We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

**People.** Because by Thy holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider this first fall of Jesus under His Cross.



His flesh was torn by the scourges, His head crowned with thorns, and He had lost a great quantity of blood. He was so weakened that he could scarcely walk, and yet he had to carry this great load upon His shoulders. The soldiers struck Him rudely, and thus He fell several times in His journey.

**People:** My beloved Jesus, it is not the weight of the Cross, but my sins, which have made Thee suffer so much pain. Ah, by the merits of this first fall, deliver me from the misfortune of falling into mortal sin. I love Thee, O my Jesus, with my whole heart; I repent of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me: Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader.** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

## FOURTH STATION

### JESUS MEETS HIS BLESSED MOTHER

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and  
we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross, Thou  
hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider the meeting of the Son and the  
Mother, which took place on this journey. Jesus and Mary looked at  
each other, and their looks became as so many arrows to wound those  
hearts which loved each other so tenderly.

**People:** My most loving Jesus, by the sorrow Thou didst experience in  
this meeting, grant me the grace of a truly devoted love for Thy most  
holy Mother. And thou, my Queen, who wast overwhelmed with sor-  
row, obtain for me by thy intercession a continual and tender remem-  
brance of the Passion of thy Son. I love Thee, Jesus my love; I repent  
of ever having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again.  
Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou  
wilt.

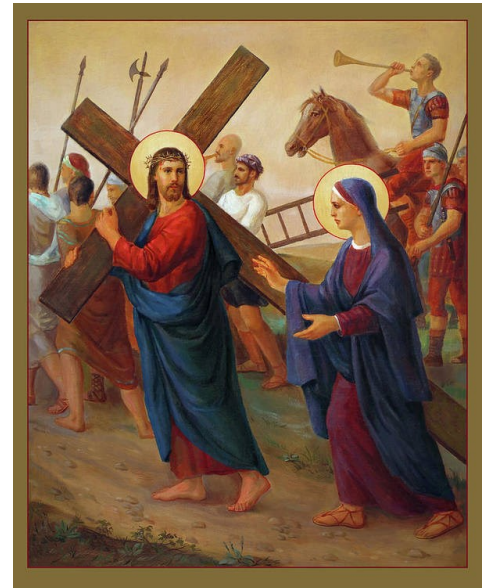
**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me:  
Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.



## FIFTH STATION

### SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider how the Jews, seeing that at each step Jesus from weakness was on the point of expiring, and fearing that He would die on the way, when they wished Him to die the ignominious death of the Cross, constrained Simon the Cyrenian to carry the Cross behind our Lord.

**People:** My most sweet Jesus, I will not refuse the Cross, as the Cyrenian did; I accept it; I embrace it. I accept in particular the death Thou hast destined for me; with all the pains that may accompany it; I unite it to Thy death, I offer it to Thee. Thou hast died for love of me; I will die for love of Thee, and to please Thee. Help me by Thy grace. I love Thee, Jesus my love; I repent of having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me:  
Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.



## SIXTH STATION

### VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and  
we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross,  
Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider how the holy woman named Veronica, seeing Jesus so afflicted, and His face bathed in sweat and blood, presented Him with a towel, with which He wiped His adorable face, leaving on it the impression of His holy countenance.

**People:** My most beloved Jesus, Thy face was beautiful before, but in this journey it has lost all its beauty, and wounds and blood have disfigured it. Alas, my soul also was once beautiful, when it received Thy grace in Baptism; but I have disfigured it since by my sins; Thou alone, my Redeemer, canst restore it to its former beauty. Do this by Thy Passion, O Jesus. I repent of having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:** Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me:  
Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.



## SEVENTH STATION

### JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and  
we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross,  
Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider the second fall of Jesus under the  
Cross—a fall which renews the pain of all the  
wounds of the head and members of our afflicted  
Lord.



**People:** My most gentle Jesus, how many times Thou hast pardoned me,  
and how many times have I fallen again, and begun again to offend Thee!  
Oh, by the merits of this new fall, give me the necessary help to persevere  
in Thy grace until death. Grant that in all temptations which assail me I  
may always commend myself to Thee. I love Thee, Jesus my love; I repent  
of having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that  
I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me:  
Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

**EIGHT STATION**  
**JESUS SPEAKS TO THE WOMEN OF**  
**JERUSALEM**



**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and  
we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross,  
Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider how those women wept with  
compassion at seeing Jesus in such a pitiable state, streaming with blood,  
as He walked along. But Jesus said to them: Weep not for Me, but for  
your children.

**People:** My Jesus, laden with sorrows, I weep for the offences I have  
committed against Thee, because of the pains they have deserved, and  
still more because of the displeasure they have caused Thee, who hast  
loved me so much. It is Thy love, more than the fear of hell, which causes  
me to weep for my sins. My Jesus, I love Thee more than myself; I repent  
of having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant  
that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me:  
Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

## NINTH STATION

### JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and  
we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross,  
Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider the third fall of Jesus Christ. His  
weakness was extreme, and the cruelty of His executioners was excessive,  
who tried to hasten His steps when He had scarcely strength to move.

**People:** Ah, my outraged Jesus, by the merits of the weakness Thou didst  
suffer in going to Calvary, give me strength sufficient to conquer all human  
respect, and all my wicked passions, which have led me to despise Thy  
friendship. I love Thee, Jesus my love, with my whole heart; I repent of  
having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I  
may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me:  
Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.



## TENTH STATION

### JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and  
we bless Thee.

**People::** Because by Thy holy Cross,  
Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider the violence with which the  
executioners stripped Jesus. His inner garments adhered to His torn flesh,  
and they dragged them off so roughly that the skin came with them. Com-  
passionate your Saviour thus cruelly treated, and say to Him:

**People:** My innocent Jesus, by the merits of the torment Thou hast felt,  
help me to strip myself of all affection to things of earth, in order that I  
may place all my love in Thee, who art so worthy of my love. I love Thee, O  
Jesus, with my whole heart; I repent of having offended Thee. Never per-  
mit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then  
do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People :**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me:  
Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.





## ELEVENTH STATION

### JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and  
we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross,  
Thou hast redeemed the world.



**Priest:** Consider how Jesus, after being thrown on the Cross extended His hands, and offered to His Eternal Father the sacrifice of His death for our salvation. These barbarians fastened Him with nails, and then, raising the Cross, allowed Him to die with anguish on this infamous gibbet.

**People:** My Jesus! loaded with contempt, nail my heart to Thy feet, that it may ever remain there, to love Thee, and never quit Thee again. I love Thee more than myself; I repent of having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me:  
Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.

## TWELFTH STATION

### JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider how thy Jesus, after three hours' Agony on the Cross, consumed at length with anguish, abandons Himself to the weight of His body, bows His head, and dies.

**People:** O my dying Jesus, I kiss devoutly the Cross on which Thou didst die for love of me. I have merited by my sins to die a miserable death; but Thy death is my hope. Ah, by the merits of Thy death, give me grace to die, embracing Thy feet, and burning with love for Thee. I yield my soul into Thy hands. I love Thee with my whole heart; I repent of ever having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me: Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.



## THIRTEENTH STATION

### JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider how, after the death of our Lord, two of His disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, took Him down from the Cross, and placed Him in the arms of His afflicted Mother, who received Him with unutterable tenderness, and pressed Him to her bosom.

**People:** O Mother of sorrow, for the love of this Son, accept me for thy servant, and pray to Him for me. And Thou, my Redeemer, since Thou hast died for me, permit me to love Thee; for I wish but Thee, and nothing more. I love Thee, my Jesus, and I repent of ever having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die  
For very love of me:  
Ah! let me bear Thee company;  
I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.



## FOURTEENTH STATION

### JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

**Reader:** We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

**People:** Because by Thy holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world.

**Priest:** Consider how the disciples carried the body of Jesus to bury it, accompanied by His holy Mother, who arranged it in the sepulchre with her own hands. They then closed the tomb, and all withdrew.

**People:** Oh, my buried Jesus, I kiss the stone that encloses Thee. But Thou didst rise again the third day. I beseech Thee, by Thy resurrection, make me rise glorious with Thee at the last day, to be always united with Thee in heaven, to praise Thee and love Thee forever. I love Thee, and I repent of ever having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

**Reader:** *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*

**People:**

Dear Jesus, Thou dost go to die

For very love of me:

Ah! let me bear Thee company;

I wish to die with Thee.

**Reader:** Have mercy on us, O Lord.

**People:** Have mercy on us.





## **Prayer to Jesus crucified**

My good and dear Jesus, I kneel before you,  
Asking you most earnestly, To engrave upon my heart,  
A deep and lively faith, hope and charity,  
With true repentance for my sins,  
And a firm resolve to make amends  
As I reflect upon your five wounds, And dwell upon them.  
With compassion and grief, I recall, good Jesus,  
The words, the Prophet David spoke.  
Long ago concerning yourself: “They pierced my hands and  
my feet;  
They have numbered all my bones”

**St. Alphonsus Liguori, Pray for us! Amen.**

PRAYING THE STATIONS



MARY'S WAY  
*of the* CROSS

Richard Furey

**Priest:** Tonight we will follow **MARY'S WAY OF THE CROSS**  
"I am the handmaid of the Lord: let it be done to me as you say."

**Reader:** Those words, some of the very few that Mary speaks in Scripture, set in motion the process of our redemption. Those words also opened for certain-ly been blest with happiness, as well as great sorrow. Simeon told Mary at the very beginning of her Child's life that "a sword of sorrow" would pierce her heart. With so little written about Mary in /scripture, one can only wonder about these joys and sorrows.

What was it like for the one person who was perhaps closer to Jesus than anyone else as she daily came to understand her Son's life?

What can we learn from her experience of this process of redemption?

This Version of the Way of the Cross attempts to enkindle within us a sense of both prayerful repentance and grateful redemption as it lets us walk Jesus' last steps with His Mother. To feel with her the "sword of sorrow," the confusion, the feelings of helplessness, as well as her ever-present faith, will hopefully lead us to a personal experience of redemption, one which may bring about conversion where it is needed. Hence, the second part of each station is designed to point out a practical way of rooting out of one's life those areas which one has not yet allowed redemption to touch.

Mary stood by her Son through His passion and, in her faith, experienced the joy of His resurrection.

These stations allow us 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians to do the same in the hope that we will, with Mary's assistance, deepen our faith and allow Jesus to rise once more in our lives.

## FIRST STATION

**Reader:** JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DIE

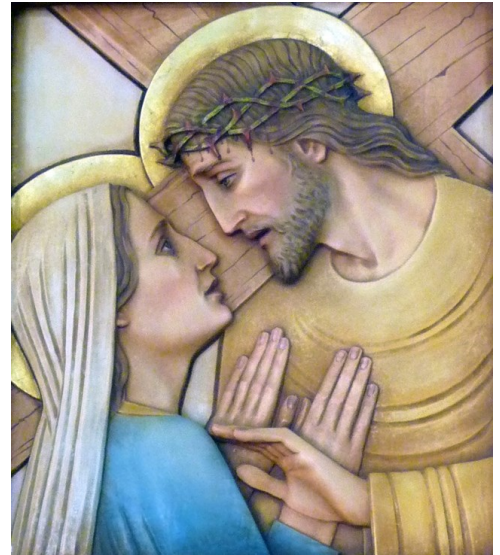
**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader:** It was early Friday morning  
when I saw my son.  
That was the first glimpse I had of him  
since they took him away.  
His bruised and bleeding skin  
Send a sword of pain deep into my heart  
and tears down my cheeks,  
Then Pilate, from his chair of judgment,  
Asked the crowd why they wanted my son executed.  
All around me they shouted, "Crucify him!"  
I wanted to plead with them to stop, but I knew this had to be,  
So I stood by and cried silently.

**People:** Lord Jesus,  
It is hard for me to imagine  
The anguish your mother felt At your condemnation.  
But what about today, when I hold a grudge...?  
"Crucify him!"  
Doesn't this bring tears of anguish  
To both you and your mother?

**Forgive me, Jesus.**



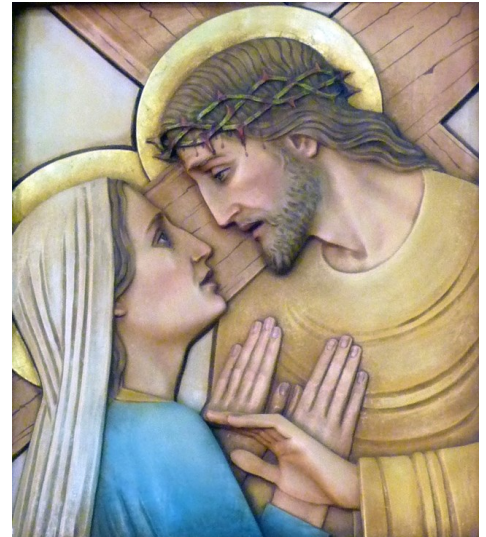


## SECOND STATION

**Reader: JESUS TAKES HIS CROSS**

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

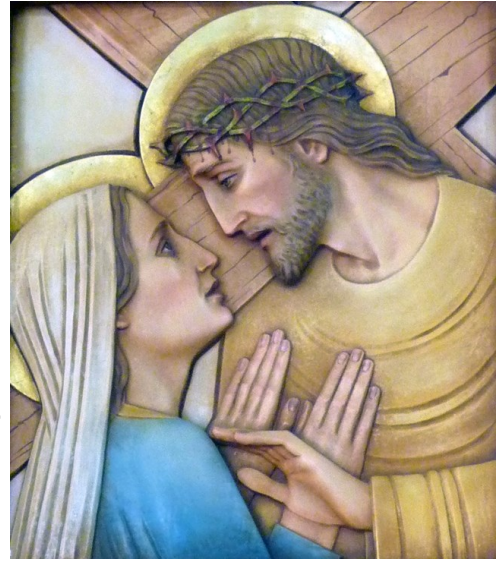


**Reader:** Regaining a little strength,  
I walked with the crowds to the entrance of the square.  
A door flew open and my son stumbled out,  
the guards laughing behind him.  
Two men dragged over a heavy wooden cross  
and dropped it on his shoulders.  
Then they shoved him down the road.  
My pain for him was unbearable.  
I wanted to take the cross from him and carry it myself.  
But I knew this had to be,  
so I walked on silently.

**People:** Lord Jesus, I beg you to forgive me,  
For the many times, I have added more weight to your cross  
By closing my eyes to the pain, and loneliness of my neighbor.  
Forgive me for gossiping about others  
and for trying to find excuses to avoid certain people  
who wish to talk to me. Help me to be like Mary,  
always seeking to lighten the crosses of others.

**Forgive me, Jesus**

### THIRD STATION



**Reader:** JESUS FALLS FOR THE FRIST TIME

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have re-deemed the world (Rise)

**Reader:** I followed close behind my son,  
as he stumbled toward Calvary  
Nothing had ever hurt me more, than to see him in such pain.  
I saw the cross digging into his shoulders.  
My heart dropped when I saw him fall face to the ground,  
the heavy cross landing squarely on his back.  
For a moment I thought that my beloved son was dead.  
Now, my whole body began to tremble. The guards kicked him.  
He rose slowly and began to walk again, yet they still whipped him.  
I wanted to protect him with my own body,  
But I knew this had to be, so I walked on and wept silently.

**People:** Lord, how often have I seen you fall? and unlike Mary, have left you there without concern? How often have I seen people make mistakes and laughed at them? How often do I find myself getting angry? when someone does things differently than I?  
Mary offered you her support through your entire passion.  
Help me to do the same for you by the support I give to others.  
Lord, have mercy on me.

**Forgive me, Jesus**

## FOURTH STATION

### **Reader: JESUS MEETS HIS GRIEVING MOTHER**

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

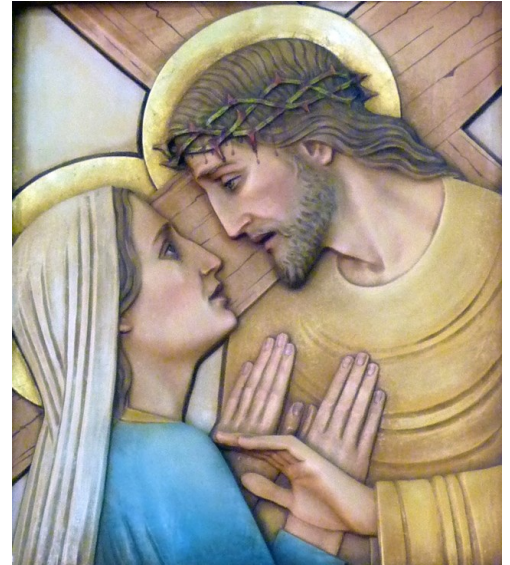


**Reader:** I had managed to break through the crowd and was walking side by side with my son. I called to him through the shouting voices. He stopped. Our eyes met, mine full of tears of anguish, his full of pain and confusion. I felt helpless; then his eyes said to me, "Courage! There is a purpose for this." As he stumbled on, I knew he was right. So I followed and prayed silently.

**People:** Lord Jesus, forgive me the many times our eyes met and I turned mine away. Forgive me the times things did not go my way and I let everyone know about it. Forgive me the times I brooded over little inconveniences or became discouraged and did not heed your call to courage! Yes, Lord, our eyes have met many times, but fruitlessly.

**Forgive me, Jesus**

## FIFTH STATION



**Reader:** SIMON HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

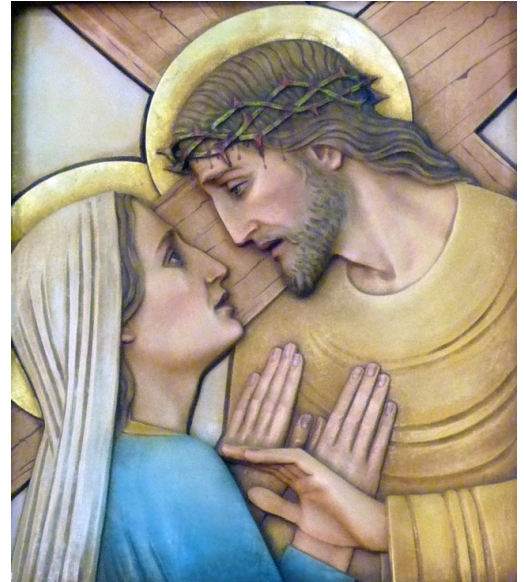
**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader:** I could now see almost complete helplessness on the face of my son as he tried to carry his heavy load. Each step looked as if it would be his last. I felt his every pain in my heart and I wanted the whole thing to end. Then I noticed some commotion near Jesus. The guards had pulled a protesting man from the crowd. They forced him to pick up the back of the cross to help lighten my son's load. He asked the guards why this had to be. I knew, and so followed silently.

**People:** Lord Jesus, I have many times refused to help you. I have been a selfish person who has often questioned your word. Don't let me remain like Simon, but help me to be like your mother, Mary, who always silently followed and obeyed.

**Forgive me, Jesus**

## SIXTH STATION



**Reader: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS**

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader:** As I continued close by Jesus, a woman pushed past the guards, took off her veil and began to wipe my son's sweating, bloody face. The guards immediately pulled her back. Her face seemed to say, "Why are you doing this to him?" I knew, so I walked on in faith, silently.

**People:** Lord, this woman gave you the best she could.

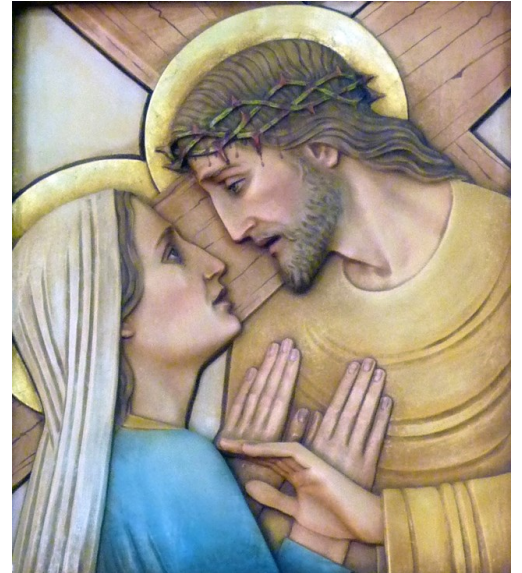
On the other hand, I have wanted to take more than I give.

So many opportunities arise every day for me to give to you by giving to others, but I pass them by.

My savior, never let me ask why again, but help me to give all I have to you.

**Forgive me, Jesus**

## SEVENTH STATION



**Reader:** JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

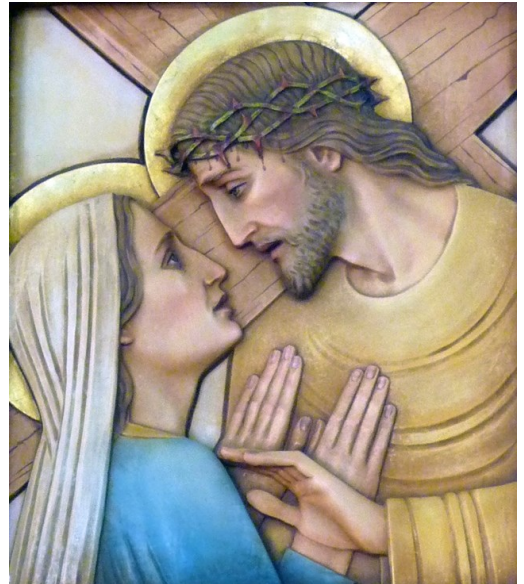
**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader:** Again my son fell,  
and again my grief was overwhelming, at the thought that he  
might die. I started to move toward him,  
but the soldiers prevented me.  
He rose and stumbled ahead slowly.  
Seeing my son fall, get up again,  
and continue on, was bitter anguish to me.  
But, since I knew this had to be,  
I walked on silently.

**People:** Lord, of all people  
Mary was your most faithful follower, never stopping in spite  
of all the pain she felt for you.  
I have many times turned away from you by my sins  
and have caused others to turn away from you.  
I beg you to have mercy on me.

**Forgive me, Jesus**

## EIGHTH STATION



**Reader:** JESUS SPEAKS TO THE WOMEN

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

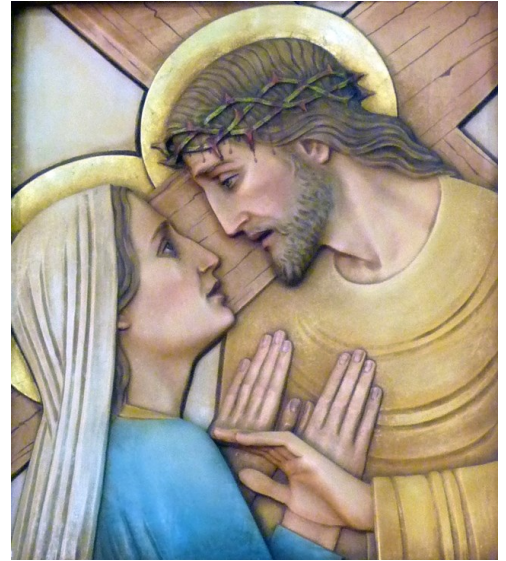
**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader:** I was walking a few steps behind Jesus when I saw him stop. Some women were there crying for him and pitying him. He told them not to shed tears for him. They had the opportunity to accept him as the messiah; like many others, they rejected him instead. He told them to shed tears for themselves, tears that would bring their conversion. They did not see the connection between that and his walk to death. I did, and as he walked on, I followed silently.

**People:** My savior,  
many times have I acted like these women,  
always seeing the faults of others  
and pitying them.  
Yet, very rarely have I seen my own sinfulness  
and asked your pardon.  
Lord, you have taught me through these women.  
Forgive me, Lord, for my blindness.

**Forgive me, Jesus**

## NINTH STATION



**Reader:** JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

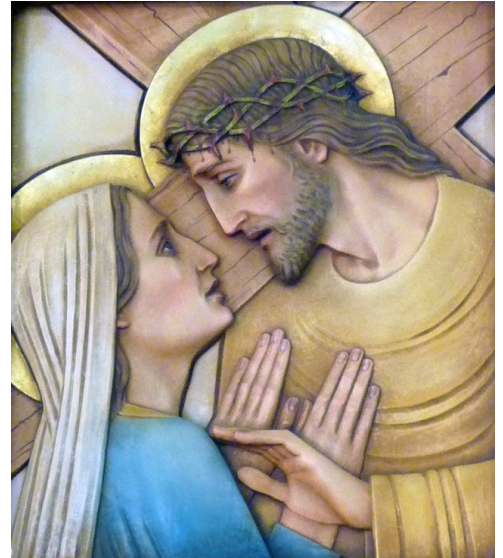
**Reader:** This fall of Jesus was agony to me. Not only had he fallen on the rocky ground again, but now he was almost at the top of the hill of crucifixion. The soldiers screamed at him and abused him, almost dragging him the last few steps. My heart pounded as I imagined what they would do to him next. But, I knew this had to be, so I climbed the hill silently behind him.

**People:** My loving Jesus,  
I know that many times  
I have offered my hand to help people  
but when it became inconvenient or painful to me,  
I left them, making excuses for myself.  
Help me Lord, to be like your mother, Mary,  
and never take my supporting hand  
away from those who need it.

**Forgive me, Jesus**



## TENTH STATION



**Reader:** JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader:** With my son  
finally relieved of the weight of the cross,  
I thought he would have a chance to rest.  
But the guards immediately started to rip his clothes off his  
blood-clotted skin. The sight of my son in such pain  
was unbearable. Yet, since I knew this had to be,  
I stood by and cried silently.

**People:** Lord, in my own way  
I too have stripped you.  
I have taken away the good name  
of another by foolish talk,  
and have stripped people of human dignity  
by my prejudice.  
Jesus, there are so many ways I have offended you  
through the hurt  
I have caused others.  
Help me to see you in all people.

**Forgive me, Jesus**

## ELEVENTH STATION

**Reader: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS**

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

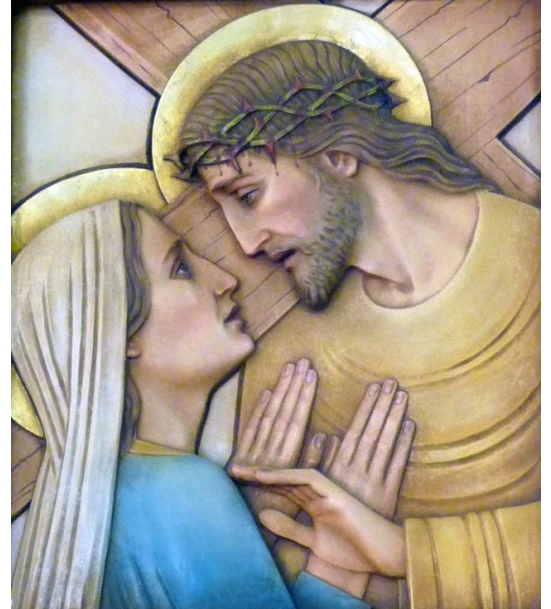
**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader:** As they threw Jesus on the cross, he willingly allowed himself to be nailed.

As they punctured his hands and feet,  
I felt the pain in my heart. Then they lifted up the cross.  
There he was, my son, whom I love so much,  
being scorned as he struggled  
for the last few moments of his earthly life.  
But I knew I had to be silent,  
so I stood by and prayed silently.

**People:** Lord, what pain you endured for me.  
And what pain your mother went through,  
seeing her only son die for love of me!  
Yet, both you and she are ready  
to forgive me as soon  
as I repent of my sin.  
Help me Lord to turn away from my sinfulness.

**Forgive me, Jesus**



## TWELFTH STATION

**Reader:** JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

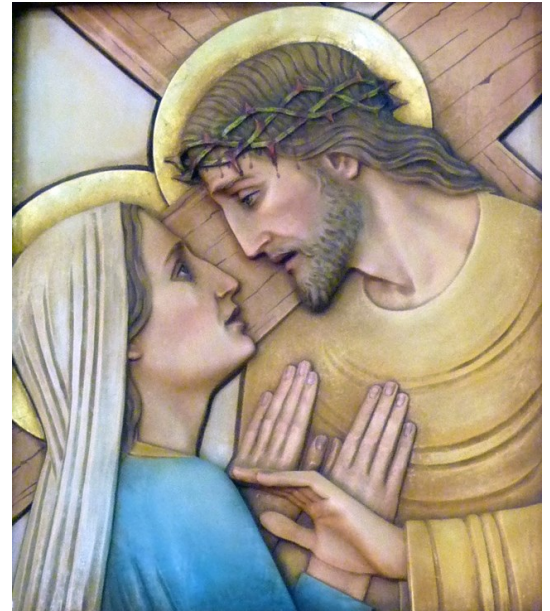
**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and  
we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you  
have redeemed the world (Rise)

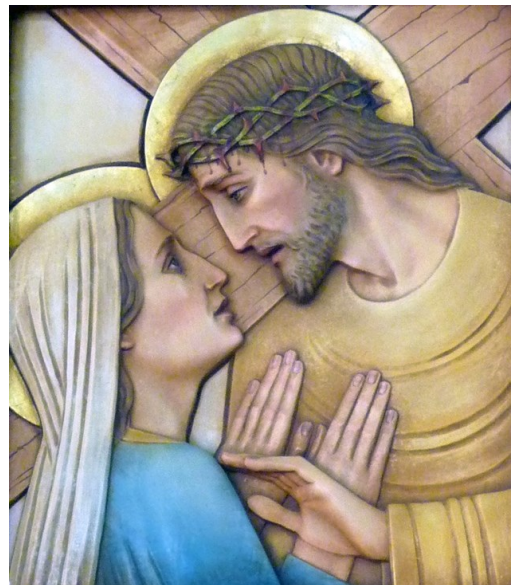
**Reader:** What greater pain  
is there for a mother,  
than to see her son die right before her eyes!  
I, who had brought this savior into the world,  
and watched him grow, stood helplessly beneath his cross  
and he lowered his head and died.  
His earthly anguish was finished, but mine was greater than ever.  
Yet, this had to be, and I had to accept it, so I stood be and  
mourned silently.

**People:** My Jesus, have mercy on me  
for what my sins have done to you  
and to others. I thank you for your great act of love.  
You have said that true love is laying down your life for your  
friends. Let me be your friend.  
Teach me to live my life for others, and not to fail you again.

**Forgive me, Jesus**



## THIRTEENTH STATION



**Reader:** **JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS**

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader:** The crowd had gone, the noise had stopped.  
I stood quietly with one of Jesus' friends  
and looked upon the dead body of our savior, my son.  
Then two men took the body  
from the cross and placed it in my arms.  
A deep sorrow engulfed my being.  
Yet, I also felt deep joy.  
Life had ended cruelly for my son,  
but it had also brought life to all of us.  
I knew this had to be and I prayed silently.

**People:** Lord, your passion has ended.  
Yet, it still goes on, Whenever I choose sin over you.  
I have done my part in your crucifixion  
and now, my savior, I beg your forgiveness with all my heart.  
Help me to live a life worthy of you and your mother.

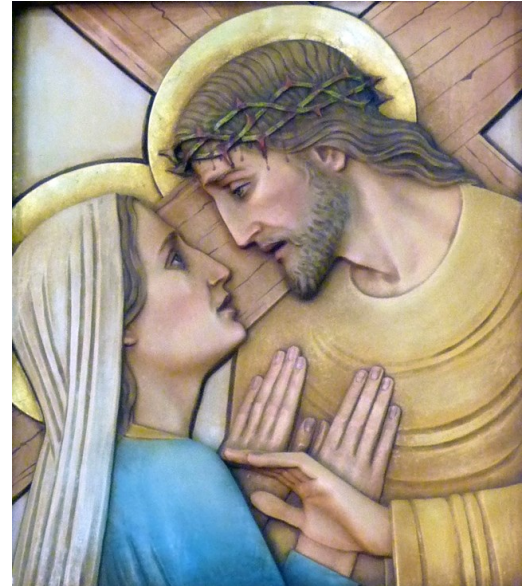
**Forgive me, Jesus**

## FOURTEENTH STATION

**Reader: JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB**

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)



**Reader:** We brought Jesus' body to a tomb,  
and I arranged it there myself,  
silently weeping,  
silently rejoicing.

I took one more look at my loving son, and then walked out.  
They closed the tomb and before I left, I thought, I knew this had  
to be.... It had to be for you!  
I would wait in faith silently.

**People:** Yes, my Lord, this had to be,  
because you love me and for no other reason.  
All you ask is that I live a good life.  
You never said such a life would be easy.  
I am willing to leave sin behind  
and live for you alone,  
in my brothers and sisters.

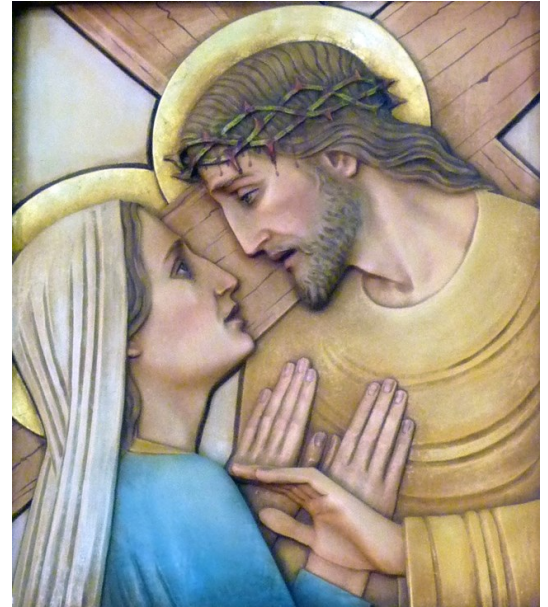
**Forgive me, Jesus**

## FIFTEENTH STATION

**Reader:** JESUS IS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

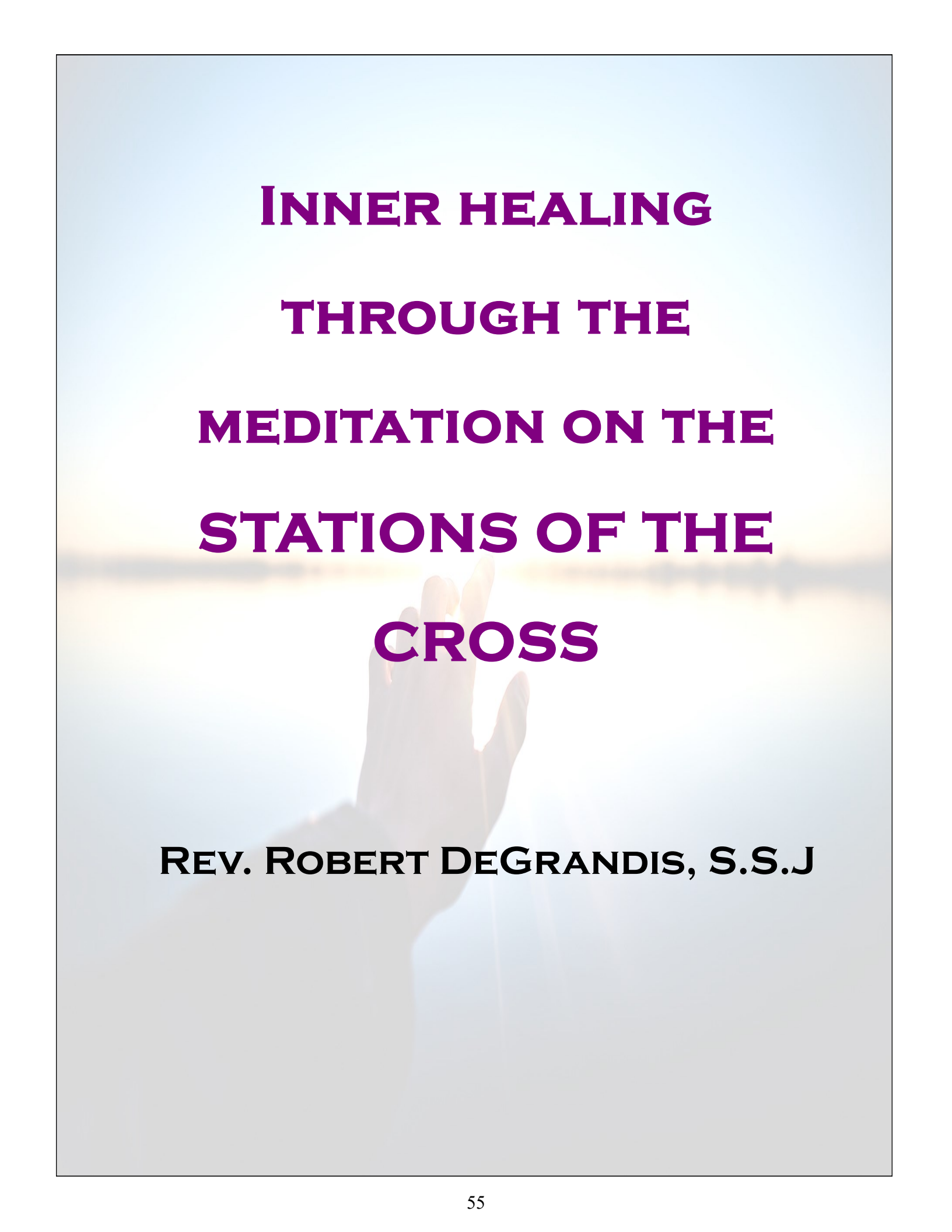
**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)



**Reader:** I could only be most grateful for the sacrifice of my son for us. Yet, what emptiness I felt trying to live without him whom I loved so! But only two days later that emptiness was filled beyond belief – he had risen! Our savior had opened the doors to a new life. That is the way it had to be – because his undying love for you would not stop at anything less. I could rejoice forever, but not in silence.

**People:** My savior, thank you! Thank you for such endless love that helps me to rise out of my own sinfulness. I will try to live a better life. Help me to always remember that love. Mary, mother of our risen savior, teach me to be like you, and in my love for others, love in return.

**Forgive me, Jesus**

A hand is shown in silhouette, reaching upwards with fingers slightly spread, towards a bright, glowing light source. The background is a soft, hazy landscape of water and sky, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall mood is one of hope, prayer, and spiritual ascent.

**INNER HEALING  
THROUGH THE  
MEDITATION ON THE  
STATIONS OF THE  
CROSS**

**REV. ROBERT DEGRANDIS, S.S.J**

## FOREWORD – TO BE READ BY PRIEST

Beginning with our earliest childhood memories most of us, as Catholics, can recall having prayed the Stations of the Cross during Lent.

Tonight it is hoped that a new point of emphasis will be provide for the person who prays the Stations of the Cross, new insight given that will reveal the Stations in a new way, and make them come alive and not be just another religious practice.

Each station is to be read and meditated upon taking its particular message into our hearts and minds to bring forth the healing love of Jesus. These meditations on the Stations stress our need to be healed – to be set free of emotional illnesses such as deep-seeded anger, resentment, jealousy, pride, hatred, unforgiveness – through the death of Jesus on the cross. “So if the Son sets you free you will be free indeed” ( John 8:36 RSV)

When We pray, it is usually for some specific need and this is a good manner of prayer. Through experience we know the more specific our prayer, the more powerful it is. As we pray the Stations tonight let us ‘zero in’ on particular needs and present them to Jesus.

Jesus said, “Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest” Matthew 11:28 JB) In some ways or another we are heavily burdened. For some it is financial trouble; for others it is family difficulties; some as hurting from loneliness; some are hurting because they are so filled with anger and bitterness over past hurts. No matter what the burden may be, Jesus said, “...I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28 JB)

It is this promised “rest” of the Lord that we seek as we follow the Stations of the Cross.



## THE FIRST STATION – JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: Reflection:**

“So in the end Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified” (John 19:16 JB) Consider what a horrendous crime Jesus committed to deserve being publicly humiliated such as he was, through scourging and being spit upon, by mocking and [placing a crown of thorns upon his Head. Jesus was human – flesh and bones as you and I are. Imagine his feelings as He stood before the people – many of them his followers, he had addressed and taught during his ministry.

### **Personal Reflection:**

Think of the times you have been unjustly condemned and judged during your life. Think of the people involved. What were your feelings at that time? Were you hurt and humiliated?

### **Priest: Meditation:**

Picture Jesus standing before you! Jesus is wearing the blood stained scarlet robe put upon him by the mocking soldiers after the scourging. See the crown of thorns plaited tightly upon his head cutting deeply into his scalp, matting his hair with blood. Look into the eyes of Jesus. See the compassionate, deep. Brown eyes of Jesus glazed with pain, yet filled with love. Walk over to where Jesus is attending and allow him to place his arms around you. Also, picture before you the person out of your past that has condemned you. As that person now stands before you, Jesus takes your hand placing it into the hands of the condemning person. Jesus says, “For my sake forgive this person. Forgive even as I have forgiven”

***“Judge not and you will not be judged: condemn not and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven” (Luke 6:37 RSV)***

## THE SECOND STATION – JESUS IS MADE TO BEAR HIS CROSS



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you  
(Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have re-  
deemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: Reflection:**

“So they took Jesus and he went out, bearing his cross, to the place called “The place of the Skull”, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha” (John 19:17)

As we reflect on Jesus bearing the burden of the heavy wooden cross, think of his weakness from the loss of blood. The soldiers surrounding him carry whips in their hands. They lash out at Jesus prodding him up the hill of Calvary. Jesus’ shoulders were sagging from the weight of the Cross.

### **Personal Reflection:**

What is the Cross in your life which you cannot accept – something that cannot be easily changed? Is it sickness in the family causing financial problems? Has there been a recent death that you cannot bear? Perhaps your children do not go to Church even though they were brought up in a Christian environment. Perhaps there is a painful close relationship with no reconciliation despite your efforts.

### **Priest: Meditation:**

Keep your eyes upon Jesus. Allow Jesus to carry the Cross for you bearing upon his shoulders the primary responsibility, for your burdens and those of Mankind. As part of the burdens you wish Jesus to carry, give to Him all the pain associated with losing loved ones in the family, especially a marriage partner and children. Let go of the deals and let them go to the Lord to enjoy happiness. Stop clinging to them. Experience the peace of Jesus as he provides the strength and consolation needed at this moment as you let go and allow him to carry the burden for you.

***“Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28 JB)***

## THE THIRD STATION – JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader: Reflection:**

Jesus' movements are beginning to slow as every move, every step increases the heaviness of the Cross he bears. As his weakened body can no longer take another step, he falls for the first time. Hear the noise of the crowd. The soldiers quickly and rudely strike Jesus, cursing him as they order him to get up. See the look on Jesus' face as he closes his eyes for a moment to bear the pain

**Personal Reflection:**

Pause for a few moments and reflect on your own strengths. What is the strongest part of your character? Perhaps it is a string will to face up to adversity with inner calmness even though situations seem hopeless. Perhaps it is your service to others, your willingness to help. Perhaps boldness, courage, enthusiasm, good work habits and attitudes! Whatever your strength is, thank the Lord for it. Think about your weak points now. Since we are all human, even as Jesus was, we have weaknesses. What is the one weakness that makes you feel as Jesus felt when he fell for the first time under the weight of the Cross. Accept your weakness, whatever it is; perhaps it could be an inability to make friends, overeating, gambling, anger, fear, sexual impulses, compulsive buying, temper problems. Accept this weakness as part of your very own being.

**Priest: Meditation:**

See Jesus on the ground before you bearing the weight of the Cross. Jesus looks at you and tells you, "My child, accept your weaknesses as part of you, as part of your very own being. I love you just as much with them. Tell Jesus now you do accept your weaknesses as difficult as that may be. Once you are able to accept it, offer it to the Lord and promise every time that you fall you will begin anew just as He did on the way to Calvary. Because he was weak at this moment, it was also difficult for him to continue His journey. Easily Jesus could have given up or he could have called upon the angels to help him. However, we know that Jesus gathered all his strength and lifted himself after his first fall. Haven't we too felt like staying down on the ground after we have fallen? How easy it would be to stay there and quit! However we know we have to rise again, like Jesus and start over. Remember the important face is not falling, but 'rising' continuing to follow Jesus no matter how discouraged we become because of our weaknesses. Follow Jesus by rising and dying again and again. ".....but he said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ then, I am confident with weakness, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong." (Corinthians 12:9 RSV)

## THE FOURTH STATION – JESUS MEETS HIS AFFLICTED MOTHER

**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you  
(Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have re-  
deemed the world (Rise)



### **Reader: Reflection:**

Imagine the scene on the hill of Calvary as Jesus is bruised and weakened. See the dried blood crusted on His wounds. Coming towards Jesus is his mother, Mary. Imagine her anguish as she sees Jesus, her only son, being treated unjustly and going through so much agony and suffering. With tears streaming down her face, Mary now reaches out to touch Jesus. How she wished she could relieve him of his pain. How she longed to hold her son to her bosom and tell him everything would be alright as she had done many times when he was a child in Nazareth.

But this was Calvary.

### **Personal Reflection:**

Think of your own mother now. Remember all the times you have hurt her by disobedience, neglect, or by not listening and being attentive to her needs. Think also of the times she was there when you needed her and she comforted and consoled you.

### **Priest: Meditation:**

With love accept your mother as Jesus accepted his mother and loved her. Thank Jesus for your own mother and for all the times she was there to bring you the comfort and understanding you needed. Also think of the time that your mother has caused you hurt and pain. Remember especially the three most painful encounters you have had with your mother. In your imagination tell her that you understand her love for you and how now you realize she brought you up the best way she knew how. Tell her you forgive her for all those times she hurt you even if she was unaware how deeply you were hurt and affected by her un-love. Ask your mother to forgive for all the times you hurt her. Recall to mind the three most painful moments when you have caused her pain. Picture your mother standing on the hill of Calvary with Jesus and Mary. Look into the face of Jesus and Mary. Then turn and look into your own mother's face. Jesus says to you, "Forgive and you will be forgiven. Pardon and you will be pardoned". Feel the peace flowing through everyone present—Jesus, Mary, your mother and yourself. Experience also the love flowing through Jesus, into Mary and into you and your Mother.

**"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." (Colossians 3.13)**

## THE FIFTH STATION - SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you  
(Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have re-  
deemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: Reflection:**

“A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross” (Mark 15:21)

Picture Simon of Cyrene as a tall, large-framed man. As he was coming in from the country, he was grabbed from the crowd and forced to help Jesus carry His cross as the soldiers feared Jesus would not be able to make it up the hill of Calvary.

### **Personal Reflection:**

Picture your own father now. He, like Simon, has tried to help you many times in your life. When there was help needed, your father was there to help you. When something was broken, your father was the one you bought the pieces to, as he always seemed to do the impossible. Or maybe your father was the opposite and was never there.

Being a weak human being, there were times when your father hurt you and perhaps humiliated you. Reflect over those times in your life when you were counting on his support and approval and he was not supportive and you had to continue on your own.

Maybe there was a time when you needed his presence at a school or sports activity and he was too busy and could not attend. Perhaps you greeted him when he came back from work and were excited and anxious to tell him all the minute details of some important event of the day and had to hear how tired he was and couldn't be bothered. Think of this times when you deeply hurt by him or felt rejected by him.

### **Priest: Meditation:**

As you see Jesus humiliated in this Station, extend forgiveness to your own earthly father for all the times you have hurt him and disappointed him, for all the times you neglected him, were ashamed of him because of the way he dressed, or his accent, for all the times you lied to him and deceived him.

Extend your arms to him and ask his forgiveness now. If necessary, even forgive him for dying when you were young and needed his support most. Also include step-fathers in this meditation.

***Forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone who sins against us” (Luke 11:4).***

## THE SIXTH STATION – VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS WITH HER VEIL



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you  
(Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: Reflection:**

Picture this woman Veronica bravely pushing her way through the crowd, passing the soldiers and offering her veil to Jesus. Risking all to help Jesus, she accomplished what no man attempted to do. As she wipes Jesus' face, once so handsome, now hideously disfigured, she is reaching out to Him with love and compassion.

### **Personal Reflection:**

Think back to the person who failed to reach out to you when you needed help and support. Was it your best friend that let you down? Perhaps your brothers and sisters? Your Parents? Your children? Who refused to help you when you swallowed your pride and went out to them seeking assistance?

Also, remember the times when someone approached you and asked for help and you refused them. Perhaps it was a beggar on the street asking for money. Maybe there was a friend in trouble and there wasn't enough time to listen.

### **Priest: Meditation:**

Gaze into the forgiving eyes of Jesus and experience his love and peace as you picture these people in your imagination. Extend forgiveness to all who have failed you, let you down, or even refused you assistance as you reached out to them. Jesus left his facial impression on Veronica's veil and so will our act of forgiveness be left upon those who have hurt us deeply in the past. As Jesus calls us to see him in every person, ask forgiveness from all those people who have refused to help.

Experience the peaceful feelings surrounding you as you have forgiven and have been forgiven.

*"Then Peter came up and said to him, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times? Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, seven times, but seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21, 22 RSV)*

## THE SEVENTH STATION – JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you  
(Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have  
redeemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: Reflection:**

As the weight of Jesus' cross seemingly increases upon his weakened and broken body, Jesus feels all his strength draining away. Totally exhausted, Jesus falls the second time. The pain of the wounds He has already encountered, renew themselves upon His body. The crown of thorns press deeper into his scalp and the whip markings are once again torn open and bleeding.

### **Personal reflection:**

How many times have you fallen under human weaknesses? How many times have you been humiliated by your own weaknesses, especially when boasting to others that this time you would make it – only to fall again?

### **Priest: Meditation:**

As Jesus painfully and slowly lifts himself up again, it is an effort for him to even to attempt it, but he does lift himself ready to bear the weight of the cross still further.

At this time, beg pardon for the times you have refused to lift yourself and follow Jesus after another fall, another failing, usually because our pride has been hurt or damaged. Easily we get discouraged and we think: "What is the use?" We remain then in our discouragement and depression.

In this Station, Jesus is calling you to commit yourself totally to him. Surrender your weaknesses to Him and reply on his loving arms to pull you up after each failing.

***"...If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it." (Mark 8: 34, 35)***

## THE EIGHTH STATION – JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you  
(Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: Reflection:**

“A large number of people followed him including women who mourned and wept for him” (Luke 23: 27) Picture Jesus once again weak and wounded followed by a large number of people. Among the people were the women of Jerusalem who were weeping and mourning compassionately at the sight of Jesus.

### **Personal Reflection:**

Those Holy women of Jerusalem can represent the people in your life who have been associated with the Church. Reflect upon those persons in your Church community that inflicted hurt upon you in anyway. Everyone who has ever been associated with a church, no matter what the denomination, has someone who has hurt them within the congregation, or perhaps it was a priest, minister, nun, deacon, usher, housekeeper or head of an organization. Include also those church members that may have gossiped about you or judged you wrongly. Also recall people in your church circle that you have offended and refused love and compassion. Perhaps there was someone you may have ignored, insulted and gossiped about unjustly.

### **Priest: Meditation:**

As you look at Jesus and the women of Jerusalem, picture them with three people from your church that you need to forgive and three people that need your forgiveness. As you picture Jesus accepting the consolation of the women of Jerusalem, accept also his love and forgiveness at this moment extended to you with compassion as you forgive and as you are forgiven. Remain with Jesus at this Station and let his healing love soak completely into all those situations and trials in your life with these church members, situations which caused deep hurt, pain and confusion. Let Jesus' love heal!

*“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances, you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” (Colossians 3:13) Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil, insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.” (1Peter3:8,9)*



## THE NINTH STATION – JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you  
(Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have re-  
deemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: Reflection:**

Imagine at this third fall Jesus' weakness which was dominating His total being. The cruelty of the executioners was excessive as they anxiously tried to rush Jesus along. Jesus could hardly move, less take another step. Finally, as He could bear the pain no longer, he gives in and falls to the ground for the third time.

### **Personal Reflection:**

Many of us get to this point. After bearing our burdens for many years and not being able to bear them any longer, we too give up. Totally discouraged, we want to 'throw in the towel'. Many times discouragement is the final blow.

### **Priest: Meditation:**

As you picture Jesus wounded and bleeding, he struggles to stand up again. Feel the weight of the heavy cross upon his shoulders.

Ask Jesus for the grace never to give in again to discouragement or despair, but instead to have the courage to get back up again after many falls. Keeping your eyes focused on Jesus get up and walk with Him, remembering that Jesus never walks in front or behind you, but beside you always ready to help you when you start to fall and to assist you in getting back up on your feet when you fall.

***"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me: (John 14:1)***

## THE TENTH STATION – JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you  
(Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have re-  
deemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: Reflection:**

As Jesus reached the place of crucifixion, Calvary, picture the violence with which the soldiers roughly strip Jesus' garments from him as even pieces of skin are torn off with the garments that adhere to Jesus' torn flesh. Feel the terrible embarrassment and humiliation that Jesus experiences as he stood there almost naked before the crowd that had come to witness his execution.

### **Personal Reflection:**

As you reflect on this Station think in your own life, what is it that you cling to? Is it fame, money, reputation, your children, your possessions, your job, your home? What is it that you completely cannot let go of and relinquish to the Lord?

### **Priest: Meditation:**

See yourself standing at the foot of the cross with Jesus as He stands stripped of his garments. Tell Jesus at this moment that you do wish to let go and give up to Him all that you hold dear, particularly that one item or that one person that you cherish the most. Ask Jesus for the strength to do this. You can sense Jesus' love as you feel him telling you that he does wish to bless your gift and return it to you in a new way. It will then not possess you, but you will possess it. Anything we cannot give to the Lord possesses us and we are in fact held in bondage by that one person or thing and live in fear that it might be taken from us. This is particularly true of loved ones, especially if we have been hurt or rejected in the past then we tend to cling to a loved one becoming possessive and fearful of leaving them. Make an act of faith and trust in Jesus as you do let go and strip yourself of that blinding possession and give it all to Jesus.

*"...give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together running over, will be out back into your lap. For the measure you give, will be the measure you get back" (Luke 6:38)*

## THE ELEVENTH STATION – JESUS IS NALIED TO THE CROSS



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you  
(Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have re-  
deemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: *Reflection:***

“When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him along with the criminals...” (Luke 23:33)

As the wooden cross is placed on the ground by the soldiers, see them forcing Jesus down onto it. Imagine the harsh wood as the splinters cut even more deeply into Jesus’ skin. Submissively Jesus extends his hands offering his life to his father for our salvation.

See and hear the sounds as the soldiers drive the nails into his hands and then into his feet. Imagine the tremendous pain Jesus suffered for us – just for you and me. And he would go through it again even if you were the only person on earth. That is how much he loves.

Consider his great love. As the soldiers set the cross upright, imagine the unbearable pain as Jesus’ body sags and down from the pull of gravity.

### ***Personal Reflection:***

How many times we have felt we could not bear the pain we were experiencing whether it was from some serious or trivial accident or from actual illness? Consider all of this in comparison with the pain Jesus endured for us.

### ***Priest: Meditation:***

In this Station, give your life totally to Jesus. Recommit yourself to Him. Having given your life to Jesus many times before, renew now that commitment to become his disciple.

***“Greater love has no one than this, that to lay down his life for his friend.” (John 15:13)***

## THE TWELTH STATION – JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: *Reflection:***

Consumed with anger Jesus endured three hours of torture on the Cross. Jesus cried out to his Father in heaven, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” Then Jesus turned to the thief on the cross next to him and told him that this day he would be with him in paradise. Hear Jesus as he extended words of forgiveness to his executioners. Finally his tortured and abused body could bear it no longer, Jesus bowed his head and died.

### ***Personal reflection:***

Reflect now on these last three hours of Jesus’ life. Through Jesus’ death on the cross ask for the grace of an abundant life. What is the area of greatest need in your life at this time? Pray especially for a greater love for your family, and for yourself.

### **Priest: *Meditation:***

As you are there on Calvary with Jesus crucified, expect Jesus to bless you and set you free imparting to you at this moment the life, the abundant life that he died to give to you.

***“...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10)***

## THE THIRTEENTH STATION – JESUS IS PLACED IN THE ARMS OF HIS AFFLICTED MOTHER



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

### **Reader: *Reflection:***

As Jesus' bruised and battered body is taken from the cross by two of his disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, they place Him into the arms of his mother, Mary. With gentleness Mary receives the body of her son. She holds his body close to her heart just as she did when Jesus was a little child. Imagine Mary's pierced heart filled with grief at the sight of the lifeless body of her son.

### ***Personal Reflection:***

Reflect no on your own relationship with your mother. Perhaps she did not give you all the love you needed, but remind yourself that she did the best under the circumstances at the time.

### ***Priest: Mediation:***

With Mary and Jesus at the foot of the cross, imagine Mary extending to you equally the love she had for Jesus. If you feel your mother never loved you or if you feel there was something missing, in your relationship with her, ask Mary to supply that maternal love to you now.

Feel Mary's love being extended to you and allow yourself to be loved by this gentle and compassionate mother.

***"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Luke 1:42)***

## THE FOURTEENTH STATION – JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB



**Priest:** We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you (Genuflect)

**People:** Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world (Rise)

**Reader: Reflection:** Having fulfilled his father's will, Jesus; lifeless body now lies in the tomb.

“At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.” (John 19:41, 42)

**Personal Reflection:** Reflect now on your own death if you can. Perhaps you have a fear of dying or a fear of the manner in which you will die: automobile accident, cancer, heart attack. Industrial fire, fire, drowning.

Also reflect upon the death of your loved ones and ask Jesus for the grace to set you free totally of the bondage of grief.

**Priest: Meditation:**

As you look upon the motionless body of Jesus lying in the tomb, ask Jesus for the grace to accept your own death and also the deaths of your loved ones knowing that death is the door to life.

Once you have been healed of the fear of death, you will walk in the freedom and peace. Seek this important grace from Jesus.

**Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this? (John 11:25, 26)**

## **EPILOGUE: (TO BE SAID BY THE PRIEST)**

The sufferings of Jesus may evoke many emotions: sorrow, fear, grief, anger. This good but the bottom line is to apply this to daily living. Not only must we be hearers of the Word, but doers also.

Through frequent meditations on the Stations of the Cross, you can be led to deep and lasting impressions on the need to forgive; the need to be more compassionate toward others and to a great desire to reach out to others with love and understanding.

As the Stations become part of our prayer life, they will lead us to the point where we are ministering to others through the love of Jesus.

It is only through realizing our own brokenness that we can truly empathize with other who are hurting and need healing also. We are not to be ashamed to seek healing for ourselves as this will free us to forgive and thus to minister to others. As we recognize an area that needs healing n our lives, we take it to the Lord in prayer. “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you find; knock and the door will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7)

It is hoped that through these meditations you will find the healing peace, love, freedom and forgiveness that Jesus Christ died to give each one of us.

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36)

“Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it” (Mark 16:20)

***Please join in saying One Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be for the intentions and protection of the Holy Father.***



## **St John Paul II's Scriptural Stations of the Cross**

We start by singing ...(*Hymn to be announced prior to the start of the Stations of the Cross*)

**Reader 1:** *In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*

**All:**       **Amen**

**Reader 2:** *Welcome to our Stations of the Cross liturgy. The Stations of the Cross are 14 stops along the way of Jesus journey from the Last Supper to his burial*

**Reader 1:** Today our chaplaincy team will be acting out these events, creating freeze frames to help us imagine what these events look like. At the start of each station we will say the response on the screen. Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.

**Reader 2:** We will begin with a prayer:

*Dear Lord, We pray that we will be able to understand the Stations of the Cross, please help us to listen and learn.*

*Lord in your mercy*



## **First Station: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane**

**Reader 1:** The first station- Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:** **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter, James and John. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me." **PAUSE** When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep.

**Reader 1:** Jesus is really sad and scared but his three closest friends don't seem to care. Do we treat our friends like this? Do we want them to pay attention to us but are never willing to help them? What could you do to help your friends more?

**Reader 2:** Dear God, Help us to be good friends and help us to make more friends everyday

Lord in your mercy.



## **Second Station: Jesus is betrayed by Judas and arrested**

Jesus stands either side holding the cross on his shoulder soldiers standing eitherside.

**Reader 1:** Second Station: Jesus is betrayed by Judas and arrested. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:** **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** While Jesus was still speaking, Judas, arrived, accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs. Judas had arranged a signal with them, saying, "the man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him and lead him away securely."

**PAUSE** He came and immediately went over to him and said, "Teacher." And he kissed him. At this they grabbed Jesus and arrested him.

**Reader 1:** Judas was one of Jesus' best friends and he betrayed him. He showed people where they could find Jesus, and made sure they attacked and arrested him. Have you ever had a friend hurt your feelings or be mean to you in front of others? Do you remember how you felt? Jesus doesn't get angry, he is sad but he forgives Judas.

**Reader 2:** Jesus, you are our king, help us to follow your steps this Easter. Lord in your mercy.



## **Third Station: Jesus is condemned by the Sanhedrin**

**Reader 1:** Third Station: Jesus is condemned by the San-head-rin. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:**           **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** When day came the council of elders of the people met, both chief priests and scribes, and they brought him before their San-head-rin. They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us," but he replied to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I question, you will not respond." They all asked, "Are you the Son of God?" He replied to them, "You saythat I am." Then they said, "We have heard it from his own mouth."

**Reader 1:** The san-head-rin was the court of all the Jewish leaders. They hated Jesus and were looking for an excuse to have him killed. They believed that anyone who said they were the Son of God should be killed. They never thought it could be true, they thought Jesus was causing trouble. Spreading rumors and talking about people is a very nasty thing to do. It can cause great damage like here

**Reader 2:** We pray that more people will follow Jesus in this Year of Mercy.

Lord in your mercy.



## **Fourth Station: Jesus is Denied by Peter**

**Reader 1:** Fourth Station: Jesus is Denied by Peter. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:**           **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." **PAUSE** But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about!" **PAUSE** Another girl recognized him as a disciple, again he denied it. A little later the bystanders accused Peter again, at that he began to curse and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately a cock crowed. **PAUSE** Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: "Before the cock crows you will deny me three times." He went out and began to weep bitterly.

**Reader 1:** Jesus warned Peter that he would deny him three times. Peter didn't believe him. It can be very easy to deny our faith, but when we do we are telling Jesus that we do not want to be his friend, we do not want His love and care.

**Reader 2:** Dear God, help us to believe everything Jesus said.  
Lord in your Mercy



## **Fifth Station: Jesus is Judged by Pilate**

**Reader 1:** Fifth Station: Jesus is Judged by Pilate. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:**           **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** Pilate questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He said to him in reply, "You say so." Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed. Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barrabas, and handed Jesus over to be crucified.

**Reader 1:** Pilate knew Jesus was innocent, and he had the power to save Jesus' life. Pilate chose to do nothing. He chose not to help, to take the easy option. Sometimes the easy option is not the best option, sometimes we have to be brave and choose to help someone to be more like Jesus and less like Pilate

**Reader 2:** Dear God, Help us to always stand up for our faith.

Lord in your mercy.



## **Sixth Station: Jesus is Scourged and Crowned with Thorns**

**Reader 1:** Sixth Station: Jesus is Scourged and Crowned with Thorns. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:**        **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck him repeatedly.

**Reader 1:** It is very upsetting to see and hear how happy they were beating Jesus. So people try and make themselves happy by picking on others, this happiness doesn't last long. It not only hurts others but it hurts the attackers too, it makes them mean and nasty, the kind of person everyone avoids.

**Reader 2:** Dear God, please help people to make others happy and not to be nasty.

Lord in your mercy.



## **Seventh Station: Jesus Bears the Cross**

**Reader 1:** Seventh Station: Jesus Bears the Cross. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:**           **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified. They took Jesus, and carrying the cross he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Gol-got-ha.

**Reader 1:** Imagine how heavy this cross must be. Imagine how tired and sore Jesus must be, but he doesn't complain. He is happy to carry this cross, how bizarre? He is happy because he knows that everyone has challenges to deal with and the cross represents them all. Jesus carries all our struggles and challenges with us

**Reader 2:** Dear God, Help people to remember Jesus and why he was crucified.

Lord in your mercy.



## **Eighth Station: Jesus is helped to carry the cross by Simon of Cyrene**

**Reader 1:** Eighth Station: Jesus is helped to carry the cross by Simon of Cyrene.

We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:            Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, from Cyrene, who was visiting Jerusalem, to carry Jesus' cross.

**Reader 1:** We don't know much about Simon, we don't know if he knew Jesus or if this was the first time they met. Yet nearly 2000 years later we know his name and the good action he did to help Jesus. Simon was one of few people who actually helped Jesus when no one else would. People remember the nice actions we do for one another. It will make them happier and it may not even take us a lot of effort. Even smiling at another person can make a big difference.

**Reader 2:** Dear God, We are sorry for all our sins because it is because of them Jesus sacrificed his life for us.

Lord in your mercy.





## **Ninth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem**

**Reader 1:** Ninth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:**           **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and cried for him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children"

**Reader 1:** Even at this time Jesus still cares for others more than he does himself. That is because he knows that God the Father will look after him, that he will restore him to life. He tells the women to cry for themselves and their children as their belief isn't as strong, they do not trust God as much as he does.

**Reader 2:** Dear God, Thank you for making this world for us and sending your son for us to show us what is right.

Lord in your mercy.



## **Tenth Station: Jesus is Crucified**

**Reader 1:** Tenth Station: Jesus is crucified. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:** **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** 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 do not know what they are doing."

**Reader 1:** Wow Jesus forgives the people who have been making fun of him, beating him and now nailed him to a cross. He isn't angry, he doesn't hold a grudge, he completely forgives them. Can we be as forgiving? Do we forgive our family and friends when they apologize? When we forgive, we are doing God's work, and being like Jesus.

**Reader 2:** Dear God, Please help us to bring peace to the like your son did.  
Lord in your mercy.



## **Eleventh Station: Jesus Promises His Kingdom to the Good Thief**

**Reader 1:** Eleventh Station: Jesus Promises His Kingdom to the Good Thief  
We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:** **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** Now one of the criminals hanging there shouted at Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." The other, however, telling him off, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you suffer the same punishment? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." **PAUSE.** 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."

**Reader 1:** It is never too late to turn to God and ask for forgiveness this thief is about to die but he realises that Jesus can forgive him. We should never wait to apologise to Jesus, because we are just wasting time. Jesus is ready to forgive us now all we have to do is ask for his forgiveness.

**Reader 2:** Dear Jesus, please help us show others the way of Jesus.  
Lord in your mercy.



## **Twelfth Station: Jesus Speaks to His Mother and the Disciple John**

**Reader 1:** Twelfth Station: Jesus Speaks to His Mother and the Disciple John. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:**           **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the     disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

**Reader 1:** Mary never deserted Jesus. She is one of the few people to stay with him to the very end. She shows us how we should be a follower of Jesus how we should love him and never desert him. Her love has always kept him going, now he asks her to look after his disciples. That means us too! Mary is our mother and cares for us just as she cared for Jesus.

**Reader 2:** Dear Lord, Please help us understand the suffering Jesus went through and the pain all Jesus' friends went through.

Lord in your mercy.



## **Thirteenth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross**

**Reader 1:** Thirteenth Station: Jesus Dies on the cross. We love you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:** **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. 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.

**Reader 1:** It went dark at 3pm in spring! How odd is that? This was a sign that Jesus the light of the world had died and left the world. We may not be **the** light of the world but we can be lights of the school, our families even our city. We can shine brightly by our actions and words to help and care for others.

**Reader 2:** Dear God, Please help us to bring light to the world just as Jesus did and help us to live like him.

Lord in your mercy.



## **Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Tomb**

**Reader 1:** Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Tomb. We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

**All:**           **Because by your holy cross, you have saved the world.**

**Reader 2:** When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be handed over. Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it in clean sheets and laid it in his new tomb. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed.

**Reader 1:** How sad must his friends have been? They believed Jesus was the Son of God; but here he is buried in a tomb. Though this is not the end, two days later they returned and found that he was not dead, he was alive, he had beaten death. When we are scared and upset and think there is no hope, turn to Jesus he defeated death, he can help us with anything!

**Reader 2:** Lord God, Help us in the times when we think there is no hope. Remind us to turn to you and never give up.

Lord in your mercy.



## Closing Prayer

**Reader 1:** We've come to the end of our journey with Jesus. We thank you for joining us. We will finish with a prayer:

**Reader 2:** Lord God, Thank you for all you have done for us. Thank for taking our sins away. Amen.

**Our Father...**

We close in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Reader 1:** We will now sing our final hymn





# **The Way of the Cross**

Meditations by Cardinal  
Ratzinger  
(Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI)



## Opening Prayer

**Priest:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

**Congregation:** Amen

**Reader:** Lord Jesus Christ, for our sake you became like the grain of wheat that falls to the earth and dies, so that it may bear much fruit (John 12:24). You invited us to follow you along this path when you told us that "the one who loves his life loses it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (John 12:25). Yet we are attached to our life. We do not want to abandon it; we want to keep it all for ourselves. We want to hold on to it, not to give it away. But you go before us, showing us that it is only by giving away our life that we can save it. As we walk with you on the Way of the Cross, you lead us along the way of the grain of wheat, the way of a fruitfulness which leads to eternity. The cross-our self-offering weighs heavily upon us. Along your own Way of the Cross you also carried my cross. Nor did you carry it just at one distant moment in the past, for your love continues to accompany every moment of my life. Today you carry that cross with me and for me, and, amazingly, you want me, like Simon of Cyrene, to join you in carrying your Cross; you want me to walk at your side and place myself with you at the service of the world's redemption. Grant that my Way of the Cross may not be just a moment of passing piety. Help all of us to accompany you not only with noble thoughts, but with all our hearts and in every step we take each day of our lives. Help us resolutely to set out on the Way of the Cross and to persevere on your path. Free us from the fear of the Cross, from the fear of mockery, from the fear that our life may escape our grasp unless we cling possessively to everything it has to offer. Help us to unmask all those temptations that promise life, but whose enticements in the end leave us only empty and deluded. Help us not to take life, but to give it. As you accompany us on the path of the grain of wheat, help us to discover, in "losing our lives," the path of love, the path which gives us true life, and life in abundance (John 10:10)

## FIRST STATION: Jesus is condemned to death

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Matthew 27:22-23, 26:

Priest: "Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the 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."

### MEDITATION

**Reader:** The Judge of the world, who will come again to judge us all, stands there, dishonored and defenseless before the earthly judge. Pilate is not utterly evil. He knows that the condemned man is innocent, and he looks for a way to free him. But his heart is divided. And in the end he lets his own position, his own self-interest, prevail over what is right. Nor are the men who are shouting and demanding the death of Jesus utterly evil. Many of them, on the day of Pentecost, will feel "cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37), when Peter will say to them: "Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God... you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law" (Acts 2:22ff.). But at that moment they are caught up in the crowd. They are shouting because everyone else is shouting, and they are shouting the same thing that everyone else is shouting. And in this way, justice is trampled underfoot by weakness, cowardice and fear of the diktat of the ruling mind-set. The quiet voice of conscience is drowned out by the cries of the crowd. Evil draws its power from indecision and concern for what other people think.

### PRAYER

**Congregation:** Lord, you were condemned to death because fear of what other people may think suppressed the voice of conscience. So too, throughout history, the innocent have always been maltreated, condemned and killed. How many times have we ourselves preferred success to the truth, our reputation to justice? Strengthen the quiet voice of our conscience, your own voice, in our lives. Look at me as you looked at Peter after his denial. Let your gaze penetrate our hearts and indicate the direction our lives must take. On the day of Pentecost you stirred the hearts of those who, on Good Friday, clamored for your death, and you brought them to conversion. In this way you gave hope to all. Grant us, ever anew, the grace of conversion.

## SECOND STATION: Jesus Takes up His Cross

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Matthew 27:27-31:

**Priest:** "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."

### MEDITATION

**Reader:** Jesus, condemned as an imposter king, is mocked, but this very mockery lays bare a painful truth. How often are the symbols of power, borne by the great ones of this world, an affront to truth, to justice and to the dignity of man! How many times are their pomps and their lofty words nothing but grandiose lies, a parody of their solemn obligation to serve the common good! It is because Jesus is mocked and wears the crown of suffering that he appears as the true King. His scepter is justice (cf. Psalm 45:7). The price of justice in this world is suffering: Jesus, the true King, does not reign through violence, but through a love which suffers for us and with us. He takes up the Cross, our cross, the burden of being human, the burden of the world. And so he goes before us and points out to us the way which leads to true life.

### PRAYER

**Congregation:** Lord, you willingly subjected yourself to mockery and scorn. Help us not to ally ourselves with those who look down on the weak and suffering. Help us to acknowledge your face in the lowly and the outcast. May we never lose heart when faced with the contempt of this world, which ridicules our obedience to your will. You carried your own Cross and you ask us to follow you on this path (cf. Matthew 10:38). Help us to take up the Cross, and not to shun it. May we never complain or become discouraged by life's trials. Help us to follow the path of love and, in submitting to its demands, to find true joy.

## THIRD STATION: Jesus falls for the first time

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Isaiah 53:4-6

**Priest:** Surely he has born our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. We all like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

### MEDITATION

**Reader:** Man has fallen, and he continues to fall: often he becomes a caricature of himself, no longer the image of God, but a mockery of the Creator. Is not the man who, on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among robbers who stripped him and left him half-dead and bleeding beside the road, the image of humanity par excellence? Jesus' fall beneath the Cross is not just the fall of the man Jesus, exhausted from his scourging. There is a more profound meaning in this fall, as Paul tells us in the Letter to the Philippians: "though he was in the form of God, he did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men... He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a Cross" (Philippians 2:6-8). In Jesus' fall beneath the weight of the Cross, the meaning of his whole life is seen: his voluntary abasement, which lifts us up from the depths of our pride. The nature of our pride is also revealed: it is that arrogance which makes us want to be liberated from God and left alone to ourselves, the arrogance which makes us think that we do not need his eternal love, but can be the masters of our own lives. In this rebellion against truth, in this attempt to be our own god, creator and judge, we fall headlong and plunge into self-destruction. The humility of Jesus is the surmounting of our pride; by his abasement he lifts us up. Let us allow him to lift us up. Let us strip away our sense of self-sufficiency, our false illusions of independence, and learn from him, the One who humbled himself, to discover our true greatness by bending low before God and before our downtrodden brothers and sisters.

### PRAYER

**Congregation:** Lord Jesus, the weight of the cross made you fall to the ground. The weight of our sin, the weight of our pride, brought you down. But your fall is not a tragedy, or mere human weakness. You came to us when, in our pride, we were laid low. The arrogance that makes us think that we ourselves can create human beings has turned man into a kind of merchandise, to be bought and sold, or stored to provide parts for experimentation. In doing this, we hope to conquer death by our own efforts, yet in reality we are profoundly debasing human dignity. Lord help us; we have fallen. Help us to abandon our destructive pride and, by learning from your humility, to rise again.

## FOURTH STATION: Jesus meets his Mother

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Luke 2:34-35,51

**Priest:** Simon blessed them and said to Mary his mother: "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against and a sword will pierce through your own soul also, that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed." And his mother kept all these things in her heart.

### MEDITATION

**Reader:** On Jesus' Way of the Cross, we also find Mary, his Mother. During his public life she had to step aside, to make place for the birth of Jesus' new family, the family of his disciples. She also had to hear the words: "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?... Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is brother, and sister and mother" (Matthew 12:48-50). Now we see her as the Mother of Jesus, not only physically, but also in her heart. Even before she conceived him bodily, through her obedience she conceived him in her heart. It was said to Mary: "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son. He will be great and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:31 ff.). And she would hear from the mouth of the elderly Simeon: "A sword will pierce through your own soul" (Luke 2:35). She would then recall the words of the prophets, words like these: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was like a lamb that is led to slaughter" (Isaiah 54:7). Now it all takes place. In her heart she had kept the words of the angel, spoken to her in the beginning: "Do not be afraid, Mary" (Luke 1:30). The disciples fled, yet she did not flee. She stayed there, with a Mother's courage, a Mother's fidelity, a Mother's goodness, and a faith which did not waver in the hour of darkness: "Blessed is she who believed" (Luke 1:45). "Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8). Yes, in this moment Jesus knows: he will find faith. In this hour, this is his great consolation.

### PRAYER

**Congregation:** Holy Mary, Mother of the Lord, you remained faithful when the disciples fled. Just as you believed the angels' incredible message - that you would become the Mother of the Most High, so too you believed at the hour of his greatest abasement. In this way, at the hour of the Cross, at the hour of the world's darkest night, you became the Mother of all believers, the Mother of the Church. We beg you: teach us to believe, and grant that our faith may bear fruit in courageous service and be the sign of a love ever ready to share suffering and to offer assistance.

## **FIFTH STATION: The Cyrenian helps Jesus carry the Cross**

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Matthew 27:32: 16:24

**Priest:** As they went out, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; this man they compelled to carry his cross. Jesus told his disciples: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

### **MEDITATION**

**Reader:** Simon of Cyrene is on his way home, returning from work, when he comes upon the sad procession of those condemned-for him, perhaps, it was a common sight. The soldiers force this rugged man from the country to carry the Cross on his own shoulders. How annoying he must have thought it to be suddenly caught up in the fate of those condemned men! He does what he must do, but reluctantly. Significantly, the Evangelist Mark does not only name him, but also his children, who were evidently known as Christians and as members of that community (cf. Mark 15:21). From this chance encounter, faith was born. The Cyrenian, walking beside Jesus and sharing the burden of the Cross, came to see that it was a grace to be able to accompany him to his crucifixion and to help him. The mystery of Jesus, silent and suffering, touched his heart. Jesus, whose divine love alone can redeem all humanity, wants us to share his Cross so that we can complete what is still lacking in his suffering (cf. Colossian 1:24). Whenever we show kindness to the suffering, the persecuted and defenseless, and share in their sufferings, we help to carry that same Cross of Jesus. In this way we obtain salvation, and help contribute to the salvation of the world.

### **PRAYER**

**Congregation:** Lord, you opened the eyes and heart of Simon of Cyrene, and you gave him, by his share in your Cross, the grace of faith. Help us to aid our neighbors in need, even when this interferes with our own plans and desires. Help us to realize that it is a grace to be able to share the cross of others and, in this way, know that we are walking with you along the way. Help us to appreciate with joy that, when we share in your suffering and the sufferings of this world, we become servants of salvation and are able to help build up your Body, the Church

## SIXTH STATION: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Isaiah 53:2-3

**Priest:** "He had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Psalms 27:8-9

**Priest:** "You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, Lord, do I seek." Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Cast me not off, forsake me not, O God of my salvation."

### MEDITATION

**Reader:** "Your face, Lord, do I seek. Hide not your face from me" (Psalm 27:8-9). Veronica - Bernice, in the Greek tradition - embodies the universal yearning of the devout men and women of the Old Testament, the yearning of all believers to see the face of God. On Jesus' Way of the Cross, though, she at first did nothing more than perform an act of womanly kindness: she held out a facecloth to Jesus. She did not let herself be deterred by the brutality of the soldiers or the fear which gripped the disciples. She is the image of that good woman, who, amid turmoil and dismay, shows the courage born of goodness and does not allow her heart to be bewildered. "Blessed are the pure in heart," the Lord had said in his Sermon on the Mount, "for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). At first, Veronica saw only a buffeted and pain-filled face. Yet her act of love impressed the true image of Jesus on her heart: on his human face, bloodied and bruised, she saw the face of God and his goodness, which accompanies us even in our deepest sorrows. Only with the heart can we see Jesus. Only love purifies us and gives us the ability to see. Only love enables us to recognize the God who is love itself

### PRAYER

**Congregation:** Lord, grant us restless hearts, hearts which seek your face. Keep us from the blindness of heart which sees only the surface of things. Give us the simplicity and purity which allow us to recognize your presence in the world. When we are not able to accomplish great things, grant us the courage which is born of humility and goodness. Impress your face on our hearts. May we encounter you along the way and show your image to the world.

## **SEVENTH STATION: Jesus falls for the second time**

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Lamentations 3:1-2,9,16

**Priest:** "I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light. He has blocked my way with hewn stones, he has made my paths crooked. He has made my teeth grind on gravel, and made me cower in ashes."

### **MEDITATION**

**Reader:** The tradition that Jesus fell three times beneath the weight of the Cross evokes the fall of Adam the state of fallen humanity - and the mystery of Jesus' own sharing in our fall. Throughout history the fall of man constantly takes on new forms. In his First Letter, Saint John speaks of a threefold fall: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life. He thus interprets the fall of man and humanity against the backdrop of the vices of his own time, with all its excesses and perversions. But we can also think, in more recent times, of how a Christianity which has grown weary of faith has abandoned the Lord: the great ideologies, and the banal existence of those who no longer believing in anything, who simply drift through life, have built a new and worse paganism, which in its attempt to do away with God once and for all, have ended up doing away with man. And so man lies fallen in the dust. The Lord bears this burden and falls, over and over again, in order to meet us. He gazes on us, he touches our hearts; he falls in order to raise us up.

### **PRAYER**

**Congregation:** Lord Jesus Christ, you have borne all our burdens and you continue to carry us. Our weight has made you fall. Lift us up, for by ourselves we cannot rise from the dust. Free us from the bonds of lust. In place of a heart of stone, give us a heart of flesh, a heart capable of seeing. Lay low the power of ideologies, so that all may see that they are a web of lies. Do not let the wall of materialism become insurmountable. Make us aware of your presence. Keep us sober and vigilant, capable of resisting the forces of evil. Help us to recognize the spiritual and material needs of others, and to give them the help they need. Lift us up, so that we may lift others up. Give us hope at every moment of darkness, so that we may bring your hope to the world.



## **EIGHTH STATION: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem who weep for him**

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Luke 23:28-31

**Priest:** "Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never gave suck!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'fall on us;' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

### **MEDITATION**

**Reader:** Hearing Jesus reproach the women of Jerusalem who follow him and weep for him ought to make us reflect. How should we understand his words? Are they not directed at a piety which is purely sentimental, one which fails to lead to conversion and living faith? It is no use to lament the sufferings of this world if our life goes on as usual. And so the Lord warns us of the danger in which we find ourselves. He shows us both the seriousness of sin and the seriousness of judgment. Can it be that, despite all our expressions of consternation in the face of evil and innocent suffering, we are all too prepared to trivialize the mystery of evil? Have we accepted only the gentleness and love of God and Jesus, and quietly set aside the word of judgment? "How can God be so concerned with our weaknesses?" we say. "We are only human!" Yet as we contemplate the sufferings of the Son, we see more clearly the seriousness of sin, and how it needs to be fully atoned if it is to be overcome. Before the image of the suffering Lord, evil can no longer be trivialized. To us too, he says: "Do not weep for me, weep for yourselves... if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

### **PRAYER**

**Congregation:** Lord, to the weeping women you spoke of repentance and the Day of Judgment, when all of us will stand before your face: before you, the Judge of the world. You call us to leave behind the trivialization of evil, which salves our consciences and allows us to carry on as before. You show us the seriousness of our responsibility, the danger of our being found guilty and without excuse on the Day of Judgment. Grant that we may not simply walk at your side, with nothing to offer other than compassionate words. Convert us and give us new life. Grant that in the end we will not be dry wood, but living branches in you, the true vine, bearing fruit for eternal life (cf. John 15:1-10).

## **NINTH STATION: Jesus falls for the third time.**

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Lamentations 3:27-32

**Priest:** "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone in silence when he has laid it on him; let him put his mouth in the dust-there may yet be hope; let him give his cheek to the smiter, and be filled with insults. For the Lord will not cast off forever, but, though he cause grief, he will have compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love."

### **MEDITATION**

**Reader:** What can the third fall of Jesus under the Cross say to us? We have considered the fall of man in general, and the falling of many Christians away from Christ and into a godless secularism. Should we not also think of how much Christ suffers in his own Church? How often is the holy sacrament of his Presence abused, how often must he enter empty and evil hearts! How often do we celebrate only ourselves, without even realizing that he is there! How often is his Word twisted and misused! What little faith is present behind so many theories, so many empty words! How much filth there is in the Church, and even among those who, in the priesthood, ought to belong entirely to him! How much pride, how much self-complacency! What little respect we pay to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where he waits for us, ready to raise us up whenever we fall! All this is present in his Passion. His betrayal by his disciples, their unworthy reception of his Body and Blood, is certainly the greatest suffering endured by the Redeemer; it pierces his heart. We can only call to him from the depths of our hearts: Kyrie eleison -- Lord, save us (cf. Matthew 8: 25).

### **PRAYER**

**Congregation:** Lord, your Church often seems like a boat about to sink, a boat taking in water on every side. In your field we see more weeds than wheat. The soiled garments and face of your Church throw us into confusion. Yet it is we ourselves who have soiled them! It is we who betray you time and time again, after all our lofty words and grand gestures. Have mercy on your Church; within her too, Adam continues to fall. When we fall, we drag you down to earth, and Satan laughs, for he hopes that you will not be able to rise from that fall; he hopes that being dragged down in the fall of your Church, you will remain prostrate and overpowered. But you will rise again. You stood up, you arose and you can also raise us up. Save and sanctify your Church. Save and sanctify us all.

## **TENTH STATION: Jesus is stripped of his garments**

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Matthew 27:33-36

**Priest:** And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull), they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there.

### **MEDITATION**

**Reader:** Jesus is stripped of his garments. Clothing gives a man his social position; it gives him his place in society, it makes him someone. His public stripping means that Jesus is no longer anything at all, he is simply an outcast, despised by all alike. The moment of the stripping reminds us of the expulsion from Paradise: God's splendor has fallen away from man, who now stands naked and exposed, unclad and ashamed. And so Jesus once more takes on the condition of fallen man. Stripped of his garments, he reminds us that we have all lost the "first garment" that is God's splendor. At the foot of the Cross, the soldiers draw lots to divide his paltry possessions, his clothes. The Evangelists describe the scene with words drawn from Psalm 22:19; by doing so they tell us the same thing that Jesus would tell his disciples on the road to Emmaus: that everything takes place "according to the Scriptures." Nothing is mere coincidence; everything that happens is contained in the Word of God and sustained by his divine plan. The Lord passes through all the stages and steps of man's fall from grace, yet each of these steps, for all its bitterness, becomes a step toward our redemption: this is how he carries home the lost sheep. Let us not forget that John says that lots were drawn for Jesus' tunic, "woven without seam from top to bottom" (John 19:23). We may consider this as a reference to the High Priest's robe, which was "woven from a single thread," without stitching (Fl. Josephus, a III, 161). For he, the Crucified One, is the true High Priest.

### **PRAYER**

**Congregation:** Lord Jesus, you were stripped of your garments, exposed to shame, cast out of society. You took upon yourself the shame of Adam, and you healed it. You also take upon yourself the sufferings and the needs of the poor, the outcasts of our world. And in this very way you fulfill the words of the prophets. This is how you bring meaning into apparent meaninglessness. This is how you make us realize that your Father holds you, us, and the whole world in his hands. Give us a profound respect for man at every stage of his existence, and in all the situations in which we encounter him. Clothe us in the light of your grace.

## **ELEVENTH STATION: Jesus is nailed to the Cross**

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Matthew 27:37-42

**Priest:** And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right hand and one on the left. And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the Cross." So also the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the Cross and we will believe in him."

### **MEDITATION**

**Reader:** Jesus is nailed to the Cross. The shroud of Turin gives us an idea of the unbelievable cruelty of this procedure. Jesus does not drink the numbing gall offered to him: he deliberately takes upon himself all the pain of the Crucifixion. His whole body is racked; the words of the Psalm have come to pass: "But I am a worm and no man, scorned by men, rejected by the people" (Psalm 22:7). "As one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised... surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3f.). Let us halt before this image of pain, before the suffering Son of God. Let us look upon him at times of presumptuousness and pleasure, in order to learn to respect limits and to see the superficiality of all merely material goods. Let us look upon him at times of trial and tribulation, and realize that it is then that we are closest to God. Let us try to see his face in the people we might look down upon. As we stand before the condemned Lord, who did not use his power to come down from the Cross, but endured its suffering to the end, another thought comes to mind. Ignatius of Antioch, a prisoner in chains for his faith in the Lord, praised the Christians of Smyrna for their invincible faith: he says that they were, so to speak, nailed with flesh and blood to the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1). Let us nail ourselves to him, resisting the temptation to stand apart, or to join others in mocking him.

### **PRAYER**

**Congregation:** Lord Jesus Christ, you let yourself be nailed to the Cross, accepting the terrible cruelty of this suffering, the destruction of your body and your dignity. You allowed yourself to be nailed fast; you did not try to escape or to lessen your suffering. May we never flee from what we are called to do. Help us to remain faithful to you. Help us to unmask the false freedom which would distance us from you. Help us to accept your "binding" freedom, and, "bound" fast to you, to discover true freedom.

## TWELFTH STATION: Jesus dies on the Cross

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

John 19:19-20

**Priest:** Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the Cross; it read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.

Matthew 27:45-50, 54

**Priest:** Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" That is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And some of the bystanders hearing it said, "This man is calling Elijah." And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit." When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe, and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

### MEDITATION

**Reader:** In Greek and Latin, the two international languages of the time, and in Hebrew, the language of the Chosen People, a sign stood above the Cross of Jesus, indicating who he was: the King of the Jews, the promised Son of David. Pilate, the unjust judge, became a prophet despite himself. The kingship of Jesus was proclaimed before the entire world. Jesus himself had not accepted the title "Messiah," because it would have suggested a mistaken, human idea of power and deliverance. Yet now the title can remain publicly displayed above the Crucified Christ. He is indeed the king of the world. Now he is truly "lifted up." In sinking to the depths he rose to the heights. Now he has radically fulfilled the commandment of love, he has completed the offering of himself, and in this way he is now the

revelation of the true God, the God who is love. Now we know who God is. Now we know what true kingship is. Jesus prays Psalm 22, which begins with the words: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Psalm 22:2). He takes to himself the whole suffering people of Israel, all of suffering humanity, the drama of God's darkness, and he makes God present in the very place where he seems definitively vanquished and absent. The Cross of Jesus is a cosmic event. The world is darkened, when the Son of God is given up to death. The earth trembles. And on the Cross, the Church of the Gentiles is born. The Roman centurion understands this, and acknowledges Jesus as the Son of God. From the Cross he triumphs - ever anew.

### **PRAYER**

**Congregation:** Lord Jesus Christ, at the hour of your death the sun was darkened. Ever anew you are being nailed to the Cross. At this present hour of history we are living in God's darkness. Through your great sufferings and the wickedness of men, the face of God, your face, seems obscured, unrecognizable. And yet, on the Cross, you have revealed yourself. Precisely by being the one who suffers and loves, you are exalted. From the Cross on high you have triumphed. Help us to recognize your face at this hour of darkness and tribulation. Help us to believe in you and to follow you in our hour of darkness and need. Show yourself once more to the world at this hour. Reveal to us your salvation.

## **THIRTEENTH STATION: Jesus is taken down from the Cross and given to his Mother**

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Matthew 27:54-55

**Priest:** "When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe, and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!" There were also many women there, looking on from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him."

### **MEDITATION**

**Reader:** Jesus is dead. From his heart, pierced by the lance of the Roman soldier, flow blood and water: a mysterious image of the stream of the sacraments, Baptism and the Eucharist, by which the Church is constantly reborn from the opened heart of the Lord. Jesus' legs are not broken, like those of the two men crucified with him. He is thus revealed as the true Paschal lamb, not one of whose bones must be broken. And now, at the end of his sufferings, it is clear that, for all the dismay which filled men's hearts, for all the power of hatred and cowardice, he was never alone. There are faithful ones who remain with him. Under the Cross stands Mary, his Mother, the sister of his Mother, Mary, Mary Magdalen and the disciple whom he loved. A wealthy man, Joseph of Arimathea, appears on the scene: a rich man is able to pass through the eye of a needle, for God has given him the grace. He buries Jesus in his own empty tomb, in a garden. At Jesus' burial, the cemetery becomes a garden, the garden from which Adam was cast out when he abandoned the fullness of life, his Creator. The garden tomb symbolizes that the dominion of death is about to end. A member of the Sanhedrin also comes along, Nicodemus, to whom Jesus had proclaimed the mystery of rebirth by water and the Spirit. Even in the Sanhedrin, which decreed his death, there is a believer, someone who knows and recognizes Jesus after his death. In this hour of immense grief, of darkness and despair, the light of hope is mysteriously present. The hidden God continues to be the God of life, ever near. Even in the night of death, the Lord continues to be our Lord and Savior. The Church of Jesus Christ, his new family, begins to take shape.

## PRAYER

### **Congregation:**

Lord, you descended into the darkness of death. But your body is placed in good hands and wrapped in a white shroud (Matthew 27:59). Faith has not completely died; the sun has not completely set. How often does it appear that you are asleep? How easy it is for us to step back and say to ourselves: "God is dead." In the hour of darkness, help us to know that you are still there. Do not abandon us when we are tempted to lose heart. Help us not to leave you alone. Give us the fidelity to withstand moments of confusion and a love ready to embrace you in your utter helplessness, like your Mother, who once more holds you to her breast. Help us, the poor and rich, simple and learned, to look beyond all our fears and prejudices, and to offer you our abilities, our hearts and our time, and thus to prepare a garden for the Resurrection.



## FOURTEENTH STATION: Jesus is laid in the tomb

**Priest:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Congregation:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Matthew 27:59-61

**Priest:** Joseph 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. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the sepulcher.

### MEDITATION

**Reader:** Jesus, disgraced and mistreated, is honorably buried in a new tomb. Nicodemus brings a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight, which gives off a precious scent. In the Son's self-offering, as at his anointing in Bethany, we see an "excess" which evokes God's generous and superabundant love. God offers himself unstintingly. If God's measure is superabundance, then we for our part should consider nothing too much for God. This is the teaching of Jesus himself, in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:20). But we should also remember the words of Saint Paul, who says that God "through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ everywhere. We are the aroma of Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:14ff.). Amid the decay of ideologies, our faith needs once more to be the fragrance which returns us to the path of life. At the very moment of his burial, Jesus' words are fulfilled: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24). Jesus is the grain of wheat which dies. From that lifeless grain of wheat comes forth the great multiplication of bread which will endure until the end of the world. Jesus is the bread of life which can satisfy superabundantly the hunger of all humanity and provide its deepest nourishment. Through his Cross and Resurrection, the eternal Word of God became flesh and bread for us. The mystery of the Eucharist already shines forth in the burial of Jesus.

## PRAYER

**Congregation:** Lord Jesus Christ, in your burial you have taken on the death of the grain of wheat. You have become the lifeless grain of wheat which produces abundant fruit for every age and for all eternity. From the tomb shines forth in every generation the promise of the grain of wheat which gives rise to the true manna, the Bread of Life, in which you offer us your very self. The eternal Word, through his Incarnation and death, has become a Word which is close to us: you put yourself into our hands and into our hearts, so that your word can grow within us and bear fruit. Through the death of the grain of wheat you give us yourself, so that we too can dare to lose our life in order to find it, so that we too can trust the promise of the grain of wheat. Help us grow in love and veneration for your Eucharistic mystery- to make you, the Bread of heaven, the source of our life. Help us to become your "fragrance," and to make known in this world the mysterious traces of your life. Like the grain of wheat which rises from the earth, putting forth its stalk and then its ear, you could not remain enclosed in the tomb: the tomb is empty because he- the Father- -"did not abandon you to the nether world, nor let your flesh see corruption" (Acts 2:31; Ps 16:10 LXX). No, you did not see corruption. You have risen, and have made a place for our transfigured flesh in the very heart of God. Help us to rejoice in this hope and bring it joyfully to the world. Help us to become witnesses of your Resurrection.

**Congregation:** Our Father...

**Priest:** Blessed be the name of the Lord

**Congregation:** Both now and forever

**Priest:** Our help is in the name of the Lord

**Congregation:** Who made heaven and earth. Amen.

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

## HYMNS



### **O Sacred Head Surrounded**

O sacred Head surrounded, by crown of piercing thorn.  
O Bleeding Head, so wounded, reviled and put to scorn.  
The pow'r of death comes o'er you, the glow of life decays.  
Yet angel hosts adore you, and tremble as they gaze.

In this your bitter passion, Good Shepherd, think of me  
With you most sweet compassion, unworthy though I be  
Beneath your cross abiding, Forever would I rest,  
In your dear love confiding, and with your presence blest.

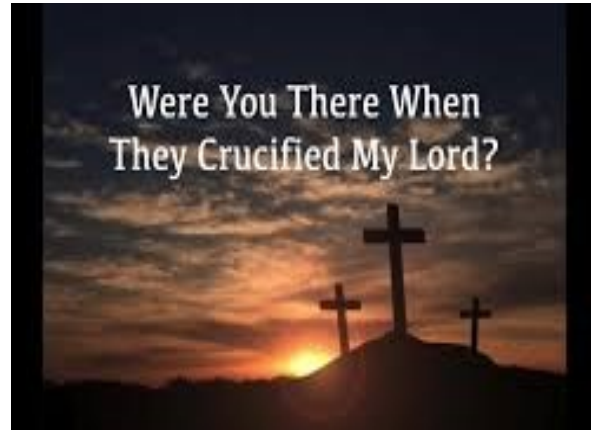


## **Stabat Mater Dolorosa**

1. Jesus on the cross is dying  
Soon his body will be lying  
In the darkness of the tomb.
2. God's own mother, purest maiden,  
Sees the sinless One, sin laden,  
Blessed fruit of blessed womb.
3. Mary's heart for him is aching  
As she sees her Son's heart breaking  
So that love may be revealed.
4. Now at last her heart is feeling  
Sorrow's sword, her Son revealing  
Thoughts in many hearts concealed.
5. How could pity not awaken  
For the Son of God, forsaken  
In the loneliness of death?
6. Who would not give consolation  
In this Mother's desolation  
As he breathes his dying breath?

7. Mary's heart for him is bleeding;  
In his blood, for sinners pleading,  
God's new law of love is sealed.
8. "It is done", she hears him crying  
At the moment of his dying:  
Death by death has now been healed.
9. Let me stand beside you, sharing  
Grief for Jesus, my sins bearing  
On the cross of Calvary.
10. By the cross your vigil keeping,  
Let me share your silent weeping,  
Pierce my heart without sorrow's sword.
11. Let me, though in humble fashion,  
Share with you the bitter passion  
Of the Son you brought to birth.
12. Let me bear the wounds of Jesus,  
Drink the precious blood that frees us,  
Glory only in his cross.
13. Let the cross be my salvation,  
Jesus' death my consolation,  
In that hour when I must die.
14. Queen of heaven, by the merit  
Of our Son let me inherit  
Jot with all the saints on high.

# Were You There ?



**Were you there when they crucified my Lord?**

Oh, were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble

Were you there when they crucified my Lord.

**Were you there when they nailed him to the cross?**

Were you there when they nailed him to the cross?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble

Were you there when they nailed him to the cross.

**Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?**

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb.

**Were you there when the stone was rolled away?**

Were you there when the stone was rolled away?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble

Were you there when the stone was rolled away.



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