



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The Fourteen Stations of the Cross

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In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Jesus spent three years preaching and performing miracles throughout Galilee. Many people believed Jesus was truly God and followed after Him. However, tension grew because the religious leaders were sceptical and resisted believing Jesus. They grew jealous and hateful, planning to kill Him. Eventually Jesus was betrayed by one of His closest friends, arrested, and brought before Pilate, the Roman governor. Pilate questions Jesus, but finds Him innocent. The religious leaders and a growing mob of people in the city of Jerusalem react with passion and hate to this verdict, crying out, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" (Luke 23:21) Pilate continues to believe that Jesus is innocent, but he is afraid of the crowd, afraid of losing approval and his position. He orders Jesus to be whipped and then to be crucified.

Meditation:

Jesus, I believe in you and I love you. Please give me the courage to stand up for my faith. Help me not to care what other people think of me. I am who I am in your eyes. You accept me just as I am and you never stop loving me. **Lord, as we begin these Stations, help me to see how you truly look at me.**

The Second Station: Jesus Carries His Cross.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

"The men who guarded Jesus were mocking and beating Him; they blindfolded Him and questioned Him..." (Luke 22:35) They put a crown of thorns on His head and make Him carry a very heavy cross to the place where they will crucify Him. Yet, Jesus willingly picks up His cross because He knows it is His Father's will. Jesus picks up His cross out of love, to pay the price for our sins.

Meditation:

Dear Jesus, you willingly carried the cross without complaining. When I go through difficult situations in my life or even feel little discomforts in my day, help me not to complain and may I depend on your strength. **What little or big crosses is God allowing me to carry in my life right now?**

The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

As Jesus carries His cross through the streets of Jerusalem, it presses into His wounds and on His back. His whole body is bruised and so sore. He is so tired. He thinks of all the Apostles and His friends. They all have left Him. Not far along the way, Jesus falls for the first time. “Yet ours were the sufferings He was bearing, ours the sorrows He was carrying...” (Isaiah 53:4)

Mediation:

Dear Jesus, the cross is heavy. I do not like heaviness or suffering. When my family is struggling, when I have an argument with someone, or fail to act as I should, when I see people around me in real pain, when I can't see the way clearly – Sometimes it feels like more than I can carry. Help me to carry my daily crosses with you and for love of you. **How am I experiencing God's presence this week, amidst my joys and difficulties?**

The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, has been watching everything happen. This is her Son they are treating as if He were not human. What emotions, memories, and pain must be running through her heart and mind. She finds an opening in the crowd and rushes forward to comfort Jesus, looking into His eyes. Her presence gives Him strength to continue.

Meditation:

Jesus, your mother Mary stays with you as you carry your cross, just as she has been with you through your life. There is a time for everything, “a time for tears, a time for laughter; a time for mourning, a time for dancing... a time for embracing, a time to refrain from embracing.” (Ecclesiastes 3:4-5) Your mother Mary has cried, laughed, mourned, and danced with you. She's known your embrace. She was with you the day you left home to fulfil your mission. She is with me too as my mother. You are both always with me. Help me to stay with you too. **What was it like when Mary and Jesus met on the way to Calvary?**

The Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus to Carry His Cross.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Jesus goes forward very slowly. He is tired and the cross is too heavy. The soldiers get impatient with Him. Seeing that Jesus was on the point of dying, and because they wished Him to die the shameful death of the cross, they grab Simon, a passer-by, and force him to help carry the cross with Jesus.

Meditation:

Dear Jesus, I want to be a Simon too. I can do that by helping others, by being patient with others' mistakes, by visiting those who are sick, or by being kind and compassionate to those who may feel left out and not accepted by others. We should indeed "carry each other's burdens; that is how to keep the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). Help me to look beyond my own needs and concerns, so that I may help lighten another's cross.

What do I find most challenging about helping those in need?

The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Veronica was a brave young woman. She does what she can to show her love for Jesus. As Jesus passes by, she breaks through the crowd, and wipes the face of Jesus with her veil. God rewards her act of courage with a great miracle. Imprinted on her veil was the image of His Holy Face.

Meditation:

Dear Jesus, like Veronica, I desire to show You my love in the unique way that only I can. Give me the courage to face my fears in loving You and those around me, and help me to obtain the reward of seeing Your face in those who suffer. By serving them, I am loving You. "We are able to come to the support of others, in every hardship of theirs because of the encouragement that we ourselves receive from God" (2 Corinthians 1:4).

What are my strengths and weaknesses in loving God and others?

The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Jesus is so exhausted now that His whole body shakes under the weight of the cross. The soldiers push Him to go faster. Jesus tries to do what they say, but the cross is too heavy and He falls a second time, which renews the pain of all His wounds.

Meditation:

Dear Jesus, You fell under the weight of the cross. Your cross was so heavy because of my sins. Help me understand the true nature of sin; that it separates me from You and also dims the light of Your life within me. When I sin I hurt You, others and even myself. "I love You Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart of having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, and then do with me what You will" (St. Alphonsus).

How do I respond when I see others fall due to their weaknesses?

The Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

A little further down the road some of the women of Jerusalem have gathered and are weeping with compassion at the sight of Jesus. "Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children. '"

(Luke 23:28)

Meditation:

Dear Jesus, as I look upon You and see the suffering You are enduring for love of me, I am moved to repent for my sins. I ask for Your forgiveness and the grace to try and not sin again. I love you Jesus, and I am sorry for the pain my sins have caused You.

What is one area in my life where I need the Lord's forgiveness?

The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls a Third Time.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Jesus looks up from carrying His cross and He can see Calvary, the place where He will be crucified. It is very close now. The soldiers beat Jesus and are hurrying Him along. Jesus falls and collapses from pain and exhaustion.

Meditation:

Dear Jesus, You said: "Unless you take up your cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple." (see Matthew 10:37-39 and Luke 9:23-26) Sometimes my crosses are from my own weaknesses, my relationships with others, the difficult situations I face throughout my day, the loss and separation of a loved one, or physical and emotional pain. May I always be willing to pick up my crosses daily and walk with You. You have promised never to leave me. Help me not to be discouraged or afraid when I fall, but to get back up and try again.

In what area of my life do I frequently fall, and what grace can I ask the Lord for to help me in this area?

The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Clothes

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

After a great struggle, Jesus arrives at Calvary and there they take the cross from Him. To humiliate Him they roughly strip Him of His clothes, leaving Him completely poor. "Remember how generous the Lord Jesus was: He was rich, but He became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of His poverty." (2 Corinthians 8:9)

Meditation:

Dear Jesus, I see You here humiliated and poor. Jesus, I give You my heart and my love. May my love console Your heart. Please help me to rid myself from anything that keeps me from You, that I may be free to love You with my whole heart.

In order for Jesus to be first in my life, what do I need to let go of?

The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Stretching out His arms, they nail Him to the cross. Jesus offers to His Father the sacrifice of His life for our salvation. "For the sake of the joy which lay ahead of Him, he endured the cross." (Hebrews 12:2) They hang a sign above His head that reads: "This is the king of the Jews." They are unaware, but in truth here hangs the King of Kings, the Lord of Heaven and earth.

Meditation:

Dear Jesus, Your pierced hands were the same hands that healed the sick, raised the dead, defended the weak, and consoled the sorrowing. Let me be Your hands to help others, even when it requires me to sacrifice my time or change my plans.

What ways is God asking me to make sacrifices in my life?

The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

From the cross Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." After three hours on the cross, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "It is finished." Then, bowing His head, He died. (see Luke 23:34 and John 19:30)

Meditation:

Standing at the foot of the cross with Mary and St. John, the Beloved, let us take a moment of silence to thank Jesus for dying on the cross for each one of us.

“What proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.” (Romans 5:8) Thank you Jesus for leaving us an example of how to forgive and how to love to the end. Help me to forgive anyone who has hurt me. Let us pray together the prayer Jesus taught us, *Our Father...*

How is God calling me to love more like Jesus did on the cross?

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

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

After Jesus dies, Mary, His beloved Mother, remains next to His cross. His disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, take Jesus down from the cross and lay Him in the arms of His afflicted Mother. One more time, she embraces Him, Her only Son.

Mediation:

Dear Jesus, Your Mother did not lose hope. Help me remember the promise of Heaven, the promise of eternal happiness with You, especially when someone I love dies, or when areas of my life become difficult. In my joys and sorrows help me to pray, “Jesus, I trust in You,” and to always remember, “If we have died with Him, then we shall live with Him. If we persevere, then we shall reign with Him” (2 Timothy 2:11-12).

What does Mary teach me about suffering?

The Fourteenth Station: Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb.

All: We adore you O Christ and we bless You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

To give Him a proper burial, the disciples, accompanied by His Holy Mother, wash His body, wrap it in a cloth and lay it in a tomb. “At the place where He had been crucified there was a garden, and in this garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been buried.” (John 19: 41) They roll a heavy stone in front of the tomb to seal it shut, and they walk sorrowfully away.

Meditation:

Dear Jesus, I know this is not the end of the story. You died to open the gates of Heaven. In three days, on Easter Sunday, You rise from the dead. Let me always live with the hope of Heaven, for I know that “death has no power over You anymore” (Romans 6:9), and “I am certain of this: neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nothing already in existence and nothing still to come, nor any power, nor the heights nor the depths, nor any created thing whatever, will be able to come between us and the love of God, known to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Amen. (Romans 8: 38-39).

Where in my life is it difficult to trust in God and find hope? Do I believe that Christ has the victory in this area of my life?

Now let us pray together for the intentions of our Holy Father:

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory Be...

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

