

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Almighty Father,

How might we follow Jesus? Help us put aside our own selfish interests and look at other people whose wants and needs are more important than our own. By caring for others and taking responsibility for them we are picking up the cross to follow Jesus.

As we walk the Stations of the Cross with Jesus, open our minds and hearts and allow Him to speak to us. In doing so we will lose nothing; indeed, we will gain everything. Amen.

FIRST STATION

Jesus is Condemned to Death

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Jesus, the most innocent of beings, is condemned to death, yes, to the shameful death of the cross. In order to remain a friend of Caesar, Pilate delivers Jesus into the hands of His enemies. O fearful crime, to condemn Innocence to death and to displease God in order to please men.

People: O Lord Jesus Christ, give me the grace not to be bitter about injustice that comes into my life, but rather to follow you with dignity and with courage.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

At the Cross her station Keeping
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.

SECOND STATION

Jesus is Made to Carry His Cross

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: When our divine Redeemer beheld the Cross, He most willingly reached out to it with His bleeding arms. He embraced it lovingly, took it on His bruised shoulders, and exhausted as He was, He carried it joyfully.

People: O Lord, by your example of humility, give me the courage to carry my cross. Help me not to complain, not to run away from it, not to pretend, but to carry it without grumbling. Deliver me from all kinds of bargaining with you about how much better it would be if I had some other cross. And if I am bitter because of the cross I have, give me your strength to overcome that bitterness. Help me carry my cross.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword has passed.

THIRD STATION

Jesus Falls the First Time

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Carrying the Cross, our dear Savior was so weakened with its heavy weight that He fell exhausted to the ground. The Cross was light and sweet to Him, but our sins made it so heavy and hard to carry.

People: O Lord Jesus Christ fallen beneath the cross, teach us by this powerful example, teach us your humility and break our pride that always wants to walk on. If we try to avoid doing your will, if we try to lead our lives without following your law, then we will live on the illusion that we do not fall. Deliver us from that terrible illusion. And if you must allow us to fall, then give us the grace to rise again and not to live in fear of falling, but rather to fear that we shall give up struggling at all. O fallen God, give us the courage to struggle on.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Oh, how sad and sore distressed
Was that Mother highly blessed
Of the sole-begotten One!

FOURTH STATION

Jesus Meets His Sorrowful Mother

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: How sad and how painful must it have been for Mary to behold her beloved Son laden with the Cross, covered with wounds and blood, and driven through the streets by savage executioners! What unspeakable pangs her most tender heart must have experienced! How earnestly did she desire to die instead of Jesus, or at least with Him!

People: O Lord Jesus Christ, as I contemplate the sorrows of your mother, I remember that you also have a human heart. I try to plunge into the grief that is in your heart. I can make it my own because sometimes I have felt that grief too. In your mother's heart were the words, "My love is crucified, my beloved son is crucified." O Lord Jesus Christ, give me your grace in the course of my life when I also must say, "My love is crucified."

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Christ above in torment hangs,
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying, glorious Son.

FIFTH STATION

Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus to Carry His Cross

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Simon of Cyrene was forced to help our exhausted Savior carry His Cross. How pleased would Jesus have been, had Simon offered his services of his own accord. However, Simon was not invited by Christ as you are. He says: "Take up your cross and follow Me." Nevertheless, you recoil, and carry it grudgingly.

People: O Lord Jesus Christ, you humbly give help and you humbly accept the help of another. O Omnipotence who grows tired, O Mighty and Strong One who is relieved by another's labor, give me the grace to recognize the times you come to help me through others and give me the graciousness to ask for and accept that help. May I never be too proud to take the hand held out to me.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Is there one who would not weep
Whelmed in miseries so deep
Christ's dear Mother to Behold?

SIXTH STATION

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Moved by compassion, Veronica presents her veil to Jesus, to wipe His disfigured face. He imprints on it His holy countenance, and returns it to her as a recompense. Shall Christ reward you in like manner? Then you too must do Him a service. But you do a service to Christ every time you perform a work of mercy towards your neighbors: For He says: "What you have done to the least of My brethren, you have done to Me."

People: O Christ our Lord, break our hearts by your holy face, and look at us when we are ugly and disfigured and alone and frightened and crazy. Look at us, O Christ, and break our hearts in half and grant that we may never pass you by.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?

SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Falls the Second Time

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Overwhelmed by the weight of the Cross, Jesus falls again to the ground. But the cruel executioners do not permit Him to rest for a moment. With thrusts and blows they urge Him onward. With what cruelty Jesus is treated and trampled underfoot! Remember, compassionate soul, that your sins caused Jesus this painful fall.

People: O Jesus Christ, in your desperate agony, you fall in the streets of Jerusalem. In exhaustion, you who were spotless purity, you who did not think being equal to God something to be clung to, you fell in that street. O Lord, I may not be desperate now, but I will be desperate again. By the power of this Station, by the power you won for me when you fell beneath the cross, give me the grace to go on.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender child,
All with bloody scourges rent.

EIGHTH STATION

The Women of Jerusalem Weep Over Jesus

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Moved by compassion, these devoted women weep over our suffering Savior. But He turns to them and says: “Weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and your children. Weep for your sins and those of your children, for they are the cause of My suffering.” You also must weep over your sins, for there is nothing more pleasing to our Lord and more useful to yourself than the tears you shed out of contrition for your sins.

People: O gentle master, O patient God, O humble Messiah, teach me by your gentle kindness to put aside my own irritations and aggravations, to keep my own needs in proper perspective. Teach me to put aside all the things I want and cling to, especially my own comfort. Give me the strength to stop and to console you when I see you hidden along the way of life.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

For the sins of His own nation
Saw Him hang in desolation
Till His spirit forth He sent.

NINTH STATION

Jesus Falls the Third Time

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Exhausted at the foot of Calvary, Jesus falls for the third time to the ground. How painful it must have been to reopen all the wounds of His tender body by these repeated falls. And how enormous must my sins be, to cause Jesus to fall so painfully. Had not Jesus taken my sins upon Himself, they would have plunged me into the abyss of Hell.

People: O Lord Jesus Christ, when we come to the end, give us the grace to believe. When we are beyond any human hope, when all that our loved ones can possibly do is nothing at all, when we come to the end, give us the grace of your courage as we prepare for the Calvary that must come for each of us.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

O You Mother! Fount of Love,
Touch my spirit from above
Make my heart with thine accord.

TENTH STATION

Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Arriving on Calvary, Jesus was cruelly deprived of His garments. How painful the stripping must have been, because the garments adhered to His mangled body, so that in removing them parts of the flesh were torn away. Jesus is deprived of His garments that he may die possessed of nothing. How happy shall I be after laying aside my evil habits and tendencies!

People: O Lord Jesus Christ, give me the grace to see you wherever you are, never to turn away, never to mock, never to laugh, never to hide behind my defenses. Break my heart that I may see you in your disguises wherever I go.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Make me feel as Thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ, my Lord.

ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Stripped of His garments, Jesus is violently thrown down on the Cross. His hands and His feet are nailed to it in the most cruel way. Jesus remains silent, because it so pleases His heavenly Father. He suffers patiently, because He suffers for you. How do you act in sufferings and trials? How fretful and impatient, how full of complaints are you!

People: O Lord Jesus Christ, by this station give me the grace to recognize you in that greatest of ills, the illness of life itself. Help me to respect you in the old. Help me that I may know that by helping them I help you. If I should live to be old, O savior, give me the grace to accept that cross as a joy and a blessing in preparation for your kingdom.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Holy Mother, pierce me through!
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified.

TWELFTH STATION

Jesus Dies on the Cross

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Behold Jesus crucified! Behold His wounds received for the love of You! His whole appearance betokens love. His head is bent to kiss you. His arms are extended to embrace you. His heart is open to receive you. Oh what love! Jesus dies on the Cross, to preserve you from eternal death.

People: O Jesus Christ upon the cross, give me the grace to live out my baptism. Break my heart open and fill it with the love I need to live my life as one sealed with the cross of baptism, as one marked with the cross of repentance, and as one filled with hope because of the divine love that was shown to me on the cross. O Christ, engrave your cross deeply into my heart and the hearts of all those dear to me.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Let me share with You His pain,
Who for all our sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died.

THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross and Placed in the Arms of His Mother

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: Jesus did not descend from the Cross, but remained on it till His death. When taken down, He rested on the bosom of His beloved Mother as He had so often done in life. Persevere in your good resolutions, and do not flee from the cross. For he who perseveres till the end shall be saved. Consider, moreover, how pure the heart should be that receives the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar.

People: O Lord Jesus Christ, I commend to you all who have run away from you, who have strayed from you, who know you not, whose hearts are dead to you. Come O Gentle Savior, in your own way and by the power of your Holy Spirit, come into their dead souls and bring them to life again.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

Let me mingle tears with You,
Mourning Him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live.

FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You,

R: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Priest: The body of Jesus is laid in a stranger's tomb. He, who in this world had not whereon to rest his head, would have no grave of His own after death. You whose heart is still attached to this world, despise it that you may not perish with it.

People: O Lord Jesus Christ, we conclude this journey with a message of hope. And while we lament your passion and suffering, our tears are abated and our grief is overcome, not only for you, but for all the sorrows in our lives because, you, O Jesus, will break open the tomb. We thank you, O Lord, and we ask you to keep always before our eyes the promise of your resurrection. Remind us that the Way of the Cross is the Way to Eternal Life.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be...

V. Lord Jesus, crucified.

R. Have Mercy on us!

By the cross with You to stay,
There with You to weep and pray,
Is all I ask of You to give.

Prayer Before a Crucifix

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus
while before Thy face I humbly kneel; and
with burning soul, pray and beseech Thee to fix
deep in my heart lively sentiments of Faith,
Hope, and Charity; true contrition for my sins,
and a firm purpose of amendment. While with
great love and tender pity I contemplate,
Thy five wounds, pondering over them within me
and calling to mind the words which David,
Thy prophet, said to Thee, my Jesus:
“They have pierced My hands and My feet,
they have numbered all My bones.”
Amen.