

# STATIONS OF THE CROSS



**Devotion to the Lord's Passion**

## INTRODUCTION

An ancient tradition has Mary, the Mother of Jesus, walking the "Way of the Cross," pondering in her heart the cost to her divine Son of the world's salvation. Certainly from a very early time in the Church's history, pilgrims to Jerusalem would follow the traditional route from Pilate's house to Calvary.

Crowds of Christians have done this over the centuries, but for most it has been an unrealizable dream.

By the Middle Ages, some churches had chapels to commemorate an event in the Passion of Jesus, and from these the Franciscans, since the 15th century, developed the devotion that has come to be called the "Stations of the Cross." The word "station" ("statlo") implies "standing still" and "gathering at a place."

It was not until the 17th century that stations came to be erected in churches, arranged at intervals around the walls. They are now almost universal in Roman Catholic churches of the Latin Rite, and very widespread in Anglican churches. By means of the stations, we are able to join ourselves in spirit to those pilgrims who walk the way of the cross in Jerusalem, and renew our appreciation of the sufferings Jesus embraced in order to redeem the world.

There are now many different ways of praying the Stations. What follows is an adaptation of the traditional form. It can be used as a private meditation or in public worship. In the latter case, carefully prepared meditations should be presented at each Station; in the former, the suggested Scripture readings might be used.

In a small gathering, the hymns - except the one during which the community moves from Station to Station - may be omitted.

May the Lord bless all who take the time to walk the way of the Cross with him and his holy Mother.

## AT EACH STATION

*The priest announces the Station, and all genuflect.*

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

*All: Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.*

*The MEDITATION follows.*

*Then is said one or both of these prayers:*

*All: O God, we love you with our whole hearts  
and above all things,  
and are heartily sorry that we have offended you.  
May we never offend you any more.  
May we love you without ceasing,  
and make it our delight to do in all things  
your most gracious will.*

*Priest: Hail, Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.*

*All: Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.*

## PRAYERS BEFORE THE ALTAR

*The people KNEEL as the clergy enter in silence.*

*The priest says:*

**I**n the Name of the Father, and of the, Son, and of the, Holy Spirit.  
*The people respond: Amen.*

*The priest says:*

**J**esus our Saviour, we gather before you, asking you mercy for  
ourselves and for your whole Church, living and departed. As  
we walk with you on the way of the Cross and consider your suf-  
ferings, grant us a share in all its merits. This road we intend to

follow was marked by your sweat and blood; it saw you despised and rejected by men. Give us the spirit of true repentance, and help us to receive with joy all the crosses and humiliations which come to us in our pilgrimage through life, knowing that we are made one with you in your suffering.

*The people STAND*

*Priest:* O God, come to our aid.

*People:* O Lord, make haste to help us.

*Priest:* Glory be to the Father and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit:

*People:* As it was in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

*This hymn is sung.*

When I survey the wondrous Cross,  
On which the Prince of Glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

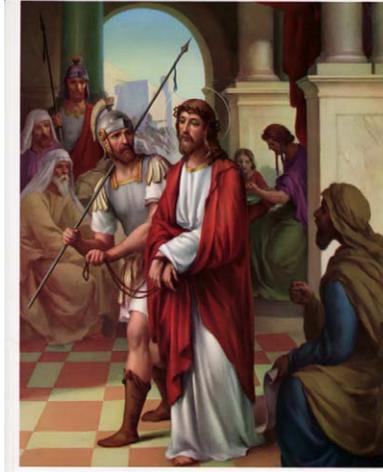
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast  
Save in the Cross of Christ my God;  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his Blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

*All move to the First Station during this last verse:*

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were an offering far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

## FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH



**W**hen Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.” And all the people answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.  
(*Matthew 27: 24 – 26*)

*The meditation*

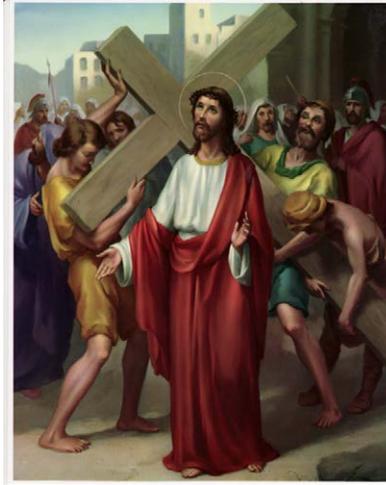
*The prayers*

*v.* God did not spare his own Son  
*R.* But delivered him up for us all.

*As the procession moves to the next Station all sing:*

**A**t the Cross her station keeping,  
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,  
Close to Jesus at the last.

## SECOND STATION: JESUS IS MADE TO BEAR HIS CROSS



**T**hey took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha. (*John 19:17*)

**A**nd as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not . . . He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (*Isaiah 53:3-8*)

*The meditation*

*The prayers*

*v.* The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all:  
*R.* For the transgression of my people was he stricken.

*As the procession moves to the next Station all sing:*

**T**hrough her soul, of joy bereavéd,  
**B**owed with anguish, deeply grievéd,  
Now at length the sword hath passed.

## THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME



**H**e was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. (*Isaiah 53:7*)

**H**e had to be made like his brethren in every respect, to atone for the sins of the people. (*Hebrews 2:17*)

*The meditation*

*The prayers*

*v.* Surely he has borne our griefs:

*R.* And carried our sorrows.

*As the procession moves to the next Station all sing:*

**O** that blessed one, grief-laden,  
Blesséd Mother, blesséd Maiden,  
Mother of the all-holy One.

## FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS BLESSED MOTHER



Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow . . . What can I say for you, to what compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What can I liken to you, that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? (*Isaiah 53:7*)

When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, 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 to his own home. (*John 19:26-27*)

*The meditation*

*The prayers*

*v.* A sword will pierce your own soul also:

*R.* And fill your heart with bitter pain.

*As the procession moves to the next Station all sing:*

O that silent, ceaseless mourning,  
O those dim eyes, never turning  
From that wondrous, suffering Son.

**FIFTH STATION:  
SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS  
TO CARRY HIS CROSS**



**A**nd as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. (*Luke 23:26*)

**A**nd Jesus said to all, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." (*Luke 9:23*)

*The meditation*

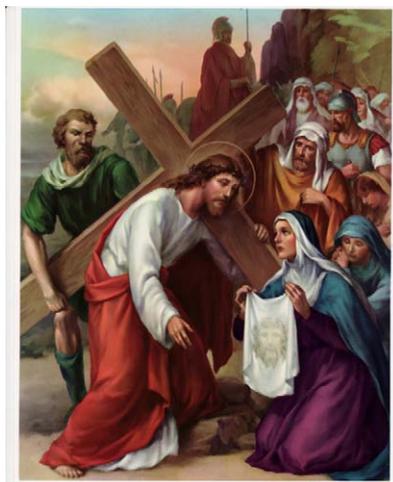
*The prayers*

v. Whoever cannot bear his own cross  
and come after me:  
R. Cannot be my disciple.

*As the procession moves to the next Station:*

**W**ho on Christ's dear Mother gazing,  
In her trouble so amazing,  
Born of woman, would not weep?

## SIXTH STATION: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS



**T**ruly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me. (*Matthew 25:40*)

**H**e was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God. (*John 1:10-12*)

*The meditation*

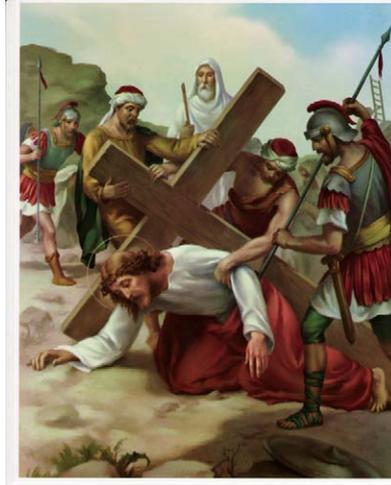
*The prayers*

*v.* Restore us, O Lord God of hosts:  
*R.* Show the light of thy countenance,  
and we shall be saved.

*As the procession moves to the next Station:*

**W**ho on Christ's dear Mother thinking,  
Such a cup of sorrow drinking,  
Would not share her sorrow deep?

## SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME



I was not rebellious, I turned not backward. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. (*Isaiah 50:5-6*)

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate. (*Matthew 23:37-38*)

*The meditation*

*The prayers*

*v.* Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:

*R.* Yet not my will, but thine be done.

*As the procession moves to the next Station:*

**F**or his people's sins, in anguish,  
There she saw the Victim languish,  
Bleed in torments, bleed and die.

## EIGHTH STATION: JESUS SPEAKS TO THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM



**A**nd there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.” (Luke 23:27-28)

**A**nd when he drew near and saw the city he wept over it, saying, “Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you, when your enemies will cast up a bank about you and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and dash you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon another in you.” (Luke 19:41-44)

*The meditation*

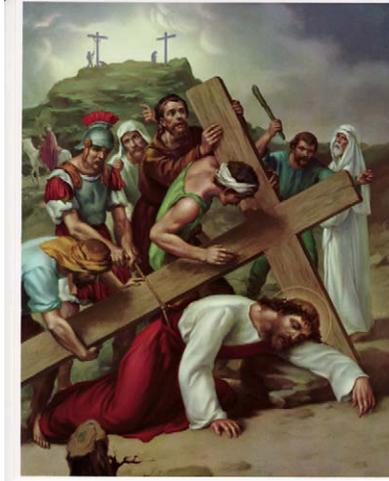
*The prayers*

v. Those who sow in tears: R. Will reap with shouts of joy.

*As the procession moves to the next Station:*

**S**aw the Lord's anointed taken,  
**S**aw her Child in death forsaken,  
 Heard his last expiring cry.

## NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME



**W**e preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (*1 Corinthians 1:23-25*)

**I**am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax, it is melted within my breast; my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; thou dost lay me in the dust of death. (*Psalms 22:14-15*)

*The meditation*

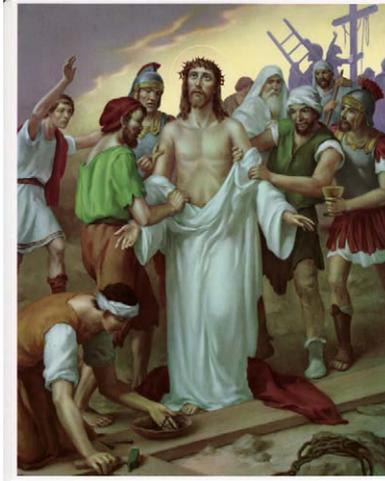
*The prayers*

*v.* He was led like a lamb to the slaughter:  
*R.* And like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb  
so he opened not his mouth.

*As the procession moves to the next Station:*

**I**n the Passion of my Maker,  
**I**be my sinful soul partaker,  
May I bear with her my part.

## TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS



**W**hen the soldiers had crucified Jesus they took his garments and made four parts, one for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was without seam, woven from top to bottom; so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." (*John 19:23-24*)

**H**is eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed which no one knows but himself. He is clad in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. (*Revelation 19:12-13*)

*The meditation*

*The prayers*

*v.* They gave me gall to eat:

*R.* And when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

*As the procession moves to the next Station:*

**O**f his Passion bear the token,  
In a spirit bowed and broken  
Bear his death within my heart.

## ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS



There they crucified him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left. And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And one of the criminals said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:33-34, 42-43))

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? All who see me mock at me, they make mouths at me, they wag their heads; "He committed his cause to the Lord; let him deliver him, let him rescue him, for he delights in him!" . . . and there is none to help. (Psalm 22:1-11)

*The meditation*

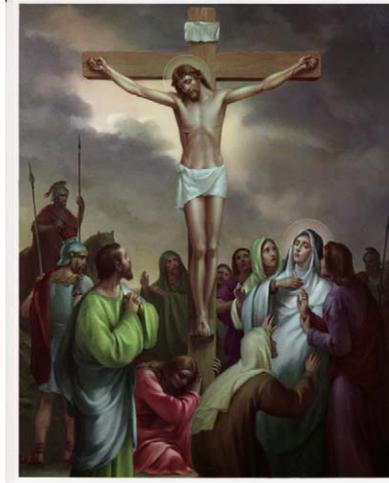
*The prayers*

v. They pierce my hands and my feet:  
R. They stare and gloat over me.

*As the procession moves to the next Station:*

May his wounds both wound and heal me,  
He enkindle, cleanse, anneal me,  
Be his Cross my hope and stay.

## TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS



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, la’ma sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? . . . And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, “Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!” And having said this he breathed his last. (*Matthew 27:45; Luke 23:46*)

I am poured out like water ... my heart is like wax, it is melted within my breast; my strength is dried up ... and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; thou dost lay me in the dust of death. (*Psalms 22:14-15*)

*The meditation*

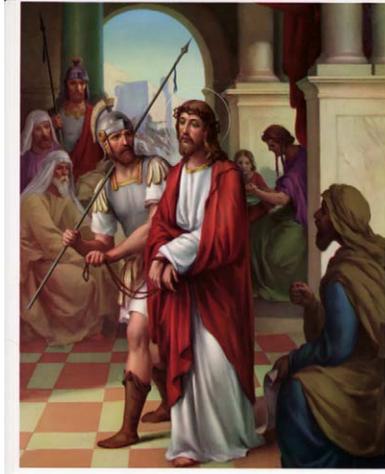
*The prayers*

v. Christ became obedient unto death: R. Even death on a cross.

*As the procession moves to the next Station:*

May he, when the mountains quiver,  
From that flame which burns for ever  
Shield me on the judgment day.

## THIRTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS



So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water . . .

After this Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him leave. (*John 19:32-38*)

*The meditation*

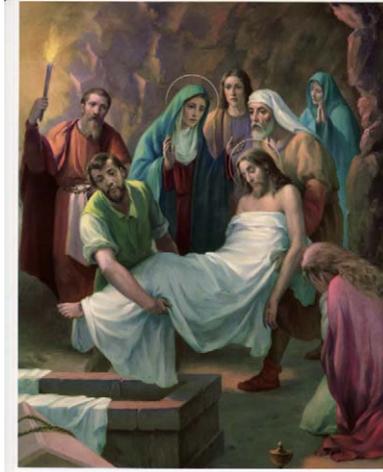
*The prayers*

v. Her tears run down her cheeks:  
R. And she has none to comfort her.

*As the procession moves to the next Station:*

**J**esu, may thy Cross defend me,  
And thy saving death befriend me,  
Cherished by thy deathless grace.

## FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB



**A**nd 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. (*Matthew 27:59-66*)

**A**ll of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (*Romans 6:3-4*)

*The meditation*

*The prayers*

*v.* You will not abandon me to the grave:  
*R.* Nor let your Holy One see corruption.

*As the procession moves to the altar:*

**W**hen to dust my dust returneth,  
Grant a soul that to thee yearneth  
In thy Paradise a place.

## CONCLUDING PRAYERS

*One of these hymns may be sung when the procession reaches the altar:*

### I

**I**n the Cross of Christ I glory,  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'ertake me,  
Hopes deceive and fears annoy,  
Never shall the Cross forsake me,  
Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming  
Light and love upon my way,  
From the Cross the radiance streaming,  
Adds more lustre to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,  
By the Cross are sanctified;  
Peace is there that knows no measure,  
Joys that through all time abide.

### II

**B**eneath the cross of Jesus  
I fain would take my stand,  
The shadow of a mighty rock  
within a weary land;  
A home within the wilderness,  
a rest upon the way,  
From the burning of the noontide heat,  
and the burden of the day.

There lies beneath its shadow  
but on the further side  
The darkness of an awful grave  
that gapes both deep and wide  
And there between us stands the cross  
two arms outstretched to save  
A watchman set to guard the way  
from that eternal grave.

Upon that cross of Jesus  
mine eye at times can see  
The very dying form of one  
who suffered there for me;  
And from my stricken heart with tears  
two wonders I confess;  
The wonders of redeeming love  
and my unworthiness.

I take, O cross, thy shadow  
for my abiding place;  
I ask no other sunshine  
than the sunshine of his face;  
Content to let the world go by  
to know no gain or loss,  
My sinful self my only shame,  
my glory all the cross.

*Priest: Let us pray.*

*The people KNEEL.*

*The priest says:*

**L**ord Jesus Christ, our merciful High Priest, who offered a pure offering to make sinners one with the Father by the wonderful power of your life, your sufferings and your death, grant us grace, we pray, to die to sin and live for you alone, through the saving power of your life and death, who live and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*The priest concludes with this blessing:*

**M**ay the cross of the Son of God, who is mightier than all the hosts of Satan, and more glorious than all the angels of heaven, abide with you in your going out and your coming in. By day and by night, at morning and at evening, at all times and in all places, may it protect and defend you. From the wrath of evil men, from the assaults of evil spirits, from foes visible and invisible, from the snares of the devil, from all low passions that beguile the soul and body, may it guard, protect, and deliver you. And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. *Amen.*

*When Stations of the Cross has been led by a lay person, instead of the above blessing the final prayer is:*

*v: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all, now and for ever.*

*R: Amen.*