

Stations of the Cross



Reader:

Lord Jesus, help me to walk with you each day of my life, even to Calvary.
The sorrow and joy, the pain and healings, the failures and triumphs of my life
are truly small deaths and resurrections that lead me to closeness with you.
Give me the faith and trust I need to walk with you always. Who lives and reign
for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Prayers for the Holy Father's intentions:

All: Our Father...but deliver from evil. Amen.

All: Hail Mary...now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

All: Glory be...world without end. Amen.

Reader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Reader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Reader:

"They will look on him whom they have pierced" (Zech 12:10). This evening,
may the prophetic words of Zechariah be fulfilled in us! May our gaze rise from
our abject poverty to look upon him, Christ our Lord, he who is Merciful Love.
Then we will be able to see his face and hear him say: "I have loved you with an
everlasting love" (Jer 31:3). By his forgiveness, he wipes away our sins and
opens to us the way of holiness, on which we will embrace our cross, together
with him, out of love for our brothers and sisters. The font which has washed
away our sins will become in us "a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (Jn
4:14).

Brief moment of silence

Let us pray.

Eternal Father,
through the Passion of your beloved Son,
you wished to reveal to us your heart
and bestow upon us your mercy.
In union with Mary, his Mother and ours,
may we know how to always welcome and protect the gift of love.
May she, the Mother of Mercy,
present you with the prayers
we raise for ourselves and for all humanity,
so that the grace of this Way of the Cross
may reach every human heart
and fill them with new hope,
that unfailing hope
which radiates from the cross of Jesus.
Who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit
for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Reader: The First Station—Jesus is condemned to death



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

A young slave:

Reader: “I was a slave in Pilate’s household in Jerusalem. There were lots of people there, jostling and pushing, and over to one side were the Jewish priests, keeping themselves separate. Pilate wanted some water and I was sent for it. I brought in a bowl and a towel and he dipped his hands in the bowl and dried them on the towel. That’s what I remember. Then Pilate said, ‘Take him away and crucify him!’ Only then did I see him — standing, shackled in front of Pilate. I wondered what he had done.”

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were condemned to death for political expediency:
be with those who are imprisoned for the convenience of the powerful.
You were the victim of unbridled injustice:
change the minds and motivations of oppressors and exploiters
to your way of peace.
To you, Jesus, innocent though condemned,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Our Father...but deliver from evil. Amen.

**All: At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.**

Reader: The Fourteenth Station—Jesus is laid in the tomb



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

Joseph of Arimathea:

“I’m Joseph of Arimathea. Like Nicodemus, I was a member of the Jewish Council. I’d only recently had a new tomb cut from the rock, near to the place. It was to be for me and my family. But it was beginning to get dark, and we had to bury his body before sunset. So I suggested laying him out there, and then we could come back on Sunday morning to tidy things up and anoint his body and say our prayers. That’s what we did, and the Governor ordered the tomb to be sealed and guarded. Of course, on Sunday morning it was all very different ...”

Prayer

Lord Jesus, Lord of life, you became as nothing for us:
be with those who feel worthless and as nothing in the world’s eyes.
You were laid in a cold, dark tomb and hidden from sight:
be with all who suffer and die in secret,
hidden from the eyes of the world.
To you, Jesus, your rigid body imprisoned in a tomb,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Hail Mary...now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

**All: By the Cross with thee to stay;
There with thee to weep and pray;
Is all I ask of thee to give.**

Reader: The Thirteenth Station—Jesus is taken down from the cross



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

Nicodemus:

"I'm Nicodemus. I had met him a few times and spoken to him. Now he was dead. We thought it was all over. All we could do now for him was to get him down from that cross and give him some dignity in death. My friend, Joseph, and I went to his Mother to offer our help. I think Joseph went to see the Governor and got his permission. So we were able to get him down and cover him up. It was a terrible task, but it was the last thing we could do for him. It was awful to see his Mother holding his limp body and kissing his bloodied face. And we just kept asking ourselves, Why; why did this happen?"

Prayer

Lord Jesus, your friends and family mourned at your death:
give strength and comfort to those who mourn.

To you, Jesus, your body cradled by your Mother in death as in birth,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

Amen.

All: Our Father...but deliver from evil. Amen.

**All: Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him who mourn'd for me,
All the days that I may live.**

Reader: The Second Station—Jesus takes up his Cross



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

A soldier:

"I was a soldier in Pilate's guard on duty that day. Once Pilate had passed the sentence of death it was our job to carry it out. So we marched him out from Pilate round to our courtyard. That's where we used to have our bit of fun: we dressed him up and mocked him and spat at him, and some of my mates roughed him up a bit. Then we got out a cross for him. He knew that he had to carry it, but he didn't seem strong enough to carry that weight. But with our spears and swords, he had no choice."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you carried the cross through the rough streets of Jerusalem:
be with those who are loaded with burdens beyond their strength.
You bore the weight of our sins when you carried the cross:
help us to realize the extent and the cost of your love for us.
To you, Jesus, bearing a cross not your own,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

Amen.

All: Hail Mary...now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

**All: Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword had pass'd.**

Reader: The Third Station—Jesus falls for the first time



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

A woman:

"I was standing outside the Governor's palace. It was just before Passover and a crowd had gathered to see if the Governor would release any prisoners. We'd cheered the news that Barabbas was to be freed. But then the soldiers came out with some other men, taking them to be executed. They were each carrying their crosses, but this one was already weak. The weight of what he was carrying seemed crushing. He lurched towards us, and he stumbled right in front of me. The soldiers were straight in with their spears; they picked up the cross, dragged him to his feet, and carried on."

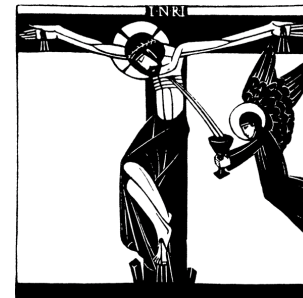
Prayer

Lord Jesus, you suffered like us under the burdens of this world:
be with those whose strength is taken away by ill-treatment or illness.
You are present in our suffering and share our loads:
help us to let you carry our burdens.
To you, Jesus, falling under the weight of the cross,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Glory be...world without end. Amen.

**All: Oh, how sad and sore distress'd
Was that Mother highly blest
Of the sole-begotten One!**

Reader: The Twelfth Station—Jesus dies on the Cross



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

The Centurion:

"I was the Centurion. My job was to supervise the whole execution and see it through until the three men were dead, and keep the crowds under control too. As the occupying power in a troubled territory we were used to executing rebels. But I remember this one. Of course it was at Passover, and the crowds were large and worrying. The Governor had us put a sign over him — that he was king of the Jews, and this is how any king of the Jews would end up. And it went so dark that day, you'd think it was the middle of the night. But the way he died was different too. He didn't curse, he didn't incite his friends to rebellion, he seemed to be saying his prayers and talking to his Mother and a few friends. Through all the pain, through all the indignity and humiliation, he seemed to know what he was doing. Everything about him proclaimed his innocence."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you died on the cross
and entered the bleakest of all circumstances:
give courage to those who die at the hands of others.
In death you entered into the darkest place of all:
illumine our darkness with your glorious presence.
To you, Jesus, your lifeless body hanging on the tree of shame,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Glory be...world without end. Amen.

**All: Let me share with thee His pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died.**

Reader: The Eleventh Station—Jesus is nailed to the Cross



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

A soldier:

"The next thing was to nail him to his cross. Sometimes prisoners were tied up, other times we used nails. This time it was nails. It always took a whole squad of us to do this. Some to hold the cross secure, some to hold him and restrain him, then someone to hold the nail, and someone to hold the hammer. You had to put a nail through each wrist, so he would be held up by the nail between the two forearm bones. Then a single nail through both ankles. To breathe, a man would have to push himself up on these nails through his wrists and ankles."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you bled in pain as the nails were driven into your flesh:
transform through the mystery of your love the pain of those who suffer.
To you, Jesus, our crucified Lord,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Hail Mary...now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

**All: Holy Mother! pierce me through;
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified.**

Reader: The Fourth Station—Jesus meets his Mother



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

Blessed Virgin Mary:

"O my Son, my dear Son. It was agony to see you suffering like this. How many mothers have seen their children suffer? I knew what it was like. We, my friends and I, had waited outside the Governor's palace, waiting for you to be freed. And then the soldiers forced you out, carrying a cross. Before they could stop us we ran past them and hugged you. Why was this happening to you? Why? Surely you could have said something, done something, and it would have stopped? Even now? But as he looked at me, I knew this would not happen — I felt as if a sword had pierced my heart."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, your Mother Mary wept at your torment:
give heart to all parents who watch their children suffer.
Your Mother felt your pain in her heart:
guide us to bring the fullness of life to children and parents.
To you, Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Our Father...but deliver from evil. Amen.

**All: Christ above in torment hangs;
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying glorious Son.**

Reader: The Fifth Station—Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the Cross



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

Simon:

"I was there to see the Passover. It was a big thing in those days, and I'd brought my two boys, Alexander and Rufus. We'd got caught up in this crowd, and I could see that they were taking some prisoners out to be executed. The soldiers saw me and the officer came over, and with his sword he forced me behind one of the prisoners and to take half the weight of the cross. I couldn't believe how heavy it was: it seemed like I was carrying half the world. At the time, I had no idea who he was."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were worn down by fatigue:
be with those from whom life drains all energy.
You needed the help of a passing stranger:
give us the humility to receive aid from others.
To you, Jesus, weighed down with exhaustion and in need of help,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Hail Mary...now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

**All: Is there one who would not weep,
Whelm'd in miseries so deep
Christ's dear Mother to behold?**

Reader: The Tenth Station—Jesus is stripped of his garments



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

A soldier:

"I was a soldier in the guard. We were just doing our job, something we'd done dozens if not hundreds of times before. Crucifixion was our business. First thing was to strip the prisoner. No dignity was left to a man being executed, not even a cover for his nakedness. His tunic was woven all in one piece, I remember that, and we threw dice to see who would have it."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, stripped and beaten by your captors:
be with all who are deprived of their dignity
by the actions of their fellow human beings.
Your clothes were given over to a game of chance:
inspire us to protect the weak and innocent, and give dignity to all.
To you, Jesus, the Word made Flesh,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Our Father...but deliver from evil. Amen.

**All: Make me feel as thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my Lord.**

Reader: The Ninth Station—Jesus falls for the third time



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

Another woman:

“After he’d fallen before, we’d run along the road, pushing through the crowd, through the city gate to the hill outside the walls. And just as we got there, he fell again, a third time. How much longer can this go on? And this time the soldiers don’t even try to force him to his feet. They’re already at the place.”

Prayer

Lord Jesus, three times you prayed that this cup might be taken from you and three times you fell under the weight of the cross:

hear our pleading, our cries of agony.

Three times Peter disowned you

and three times you bade him feed your sheep:

forgive us when we disown you and strengthen us to share your love.

To you, Jesus, sharer in our suffering,

be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,

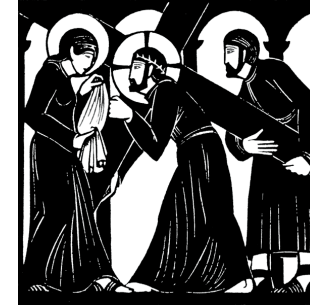
now and for ever.

Amen.

All: Glory be...world without end. Amen.

**All: O thou Mother! fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with thine accord.**

Reader: The Sixth Station—Veronica wipes the face of Jesus



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

Veronica:

“Everyone forgets my name now. But I was there, and I remember seeing him, carrying his cross, his face so covered in sweat and in blood from the soldiers’ blows. He stumbled towards me and almost by instinct I pulled out a small cloth and wiped his face. There was so much sweat and blood that when you looked at the cloth you could see his face. I still have that cloth, a true image of him.”

Prayer

Lord Jesus, your face was sweaty and bloodied:

be with all who care for the broken bodies of our sick and injured.

Your face was wiped by an unknown woman:

let us bear your true image in our hearts, in our words and in our deeds.

To you, Jesus, scarred by a crown of thorns,

be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,

now and for ever.

Amen.

All: Glory be...world without end. Amen.

**All: Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother’s pain untold?**

Reader: The Seventh Station—Jesus falls for the second time



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

A man:

"We were walking into the city as the soldiers cleared the way out, so we stood to one side to watch. A man, helped by another man, was carrying his cross. Even with help he was struggling, and he stumbled and fell beneath the weight. Some of the crowd were yelling abuse at him, and others were crying. Despite everything there was something about him that stood out. I remember wondering who he was."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you suffered and fell under the ill-treatment of your captors:
be with all who cannot find the strength to get up and carry on.
Your captors were doing the job they had been given:
guard us from causing others to stumble and fall.
To you, Jesus, bearing the cross for the whole world,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Our Father...but deliver from evil. Amen.

**All: Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child
All with bloody scourges rent.**

Reader: The Eighth Station—Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem



Reader: We adore you O Christ and we praise you.

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

A woman:

"My friends and I had been waiting for him to come to Jerusalem. We'd heard about the man from Galilee. We'd even seen him there and heard him speak. And now here he was. Surely it didn't have to come to this? And as we cried he must have heard us, and drew on his reserves. 'Don't cry for me,' he said, 'cry for yourselves and your children'. How could he have known what would happen to us all these years later? Our beautiful city destroyed, and our Temple razed to the ground. Now there are no more sacrifices here."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, the women of Jerusalem wept for you:
move us to tears at the plight of the broken in our world.
You embraced the pain of Jerusalem, the 'city of peace':
bless Jerusalem this day and lead it to the path of profound peace.
To you, Jesus, the King of peace who wept for the city of peace,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

All: Hail Mary...now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

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