

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again

THE FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DIE.

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Jesus stands in the most human of places. He has already experienced profound solidarity with so many on this earth, by being beaten and tortured. Now he is wrongfully condemned to punishment by death. His commitment to entering our lives completely begins its final steps. He has said “Yes” to God and placed his life in God’s hands. We follow him in this final surrender, and contemplate with reverence each place along the way, as he is broken and given for us.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Let me remember all those condemned unjustly. Give me the wisdom not to ‘go along with the crowd’
No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. (John 15:13)

THE SECOND STATION: JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

Hail Mary full of grace.....

Jesus is made to carry the cross on which he will die. It represents the weight of all our crosses. What he must have felt as he first took it upon his shoulders! With each step he enters more deeply into our human experience. He walks in the path of human misery and suffering, and experiences its crushing weight.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Let me take up my cross daily and ask for God's grace to help me through each day.

If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me (Luke 9:23)

THE THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

Glory be to the Father.....

The weight is unbearable. Jesus falls under it. How could he enter our lives completely without surrendering to the crushing weight of the life of so many on this earth! He lays on the ground and knows the experience of weakness beneath unfair burdens. He feels the powerlessness of wondering if he will ever be able to continue. He is pulled up and made to continue.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Remember the deprived and the lonely. It is easy to fall but divine grace is always at hand.

He has broken my teeth with gravel, pressed my face in the dust; my soul is deprived of peace. I have forgotten what happiness is. (Lamentations 3:16-17)

THE FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

Hail Mary full of grace...

Jesus' path takes him to a powerful source of his strength to continue. All his life, his mother had taught him the meaning of the words, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord". Now they look into each other's eyes. How pierced-through her heart must be! How pained he must be to see her tears! Now, her grace-filled smile blesses his mission and stirs his heart to its depth. Love and trust in God bind them together.

Let me dwell on the pain of all parents when their children are suffering and help seems unavailable.

Come, all you who pass by the way, look and see whether there is any suffering like My suffering (Lamentations 1:12)

THE FIFTH STATION: SIMON HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS

Glory be to the Father.....

Jesus even experiences our struggle to receive help. He is made to experience the poverty of not being able to carry his burden alone. He enters into the experience of all who must depend upon others to survive. He is deprived of the satisfaction of carrying this burden on his own.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

I remember the times I have struggled to bear my burdens and those who helped me.

Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of Mine, you did for Me (Matthew 25:40)

THE SIXTH STATION: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

Hail Mary full of grace.....

Jesus' journey is at times brutal. He has entered into the terrible experiences of rejection and injustice. He has been whipped and beaten. His face shows the signs of his solidarity with all who have ever suffered injustice and vile, abusive treatment. He encounters a compassionate, loving disciple who wipes the vulgar spit and mocking blood from his face. On her veil, she discovers the image of his face – his gift to her. And, for us to contemplate forever.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Let me break through the bustle of life and offer help where it is needed.

Without beauty, without majesty we saw him, no looks to attract our eyes; despised and rejected, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering (Isaiah 53:2-4)

THE SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

Glory be to the Father.....

Even with help, Jesus stumbles and falls to the ground. In deep exhaustion he stares at the earth beneath him. "Remember, you are just and to dust you will return". He has seen death before. Now he can feel the profound weakness of disability and disease and aging itself, there on his knees, under the weight of his cross.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

When I feel abandoned by everyone let me remember how Jesus suffered for me.

Come to Me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28)

THE EIGHTH STATION: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Hail Mary full of grace...

The women of Jerusalem =, and their children, come out to comfort and thank him. They had seen his compassion and welcomed his words of healing and freedom. He had broken all kinds of social and religious conventions to connect with them. Now they are here to support him. He feels their grief. He suffers, knowing he can't remain to help them more in this life. He knows the mystery of facing the separation of death.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

How can I help and encourage those downtrodden by life's injustices.

A large number of people followed Him, including women who mourned and wailed for Him. Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me; weep for yourselves and for your children" (Luke 23:27-28)

THE NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

Glory be to the Father.....

This last fall is devastating. Jesus can barely proceed to the end. Summoning all his remaining strength, supported by his inner trust in God, Jesus collapses under the weight of the cross. His executioners look at him as a broken man, pathetic yet paying a price he deserves. They help him up so he can make it up the hill of crucifixion.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Allow me, in my frequent failings, to know that God's grace is always available.

Everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted (Luke 14:11)

THE TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED

Hail Mary full of grace....

Part of the indignity is to be crucified naked. Jesus is completely stripped of any pride. The wounds on his back are torn open again. He experiences the ultimate vulnerability of the defenceless. No shield or security protects him. As they stare at him, his eyes turn to heaven.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Remember those who suffer loss of dignity because of the inhumanity of others.

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took His clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them (John 19:21)

THE ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Glory be to the Father.....

Huge nails are hammered through his hands and feet to fix him on the cross. He is bleeding much more seriously now. As the cross is lifted up, the weight of his life hangs on those nails. Every time he struggles to pull himself up to breathe, his ability to cling to life slips away.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Let me remember the pain I cause when I neglect or reject the Christian way of life.

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34)

THE TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Hail Mary full of grace.....

Between two criminals, a mocking title above his head, with only Mary, John and Mary Magdalene to support him, Jesus surrenders his last breath: "Into your hands I commend my spirit".

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Lord give me the peace of Christ at the end of my life.

He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, even to death on a cross. Therefore God has exalted Him.
(Philippians 2:8-9)

THE THIRTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

Glory be to the Father.....

What tender mourning! Jesus' lifeless body lays in his mother's arms. He has truly died. A profound sacrifice, complete.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Remember the tragedy of parents who receive the bodies of their children

In this has the love of God been shown in our case, that God has sent His only-begotten Son into the world as propitiation for sins (I John 4:9-10)

THE FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

Our Father who art in heaven...

Hail Mary full of grace...

Glory be to the Father....

They take the body of Jesus to its resting place. The huge stone over the tomb is the final sign of the permanence of death. In this final act of surrender, who would have imagined this tomb would soon be empty or that Jesus would show himself alive to his disciples, or that they would recognise him in the breaking of bread? Oh, that our hearts might burn within us, as we realise how he had to suffer and die so as to enter into his glory, for us.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Lord by your Cross and Resurrection, you have redeemed the world.

Let the tomb be my source of new life. May I find light in times of darkness.

Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it brings forth much fruit
(John 12: 24-25)

Lord by Your Cross and Resurrection You have set us free. You are the Saviour of the World.