

*Living
Stations of the Cross*



Good Friday

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church
Naperville, IL

The Stations of the Cross, also known as the Way of the Cross or Via Crucis, commemorate Jesus's passion and death on the cross. There are 14 stations that each depict a moment on his journey to Calvary, usually through sacred art, prayers, and reflections. The practice began as pious pilgrims traced his path through Jerusalem on the Via Dolorosa.

Later, for the many who wanted to pass along the same route, but could not make the trip to Jerusalem, a practice developed that eventually took the form of the fourteen stations currently found in almost every church throughout the world.

-United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

FIRST STATION Jesus Is Condemned to Death

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *Jesus stands all alone before Pilate. Nobody speaks up for Him. Nobody helps defend Him. He devoted His entire life to helping others, listening to the smallest ones, caring for those who were ignored by others. They don't seem to remember that as they prepare to put Him to death.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *Every day in our world, people are condemned and held captive. Every time someone is rejected for being Black, Asian, Hispanic, Muslim, or Jewish, someone is being condemned. Every time a person has to huddle on the street corner to keep warm or search in a garbage can for food, every time a person with a disability is made to feel unwelcome, someone is condemned. Like Jesus, many are held captive against their will...those in immigration holding cells, in jails, or prisons, those isolated because of the pandemic, those in human trafficking situations. Captivity can be hard, lonely, and dehumanizing. Jesus knows their pain because He experienced it, too.*

All: We pray for all those who are condemned and held captive, that they may be released unharmed from their confinement. Jesus, watch over them and give them peace.



SECOND STATION

Jesus Is Made To Take Up His Cross

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *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 the path of human misery and suffering, and experiences its crushing weight.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *All around us people are carrying heavy burdens. Some of these burdens we know about, like the burdens of our family members. Some burdens we don't know about, like the ones carried by our neighbors, the cashier at the grocery store, the police officer, or the emergency room nurse. We hear of other burdens on the news, like war, hunger, injustice, and unemployment. And, some burdens are hidden deep within our hearts. We take the weight of all these kinds of crosses on our shoulders, and we carry them toward Calvary. Knowing exactly what we hold in our hearts, Jesus lightens our burden.*

All: Jesus, You take up Your cross, those heavy beams. On those days when the burdens of life weigh me down, help me to remember that I am not alone and that You are walking beside me.

Take Up Our Cross

The musical score is written for a single voice part in treble clef, with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. It begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign, labeled 'Refrain'. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are: 'We take up our cross and fol - low him; we lay down our lives that we might live. We car - ry the hope of Christ with-in; we take up our cross and fol - low him.' The score includes performance directions: '1, Final (Fine) to Verse 2', '2 to Bridge', and '3'. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat sign.

THIRD STATION

Jesus Falls the First Time

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *As Jesus walked through the narrow streets, every movement, every jolt burned and reopened His wounds. The weight of the cross becomes unbearable and Jesus falls under it. In boxing, when a fighter falls and is too beaten to continue, the fight is stopped by the referee. Yet, there is no one to stop the battle Jesus fights for us. He lies on the ground and knows the experience of weakness beneath unfair burdens. He is pulled up and made to continue.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *How embarrassing it is to fall flat on your face. All of us have fallen in some way, at one time or another. Maybe we have experienced a physical fall, like the fall of our Lord, where we have literally to pick ourselves up from the floor. Most often, however, we experience falls of another sort: when we feel as though we have failed miserably at something we have tried hard to achieve. Perhaps we failed at a sport, or class, a job, or a relationship. It is tempting to give up right there and say, "Forget it! Enough!" But Jesus calls us to get up and try again.*

All: As I look at You, Jesus, there on the ground, being roughly pulled up, I know how profoundly You understand fatigue and defeat. Be with the immigrant who has been turned away at the border, the mother who has lost a son to gun violence, the family who's lost a loved during a pandemic, and all of those who feel defeated in life. Learning from Your humanity and example, help us to continue the journey.

Way of the Cross

We car-ry the sav-ing cross through the roads of the world, through the
al-leys of pov-er-ty and mis - er - y, march-ing to a dawn-ing day, to
free-dom and vic-to-ry, to God's life and end - less glo - ry.

Filipino verses tr. by Anita Mendoza and Ricky Manalo; Spanish verses tr. by Pedro Rubalcava, Mary Straub and Katy Haerling. Text and music © 1995, 2003, 2009, Jesuit Communications Foundation, Inc.
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FOURTH STATION

Jesus Meets His Mother

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *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, "Be it done unto me according to your Word." 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 expression blesses His mission and stirs His heart to its depth. Love and trust in God bind them together.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *As close as Mary got to Jesus, she longed to be even closer. How she wanted to do anything in her power to ease His pain. Because of the need to maintain social distance or because of the separation caused by broken relationships, many family members experience that same longing to be closer and that desire to ease a loved one's pain. Mary certainly understands.*

All: Mary, you felt the pain and frustration of seeing your son suffer and die, and yet you trusted in the goodness of God. In Your wisdom, teach us to love and trust as you did. Jesus, as I watch You and Your Mother, Mary, I am reminded of love's power to give strength. Help my love to give strength to others.

At the Cross Her Station Keeping



1. At the cross her sta - tion keep - ing, Mar - y stood in
2. While she wait - ed in her an - guish, See - ing Christ in
3. With what pain and des - o - la - tion, With what no - ble
4. Ev - er pa - tient in her yearn - ing, Though her tear - filled



sor - row, weep - ing, When her Son was cru - ci - fied.
tor - ment lan - guish, Bit - ter sor - row pierced her heart.
res - ig - na - tion, Mar - y watched her dy - ing Son.
eyes were burn - ing, Mar - y gazed up - on her Son.

FIFTH STATION

Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *Just when Jesus begins to think that He can go no farther, just when the soldiers begin to doubt that Jesus can make the long journey up the hill, they grab a man from the side of the road and force him to carry the cross. Simon feels a piece of the wood on his shoulder, and certainly he must have wondered why he, an innocent man, should be asked to do this.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *From time to time, all of us are given jobs that we don't enjoy or for which we didn't volunteer. In these pandemic years, so many 'Simons' stepped up to run errands, help financially, work an extra shift, or make another delivery. Reaching out to others has helped us to stay connected and at least in some small way has helped us to carry some of the burden of another's cross.*

All: Jesus, open my ears to the ways that You call me to serve others, even when this interferes with my own plan and desires. Help me to realize that it is a grace to be able to share the cross of others and, in this way, know that we are walking with You along the way.



SIXTH STATION

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *By now, the thorns cut so deeply into Jesus' head that even seeing where He should step next is almost impossible. Up to this point all who approach Jesus, other than His mother, shout at Him or spit in His face. As Veronica approaches, she walks differently than the others. As she reaches out her hands and wipes His face with her cloth, suddenly her face of compassion becomes clear. No words are necessary, for in that moment, Jesus' dignity as a man is restored.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *When a person goes against the crowd, there is a chance the crowd will shift its attention. Veronica took that risk. Jesus asks us to show the same integrity, courage, and compassion that Veronica did. How many times could a simple act of love have made a difference to someone we saw in pain? How many times have we wanted to step up and help in a small way but were afraid? How many times have we hidden our talents, gifts, and resources so that we would not be asked to help?*

All: I look at Your face, Jesus, now wiped clean, and see the depth of Your sufferings. Lend me the strength and courage that I need to follow Veronica's example—to offer comfort and consolation to those who need it. Help me to see Your presence in others.

REFRAIN At the Name of Jesus

O God, we a - dore you. O
God, we bow down. We ex - alt and we
praise you, led by your Spir - it, O
Ho - ly One, O Ho - ly One.

Vss.: Caroline Maria Noel, 1817–1877, alt.

Ed Bolduc
Text (ref.) and music © 1998, WLP

SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Falls A Second Time

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *Even with help, Jesus stumbles and falls to the ground. As He falls again, all the pain is renewed. A jolt of agony shoots through His body. But He rises again, and continues on His way. He is thinking about all of humanity.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *It is often much more difficult to pick ourselves up from a second fall than from a first. We are hurting, tired, and it's just hard! We see this played out on the world stage as countries, despite tremendous efforts and sacrifice, fail to achieve lasting peace. We see this played out in our communities as we struggle to get past the differences that divide us. It's discouraging. It takes strength and resolve to continue. Jesus knows how we feel and promises to accompany us on the journey.*

All: As I look at You, Jesus, there on the ground, with all the agony taking its toll on You, I know, beyond any doubt, that I will never be alone in my suffering. Give me the courage, when failure presses heavily on me and I am desolate, to let You raise me up.



EIGHTH STATION

Jesus Meets Some Grieving Women

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *The women of Jerusalem, and their children, come out to comfort and thank Jesus. 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.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *Many of the news stories give us a window into the world of those living in different circumstances. We witness uncontrollable suffering and grief. Perhaps we understand better that we belong to each other. Jesus and the grieving women certainly understood that.*

All: Teach me Your mercy so I can ease the pain of others. Help me to be able to express tender, compassionate, and merciful love for that is how You have loved me.

God So Loved the World

REFRAIN

God so loved the world that he gave his on - ly
Son that who - ev - er be - lieves in him shall nev - er
die, but have e - ter - nal life. _____

The musical notation is written on three staves in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The first line of music corresponds to the first line of lyrics, the second line to the second line, and the third line to the third line. The final note of the third line is a long note with a horizontal line extending to the right, indicating a continuation of the melody.

Paul A. Tate
Text and music © 1998, WLP

NINTH STATION Jesus Falls A Third Time

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *Again Jesus falls, this time from sheer exhaustion. Only His will presses Him forward while His body refuses. How difficult this must be for Jesus, fully God and fully human. God knows that this has to be finished and that it is not yet complete. The human part of Jesus feels the excruciating pain and every bone in His body wants to stop right now and move no further. Somehow Jesus' divinity and humanity join together and He musters the strength to get up. He knows the end is close and so He presses on.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *On April 3rd, 2015, Anthony Ray Hinton walked out of prison a free man after spending 30 years on Death Row for a crime he did not commit. Civil rights attorney, Bryan Stevenson, worked for 13 years to secure his release. Imagine the number of times hopes were raised that justice would prevail only to have hopes dashed. Imagine the grace needed to continue the journey. Jesus knows. Jesus tells us that we can accomplish anything if we have faith in Him—that with God, all things are possible.*

All: Lord, grant me the spirit of hope that inspired and encouraged You to lift Yourself three times from the ground to complete Your mission. If I ever begin to doubt how completely You love me, remind me, that even after You fell three times, You got up so that I could be saved.

Nada Te Turbe / Nothing Can Trouble

Ostinato Refrain



Na - da te tur - be, na - da te es - pan - te. Quien a Dios tie - ne
Noth - ing can trou - ble, noth - ing can fright - en. Those who seek God shall



na - da le fal - ta. So - lo Dios bas - ta.
nev - er go want - ing. God a - lone fills us.

Text: St. Teresa of Jesus; Taizé Community, 1986, 1991
Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
© 1986, 1991, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent

TENTH STATION

Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

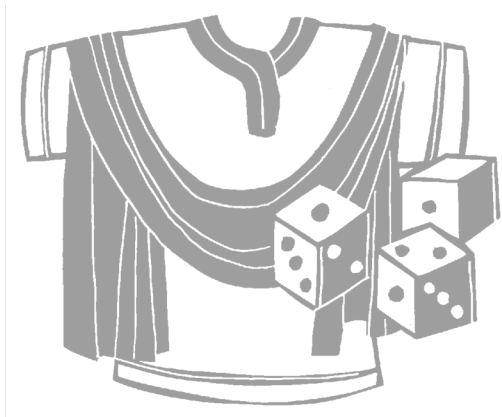
Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *Think about the moment that Jesus finally reaches His destination, the place called Calvary. Jesus is now stripped of His last possession. He stands naked to the world as the soldiers remove His clothes, tearing open the wounds on His back. He has lost His strength, His freedom, His disciples, and now even His clothes. What more can He lose? As the soldiers and on-lookers stare at Him, His eyes turn to heaven.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *Without so much as a garment to cover Himself, Jesus has not lost His dignity. Amid the degradation and torment He suffers, we see so clearly that His fundamental value and dignity come from who He is, not from what He possesses. Being vulnerable is extremely difficult. It means standing up as you are, with nothing to cover up the blemishes, and asking others to accept you.*

All: Jesus, help me not to judge others by how they look, what they wear, or what they possess. Help me to find my worth and identity in You. Give me the grace to free myself of all that puts a barrier between You and me, so that I might be clothed in the garments of Your love.



ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *Lying down on wood is not foreign to Jesus. When He came into this world, His first bed was a wooden manger. Mary and Joseph gently laid Him there in love, and now it is out of love that He hangs here on this wooden cross. Huge nails are hammered through Jesus' 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. In the midst of His intense agony, His heart remains on His people: "Father, forgive them," He prays, "for they know not what they do."*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *At one time or another, all of us have felt persecuted. When we feel as though we are victims of injustice, we experience a small fraction of what Jesus must have felt when the nails pierced His flesh. At times we feel innocent and resent the punishment that is thrown our way; other times we know that we have to pay the consequences of our behavior. In both situations, the pain is uncomfortable. We wait for the nailing to cease; we pray for an end to our persecution.*

All: Jesus, sometimes when things are not going well, I begin to wonder what use my life is. As You stretch out Your hands and accept the executioner's nails, I can't help but see the meaning in my own life. You did this for me—You died for me. Thank you, Jesus, for this gift. If ever I doubt my own meaningfulness, help me to remember You dying for me.



TWELFTH STATION

Jesus Dies on the Cross

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *Jesus didn't immediately die when they nailed Him to the cross. He suffered for three long, agonizing hours. The giver of life, who stood side by side with God at the moment of creation, was now dead. His mission on earth was nearly accomplished. He gave up His spirit, and gave us His life.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *As we think of the losses of recent years, the tremendous loss of life, and the realization that where we thought we were as a nation is not the lived reality for many, it seems as though death and loss are so final, that there is nothing beyond it to give us hope. The whole point of Jesus' death on the cross is to show that death is conquered by love. In the midst of incredible loss, Jesus shows us that love always finds a way.*

All: Jesus, help me never to forget Your love for me. Help me to know that You died for me. By the mystery of Your death and resurrection, I can trust that life will come out of loss. Because of you, I know life everlasting.

My Savior, My Friend

Refrain

On the wood of the cross hung my Sav - ior, my friend.

Now I come, here I a - dore and give

praise to my Lord with - out end.

Text: Mark 15:34; Sr. Frances Teresa, OSC, ©
Tune: Chris de Silva, b.1967
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THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus Is Taken Down From the Cross

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *The first arms that held Jesus, in this world, would also be the last. Mary was told a sword would pierce her heart the day she and Joseph presented Jesus as an infant in the Temple. Now, as she holds Jesus' body that is mangled beyond recognition, she sees not only the man she now holds, but also the child she held, and her heart is pierced. In time, Mary will be comforted, but in this moment, she has only God and a few friends with her in her pain and sorrow. All hope seems gone.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *When a loved one dies, we sometimes console ourselves and others by the realization that, at least, they aren't suffering anymore. Certainly death is the end of life as we know it. Yet, it is also a journey home, into the embrace of God.*

All: Jesus, help me to believe that You are with me and all of humanity, helping us through all our painful times, including death.



FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus Is Placed In the Tomb

Leader: Saving and forgiving Lord, we love You, we need You, and we trust You.

All: Give us the strength to follow Your way of living and loving.

MEDITATION: *Jesus is laid to rest by Joseph of Arimathea, Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and a few other followers. As His body is anointed, Mary Magdalene remembers Jesus' eyes penetrating her heart. Tears stream down her face along with the others there as they, too, remember Jesus' love. They wrap the body in clean linens and lay it in a new tomb. The stone is rolled over the entrance and now it surely is the end. While those Jesus lived with, laughed with, and cried with are in their heightened sorrow believing it is over, Jesus is conquering sin and death.*

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE: *Jesus has offered the greatest gift: Himself. He has shown the greatest love. As surely as morning comes after a dark night, or spring comes after winter, as surely as new life can emerge from a pandemic, Jesus will be alive again, showing us that death is not the end of life.*

All: Jesus, help me to live a life of love. Love for You, my God, as well as all humanity. Help me to give the greatest gift, myself, to You and to them, in love.

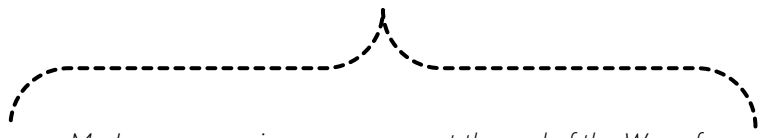
Were You There

1. Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you
2. Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? Were you
3. Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? Were you

1. there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Oh!
2. there when they nailed him to the tree? Oh!
3. there when they laid him in the tomb? Oh!

1-3. Some - times it caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.

1. Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord?
2. Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
3. Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?



My Jesus, my savior, we are now at the end of the Way of the Cross, and your ultimate triumph.

You showed in your great passion, true grace, love and mercy in the face of cruelty and violence.

*Help me to embrace and trust my Lord's will as you did.
Let me be the face of your peace for others as you taught.
Help me to become fully alive in faith every day in the true Spirit of our God.*

You, Jesus, are truly my model of undying love.

Because of your painful passion, sorrowful death and ultimate resurrection, you have recreated the world to be one with our God.

*In my faith, I pray, remake me to now carry on your love for the unloved, your mercy to those who hurt me, your compassion to those who are without necessity.
Help me to know that I am enough for you, so that I will have the courage to become who you have created and saved me to be in this life.*

Help me to begin to fulfill your plan for the Kingdom of God here today.

Allow me to be your witness until this earthly life is finished, when I am completely with you again.

Let me always show less of me, and more of you.

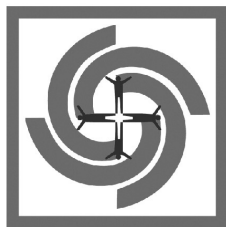
Praise be always for the greater honor and glory of God.

Amen.

— by Deb Schnettler, campus minister at Cathedral High School, St. Cloud, MN







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