

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

S1 The First Station



Preparatory Prayer

ALL: My Lord, Jesus Christ, / You have made this journey to die for me with unspeakable love; / and I have so many times ungratefully abandoned You. But now I love You with all my heart; / and, because I love You, I am sincerely sorry for ever having offended You. / Pardon me, my God, and permit me to accompany You on this journey. / You go to die for love of me; / I want, my beloved Redeemer, to die for love of You. / My Jesus, I will live and die always united to You.

At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful Mother weeping
Close to Jesus to the last

The First Station: Jesus is condemned to death by Pontius Pilate
V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)
R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

V: Consider how Jesus Christ, after being scourged and crowned with thorns, was unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the cross. (Kneel)

R: My adorable Jesus, / it was not Pilate; / no, it was my sins that condemned You to die. / I beseech You, by the merits of this sorrowful journey, / to assist my soul on its journey to eternity. / I love You, beloved Jesus; / I love You more than I love myself. / With all my heart I repent of ever having offended You. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.) Through her heart, His sorrow sharing
All His bitter anguish bearing
Now at length the sword has passed

S2 The Second Station



The Second Station: Jesus takes up His Cross

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)
R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

V: Consider Jesus as He walked this road with the cross on His shoulders, thinking of us, and offering to His Father in our behalf, the death He was about to suffer. (Kneel)

R: My most beloved Jesus, / I embrace all the sufferings You have destined for me until death. / I beg You, by all You suffered in carrying Your cross, / to help me carry mine with Your perfect peace and resignation. / I love You, Jesus, my love; / I repent of ever having offended You. / Never let me separate myself from You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.) O, how sad and sore depressed
Was that Mother highly blessed. Of the sole Begotten One

S3 The Third Station



The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

V: Consider the first fall of Jesus. Loss of blood from the scourging and crowing with thorns had so weakened Him that He could hardly walk; and yet He had to carry that great load upon His shoulders. As the soldiers struck Him cruelly, He fell several times under the heavy cross. (Kneel)

R: My beloved Jesus, / it was not the weight of the cross / but the weight of my sins which made You suffer so much. / By the merits of this first fall, / save me from falling into mortal sin. / I love You, O my Jesus, with all my heart; / I am sorry that I have offended You. / May I never offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.) Christ above in torment hangs
She beneath beholds the pangs Of her dying, glorious Son

S4 The Fourth Station



The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

V: Consider how the Son met his Mother on His way to Calvary. Jesus and Mary gazed at each other and their looks became as so many arrows to wound those hearts which loved each other so tenderly (Kneel)

R: My most loving Jesus, / by the pain You suffered in this meeting grant me the grace of being truly devoted to Your most holy Mother. / And You, my Queen, who was overwhelmed with sorrow, / obtain for me by Your prayers / a tender and a lasting remembrance of the passion of Your divine Son. / I love You, Jesus, my Love, above all things. / I repent of ever having offended You. / Never allow me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.) Is there one who would not weep,
whelmed in miseries so deep Christ's dear Mother to behold.

S5 The Fifth Station



The Fifth Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry the Cross
V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)
R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

V: Consider how weak and weary Jesus was. At each step He was at the point of expiring. Fearing that He would die on the way when they wished Him to die the infamous death of the cross, they forced Simon of Cyrene to help carry the cross after Our Lord. (Kneel)

R: My beloved Jesus / I will not refuse the cross as Simon did: / I accept it and embrace it. / I accept in particular the death that is destined for me / with all the pains that may accompany it. / I unite it to Your death / and I offer it to You. / You have died for love of me; / I will die for love of You and to please You. / Help me by Your grace. / I love You, Jesus, my Love; / I repent of ever having offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.) Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain In that Mother's pain untold?

S6 The Sixth Station



The Sixth Station: Veronica Offers Her Veil to Jesus
V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)
R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

V: Consider the compassion of the holy woman, Veronica. Seeing Jesus in such distress, His face bathed in sweat and blood, she presented Him with her veil. Jesus wiped His face, and left upon the cloth the image of his sacred countenance. (Kneel)

R: My beloved Jesus, / Your face was beautiful before You began this journey; / but, now, it no longer appears beautiful / and is disfigured with wounds and blood. / Alas, my soul also was once beautiful / when it received Your grace in Baptism; / but I have since disfigured it with my sins. / You alone, my Redeemer, can restore it to its former beauty. / Do this by the merits of Your passion; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.) Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled
She beheld her tender Child. All with bloody scourges rent.

S7 The Seventh Station



The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

V: Consider how the second fall of Jesus under His cross renews the pain in all the wounds of the head and members of our afflicted Lord. (Kneel)

R: My most gentle Jesus, / how many times You have forgiven me; / and how many times I have fallen again and begun again to offend You! / By the merits of this second fall, / give me the grace to persevere in Your love until death. / Grant, that in all my temptations, I may always have recourse to You. / I love You, Jesus, my Love with all my heart; / I am sorry that I have offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.)

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

S8 The Eighth Station



The Eighth Station: Jesus Speaks to the Women

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

V: Consider how the women wept with compassion seeing Jesus so distressed and dripping with blood as he walked along. Jesus said to them, "Weep not so much for me, but rather for Your children." (Kneel)

R: My Jesus, laden with sorrows, / I weep for the sins which I have committed against You / because of the punishment I deserve for them; / and, still more, because of the displeasure they have caused You / who have loved me with an infinite love. / It is Your love, more than the fear of hell, / which makes me weep for my sins. / My Jesus, I love You more than myself; / I am sorry that I have offended You. / Never allow me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.)

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

S9 The Ninth Station



The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

V: Consider how Jesus Christ fell for the third time. He was extremely weak and the cruelty of His executioners was excessive; they tried to hasten His steps though He hardly had strength to move. (Kneel)

R: My outraged Jesus, / by the weakness You suffered in going to Calvary, / give me enough strength to overcome all human respect / and all my evil passions which have led me to despise Your friendship. / I love You, Jesus my Love, with all my heart; / I am sorry for ever having offended You. / Never permit me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.)

Make me feel as You have felt. Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ, my Lord.

S10 The Tenth Station



The Tenth Station: Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

V: Consider how Jesus was violently stripped of His clothes by His executioners. The inner garments adhered to his lacerated flesh and the soldiers tore them off so roughly that the skin came with them. Have pity for your Savior so cruelly treated and tell Him: (Kneel)

R: My innocent Jesus, / by the torment You suffered in being stripped of Your garments, / help me to strip myself of all attachment for the things of earth / that I may place all my love in You who are so worthy of my love. / I love You, O Jesus, with all my heart; / I am sorry for ever having offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.)

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

S11 The Eleventh Station



The Eleventh Station: Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

V: Consider Jesus, thrown down upon the cross, He stretched out His arms and offered to His eternal Father the sacrifice of His life for our salvation. They nailed His hands and feet, and then, raising the cross, left Him to die in anguish. (Kneel)

R: My despised Jesus, / nail my heart to the cross / that it may always remain there to love You and never leave You again. / I love You more than myself; / I am sorry for ever having offended You. / Never permit me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.)

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

S12 The Twelfth Station



The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies Upon the Cross

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

V: Consider how Your Jesus, after three hours of agony on the cross, is finally overwhelmed with suffering and, abandoning Himself to the weight of His body, bows His head and dies. (Kneel)

R: My dying Jesus, / I devoutly kiss the cross on which You would die for love of me. / I deserve, because of my sins, to die a terrible death; / but Your death is my hope. / By the merits of Your death, / give me the grace to die embracing Your feet and burning with love of You. / I yield my soul into Your hands. / I love You with my whole heart. / I am sorry that I have offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.)

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

S13 The Thirteenth Station



The Thirteenth Station: Jesus Is Taken Down from the Cross

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

V: Consider how, after Our Lord had died, He was taken down from the cross by two of His disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, and placed in the arms of His afflicted Mother. She received Him with unutterable tenderness and pressed Him close to her bosom. (Kneel)

R: O Mother of Sorrows, / for the love of Your Son, / accept me as Your servant and pray to Him for me, / And You, my Redeemer, since you have died for me, / allow me to love You, / for I desire only You and nothing more. / I love You, Jesus my Love, / and I am sorry that I have offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.)

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

S14 The Fourteenth Station



The Fourteenth Station: Jesus Is Placed in the Sepulcher

V: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (Genuflect)

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

(Rise)

V: Consider how the disciples carried the body of Jesus to its burial, while His holy Mother went with them and arranged it in the sepulcher with her own hands. They then closed the tomb and all departed. (Kneel)

R: Oh, my buried Jesus, / I kiss the stone that closes You in. / But You gloriously did rise again on the third day. / I beg You by Your resurrection that I may be raised gloriously on the last day, / to be united with You in heaven, to praise You and love You forever. / I love You, Jesus, and I repent of ever having offended You. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will. (Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.)

Virgin of all virgins blest! Listen to my fond request: Let me share your grief divine.

Prayer to Jesus Christ Crucified

My good and dear Jesus, I kneel before You, asking You most earnestly to engrave upon my heart a deep and lively faith, hope, and charity, with true repentance for my sins, and a firm resolve to make amends. As I reflect upon Your five wounds, and dwell upon them with deep compassion and grief, I recall, good Jesus, the words the Prophet David spoke long ago concerning Yourself:

"They pierced My hands and My feet; they have numbered all My bones."

Information on the Stations of the Cross or the Way of the Cross

1. Jesus is condemned to Death
2. Jesus is made to carry His Cross
3. Jesus falls the First Time
4. Jesus meets His Sorrowful Mother
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry His Cross
6. Veronica wipes the Face of Jesus
7. Jesus falls the Second Time
8. The Women of Jerusalem weep over Jesus
9. Jesus falls the Third Time
10. Jesus is stripped of His Garments
11. Jesus is nailed to the Cross
12. Jesus is raised upon the Cross and Dies
13. Jesus is taken down from the Cross and placed in the Arms of His Mother
14. Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre

The object of the Stations is to help the faithful to make in spirit, as it were, a pilgrimage to the chief scenes of Christ's sufferings and death, and this has become one of the most popular of Catholic devotions. It is carried out by passing from Station to Station with certain prayers at each and devout meditation on the various incidents in turn. It is very usual, when the devotion is performed publicly, to sing a stanza of the "Stabat Mater" while passing from one Station to the next.

Inasmuch as the Way of the Cross, made in this way, constitutes a miniature pilgrimage to the holy places at Jerusalem, the origin of the devotion may be traced to the Holy Land. The Via Dolorosa at Jerusalem (though not called by that name before the sixteenth century) was reverently marked out from the earliest times and has been the goal of pious pilgrims ever since the days of Constantine. Tradition asserts that the Blessed Virgin used to visit daily the scenes of the Passion of Christ, and St. Jerome speaks of the crowds of pilgrims from all countries that used to visit the holy places in his day.

It cannot be said with any certainty when indulgences for visiting the holy places began to be granted, but most probably they may be due to the Franciscans, to whom in 1342 the guardianship of the holy places was entrusted. A desire to reproduce the holy places in other lands, in order to satisfy the devotion of those who were hindered from making the actual pilgrimage, seems to have manifested itself at quite an early date.

Realizing that comparatively few persons were able to gain these by means of a personal pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Innocent XI, in 1686, granted to the Franciscans, in answer to their petition, the right to erect the Stations in all their churches and declared that all the indulgences that had ever been given for devoutly visiting the actual scenes of Christ's Passion could thenceforth be gained by Franciscans and all others affiliated with their order if they made the Way of the Cross in their own churches in the accustomed manner. Innocent XII confirmed the privilege in 1694 and Benedict XIII in 1726 extended it to all the faithful. In 1731, Clement XII still further extended it by permitting the indulgenced Stations to all churches, provided that they were erected by a Franciscan father with the sanction of the ordinary. At the same time, he definitely fixed the number of Stations at fourteen. Benedict XIV in 1742 exhorted all priests to enrich their churches with so great a treasure, and there are few churches now without the Stations.

There is some uncertainty as to what are the precise indulgences belonging to the Stations. It is agreed that all that have ever been granted to the faithful for visiting the holy places in person can now be gained by making the Via Crucis in any church where the Stations have been erected in due form.

In 1773, Clement XIV attached the same indulgence, under certain conditions, to crucifixes duly blessed for the purpose, for the use of the sick, those at sea or in prison, and others lawfully hindered from making the Stations in a church. The conditions are that, whilst holding the crucifix in their hands, they must say the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" fourteen times, then the "Our Father", "Hail Mary", and "Glory Be" five times, and the same prayers once each for the pope's intentions.

In conclusion, it may be safely asserted that there is no devotion more richly endowed with indulgences than the Way of the Cross and none which enables us more literally to obey Christ's injunction to take up our cross and follow Him. A perusal of the prayers usually given for this devotion in any manual shows what abundant spiritual graces, even apart from the indulgences, may be obtained through the devotion. The fact that the Stations may be made either publicly or privately in any church renders the devotion suitable for all.

Excerpted from the Catholic Encyclopedia

Carmelite Monastery --<http://www.sistersofcarmel.com/stations-of-the-cross-way-of-the-cross-information.php>--