



The Way of the Cross

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The Way of the Cross

Tradition tells us that the Blessed Mother, after the Ascension of her Divine Son, used to visit the spots made sacred by the bleeding feet of Jesus.

The early Christians imitated the Blessed Mother in venerating those sacred spots. These Pilgrimages ceased when the Holy Land fell into the hands of the infidel Turks. Then it was that several churches erected Stations as a substitute for these Pilgrimages, and the same indulgences were granted as had previously been given for a journey to Jerusalem.

The Franciscan Order, whose members have charge of the Holy Places, began the devotion as we now know it. In the seventeenth century Pope Innocent XI granted an indulgence to all Franciscans, and to those affiliated with the Franciscan Order, for making the Stations. In 1726 Pope Benedict XIII extended these indulgences to all the Faithful Catholic People. In 1731 Pope Clement XII gave permission for the Stations to be erected in any church, and allowed all who made them to gain the indulgences.

INDULGENCE: Plenary indulgence if Holy Communion is received on same day or if Holy Communion is received within a month after making Stations 10 times.

O JESUS, our adorable Saviour, behold us prostrate at Thy feet, imploring Thy mercy for ourselves, and for the souls of all the faithful departed. Vouchsafe to apply to us the infinite merits of Thy passion, on which we are now about to meditate. Grant that while we trace this path of sighs and tears, our hearts may be so touched to embrace with joy all the crosses, sufferings, and humiliations of this our life and pilgrimage.

V. Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord.

R. And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.

V. O God, come to my assistance.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be, etc. R. As it was, etc.

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I.
STATION

Jesus is
Condemned
to Death



- V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

Leaving the house of Caiphaz, where He had been blasphemed, and the house of Herod, where He had been mocked, Jesus is dragged before Pilate, His back torn with scourges, His head crowned with thorns; and He, who on the last day will judge the living and the dead, is Himself condemned to a disgraceful death.

IT WAS for us that Thou didst suffer, O blessed Jesus; it was for our sins Thou wast condemned to die. Oh, grant that we may detest them from the bottom of our hearts, and by this repentance obtain Thy mercy and pardon.

At the Cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.

II.
STATION

Jesus Bears
His Cross



V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

*A heavy cross is laid upon the bruised shoulders
of Jesus. He receives it with meekness, nay, with a
secret joy, for it is the instrument with which He is
to redeem the world.*

O JESUS! grant us, by virtue of
Thy cross, to embrace with meekness and
cheerful submission the difficulties of our
state, and to be ever ready to take up our
cross and follow Thee.

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

III.
STATION
Jesus Falls
the First Time



- V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

Bowed down under the weight of the cross, Jesus slowly sets forth on the way to Calvary, amidst the mockeries and insults of the crowd. His agony in the garden has exhausted His body; He is sore with blows and wounds; His strength fails Him; He falls to the ground under the cross.

O JESUS! who for our sins didst bear the heavy burden of the cross, and fell under its weight, may the thoughts of Thy sufferings make us watchful over ourselves, and save us from any grievous fall into sin.

O that blessed one, grief laden,
Blessed Mother, Blessed Maiden,
Mother of the All blest one.

IV.
STATION

Jesus Meets
His Mother



- V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

Still burdened with His cross, and wounded yet more by His fall, Jesus proceeds on His way. He is met by His Mother. What a meeting must that have been! What a sword of anguish must have pierced that Mother's bosom! What must have been the compassion of that Son for His holy Mother!

O JESUS! by the compassion which Thou didst feel for Thy Mother, have compassion on us, and give us a share in her intercession. O Mary, most afflicted Mother! intercede for us that, through the sufferings of Thy Son, we may be delivered from the wrath to come.

**How she stood in desolation,
Upward gazing on the passion
Of that deathless, dying Son.**

V.
STATION

Jesus is
Relieved by
Simon



- V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

As the strength of Jesus fails, and He is unable to proceed, the executioners seize and compel Simon of Cyrene to carry His cross. The virtue of that cross changed his heart, and from a compulsory task it became a privilege and a joy.

O LORD JESUS! may it be our privilege also to bear Thy cross; may we glory in nothing else; by it may the world be crucified unto us, and we unto the world; may we never shrink from sufferings, but rather rejoice if we may be counted worthy to suffer for Thy name's sake.

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

VI.
STATION

Jesus Meets
Veronica



- V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

As Jesus proceeds on the way, covered with the sweat of death, a woman, moved with compassion, makes her way through the crowd, and wipes His face with a handkerchief. As a reward of her piety, the impression of His sacred countenance is miraculously imprinted upon the handkerchief.

O JESUS! may the contemplation of Thy sufferings move us with the deepest compassion, make us to hate our sins, and kindle in our hearts more fervent love for Thee. May Thy image be graven on our minds, until we are transformed into Thy likeness.

Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?

VII.
STATION

Jesus Falls
the Second
Time



V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

*The pain of His wounds and the loss of blood
increasing at every step of His way, again His
strength fails Him, and Jesus falls to the ground a
second time.*

O JESUS! falling again under the
burden of our sins, and of Thy sufferings
for our sins, how often have we grieved Thee
by our repeated falls into sin! Oh, may we
rather die than ever offend Thee again!

**Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with blood-stained scourges rent;**

VIII. STATION

Jesus Meets The Women of Jerusalem



V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

At the sight of the sufferings of Jesus some holy women in the crowd were so touched with sympathy that they openly bewailed and lamented Him. Jesus, knowing the things that were to come to pass upon Jerusalem because of their rejection of Him, turned to them and said: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

O LORD JESUS! we mourn, and will mourn, both for Thee and for ourselves; for Thy sufferings and for our sins which caused them. Oh teach us so to mourn, that we may be comforted, and escape those dreadful judgments prepared for all who reject or neglect Thee in this life.

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

IX. STATION

Jesus Falls
the Third
Time



- V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

Jesus had now arrived almost at the summit of Calvary; but before He reached the spot where He was to be crucified, His strength again fails Him, and He falls the third time, to be again dragged up and goaded onward by the brutal soldiers.

O LORD JESUS! we entreat Thee, by the merits of this Thy third most painful fall, to pardon our frequent relapses and our long continuance in sin; and may the thought of these Thy sufferings make us to hate our sins more and more.

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

X.
STATION

Jesus is
Stripped of
His Garments



V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

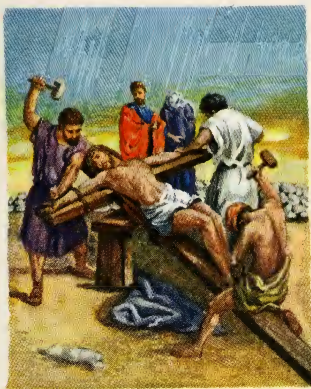
Arrived at last at the place of sacrifice, they prepare to crucify Him. His garments are torn from His bleeding body and He, the Holy of Holies, stands exposed to the vulgar gaze of the rude and scoffing multitude.

O LORD JESUS, Thou didst endure this shame for our most shameful deeds. Strip us, we beseech Thee, of all false shame, conceit, and pride, and make us humble ourselves voluntarily in this life, that we may escape everlasting ignominy in the world to come.

Make me feel as Thou has felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ the Lord.

**XI.
STATION**

**Jesus is
Nailed to
the Cross**



V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

The cross is laid upon the ground, and Jesus is stretched upon His bed of death. At one and the same time He offers His bruised limbs to His heavenly Father on behalf of sinful man, and to His fierce executioners to be nailed by them to the disgraceful wood. The blows are struck! The blood gushes forth!

O JESUS, nailed to the cross, fasten our hearts there also, that they may be united to Thee until death shall strike us with its fatal blow, and with our last breath we shall have yielded up our souls to Thee.

**Those five wounds of Jesus smitten,
Mother in my heart be written,
Deep as in thine own they be.**

XII. STATION

Jesus Dies Upon The Cross



- V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

For three hours Jesus hung upon the cross; His blood has run in streams down His body, and bedewed the ground; and in the midst of excruciating sufferings He has pardoned His murderers, promised the bliss of paradise to the good thief, and committed His blessed Mother and beloved disciple to each other's care. All is now consummated; and meekly bowing down His head, He gives up His Spirit.

O JESUS! we devoutly embrace that honoured cross where Thou didst love us even unto death. In that death we place all our confidence. Henceforth let us live only for Thee; and in dying for Thee, let us die loving Thee, and in Thy sacred arms.

**Thou my Saviour's Cross that bearest,
Thou thy Son's rebuke that sharest
Let me share them both with thee!**

XIII. STATION

Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross



V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

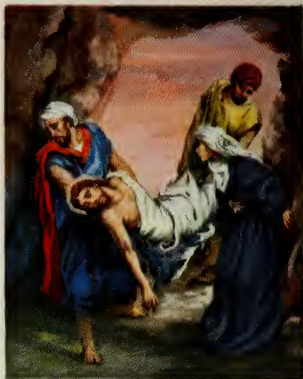
The multitude have left the heights of Calvary, and none remain save the beloved disciple and the holy women, who, at the foot of the cross, are striving to stem the grief of Christ's inconsolable Mother. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take down the body of her Divine Son from the cross and deposit it in her arms.

O THOU, whose grief was boundless as an ocean that hath no limits, Mary Mother of God, give us a share in thy most holy sorrow in the sufferings of thy Son, and have compassion on our infirmities. Accept us as thy children with the beloved disciple. Show thyself a mother unto us; and may He, through thee, receive our prayer, who for us vouchsafed to be thy Son.

*In the passion of my Maker
By my sinful soul partaker,
Weep till death, and weep with thee.*

XIV.
STATION

Jesus is Laid
in the
Tomb



- V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee.
R. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.

The body of her dearly beloved Son is taken from His Mother, and laid by the disciples in the tomb. The tomb is closed, and there the lifeless body remains until the hour of its glorious resurrection.

WE, TOO, O God, will descend into the grave whenever it shall please Thee, as it shall please Thee, and wheresoever it shall please Thee. Let Thy just decrees be fulfilled; let our sinful bodies return to their parent dust, but do Thou, in Thy great mercy, receive our immortal souls, and when our bodies have risen again, place them likewise in Thy kingdom that we may love and bless Thee for ever and ever. Amen.

Mine with Thee be that sad station
There to watch the great Salvation,
Wrought upon th' atoning tree.