



Stations of the Cross

First Station – Jesus is condemned to Death.

**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

They lied to convict Jesus. He was without sin and had not committed a crime.

He only healed the bodies and souls of the people. They had seen Him touch and cure the sick. They had heard Him speak with power. They had experienced His peace – something so new, so amazing, so liberating... And yet – after all this - they had no problem making up incriminating stories about Jesus in front of Pilate's court.

They sentenced him to the worst death possible. To be tortured and nailed to a cross. A death reserved for the vilest of criminals.

Pontius Pilate delivered Jesus to the hands of his enemies in order to remain a friend to the Emperor, Cesar.

Jesus did not say a word in his defense, but rather accepted this most humiliating, sorrowful and painful punishments, knowing it would end in death. He did this for us.

Meditations:

- Have we ever been accused or treated so poorly without any truth?
- How did we respond?
- Did we accept this, or angrily deny it?
- Could we pray for the person or people who accused us so falsely?

Prayer:

Jesus, you know the pain of being falsely accused by those who owe you gratitude. Please, help me through the pain. I decide not to focus on the unjust world. I decide to take the ungrateful and lying person and place him or her in your arms. I bless this brother / sister of mine. I realize that my calling is to bring peace and healing through prayer.



Stations of the Cross

Second Station – Jesus takes up his cross.

**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

Jesus has been beaten by the guards who treated him less than human. His back was bloodied and flesh was missing from the whip. His head was punctured with thorns from the crown they jokingly made to humiliate him.

Jesus stretched out his arms, he lovingly embraced his cross. This cross made of harsh wood and immense weight. He kissed it and placed it on his bruised and bloodied back and shoulders.

Meditation:

- Do we have a cross in our life which is something we have to carry? (a friend or family member who causes us pain)
- Do we willingly embrace this cross we have to carry?
- Do we refuse to carry this cross?
- Can we take the entire weight on our shoulders?
- Would we run away if it was too much to carry?

Prayer:

Jesus, you know the pain of a cross being heaved onto your shoulders. Please, help me through the pain. I decide not to focus on fighting against the surprise. I decide to take what was placed on me and pass it onto your shoulders.



Stations of the Cross

Third Station – Jesus falls for the First time.

**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

Imagine falling on stones when you have no hands to stop your fall. Your hands are tied with rough rope to the timbers on the cross. Imagine the weight of your cross also adding to the pain as it smashes down on top of your back, your head crowned with thorns and your hands.

Imagine all the while being helpless, while the soldiers continued to kick him, spit on him and whip him. How much suffering did he endure during this time and yet Jesus got up and continued on knowing the end was death, but death for our sins which also weighed him down.

Meditation:

- How do we respond to our failings and suffering?
- Do we carry on, or give up?
- Do we allow ourselves to be angry because of our weakness?
- Can you offer yourself compassion (as Jesus does), because of your weakness?

Prayer:

Jesus, you know the pain of falling unprotected onto a stony road. Please, help me through the pain. I decide not to be my enemy. I decide not to hate myself for being a loser. I decide to look at myself through your eyes. Please, please, speak to me. Teach me compassion with myself. Teach me to be my own good friend.

Stations of the Cross

Fourth Station – Jesus meets his sorrowful Mother.



**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

How painful was it for Sorrowful Mary to see her son? He was beaten like a dog, treated like a criminal. Bloodied, in pain and yet carrying a tremendous wooden cross on his back.

What would she have done to stop his suffering? Would she have taken his place in death? Would she have wanted to be buried along with her son?

Meditation:

- Would we take the pain and suffering of those around us?
- Can you embrace those around you who are suffering and offer them your love?
- Would our family or friends love us so much that they would help us with our suffering?
- Will you accept the love of those that want to help us with our suffering?

Prayer:

Jesus, I am pained to see my loved ones in pain because of my suffering. Thank you for setting them on my side so that I have someone to cry with. Please, spare them the pain if I may ask.



Stations of the Cross

Fifth Station – Simone of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross.

**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

Simon was on his way home for a midday meal. He looked forward to being out of the hot sun and to see his wife. He was about to pass a lowly criminal, on their way to crucifixion and death... it was Jesus.

He was forced to assist Jesus in carrying the cross and took this on. He might have run away, or complained because he knew he was helping a criminal. Simon was allowed to carry this cross for Jesus but may not have wanted to do so.

Meditation:

- Who helps us carry our cross in life?
- Would we run away from the people who need help in our lives?
- Do we feel angry when someone needs our help?
- Do we feel we are too important to stop and help?
- Would we also help Jesus carry his cross?
- Do we demonstrate our love of Jesus every day in our life?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for the help of the people around me in my suffering. Please, touch the hearts of all those who resent the fact that my suffering affects them as well. Please, bless them. Please, give me the grace of not resenting them and of not resenting myself.



Stations of the Cross

Sixth Station – Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

Jesus to this point had been beaten and fallen down onto the street. Imagine the dirt and filth that laid there in a time where animals roamed freely. Where people hurled their waste into the streets. Jesus could barely see because of the stinging of sweat and blood and dirt in his eyes. He could barely breath because of the dirt covering his nose.

Veronica, a tiny woman was compelled by devotion and compassion to wipe the bloodied, battered and disfigured face of Jesus. She pushed her way through a crowd of spectators and the strong, muscular Roman guards. It was just a brief touch yet it meant an eternity of relief to Jesus. Veronica showed him this tiny compassion, which meant so much, while Jesus continued to be yelled at and beaten.

Meditation:

- Do we accept compassion of those around us?
- Can we show compassion to those around us?
- Does our compassion need to be a grand gesture?
- Would we want to wipe the dirt, blood and sweat from Jesus face?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for all the people who reached out to me with their little gestures of affection and compassion. Please, give me the wisdom and the simplicity to be able to notice their kindness and savor it.

Stations of the Cross

Seventh Station – Jesus falls the second time.



**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

Jesus continues to suffer under the weight of his cross and falls again. He is hurt even more by the stones on the path. He again has his face bloodied and filled with dirt. Yet the executioner and the Roman guards continue to whip him, kick him and prod him to move forward.

Jesus continues falling under the weight of his cross, the weight of our sins during the time of his crucifixion. He also feels that same weight as we continue to repeat our sins today.

Meditation:

- Do you make the same mistakes and fall repeatedly?
- Do you pray to Jesus to forgive your mistakes?
- Can you wipe the dirt off your face and gather the energy to stop sinning?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for lying alongside me when I fall. Please, give me strength so that I may get up from my fall – not the first one and not the last one.



Stations of the Cross

Eighth Station – The women of Jerusalem weep over Jesus.

**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

Jesus continues carrying this cross in anguish. Battered and broken he stops at a group of devoted women who are weeping over his suffering. He stops to offer compassion to them even though the guards continue to beat him and prod him to move. He stops even though he barely has any energy left to carry his cross.

Jesus offers words of compassion by telling them not to weep for him as he is innocent. He also tells them that their tears of pain in what the people are doing for him is an act of contrition and how please God is with them.

Meditation:

- In our painful moments, do we lash out at those who try to help?
- Do we take time (like Jesus) to acknowledge and accept compassion from others?
- Can you help others while in pain yourself?
- Would we have the strength of Jesus when in the same situation?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for your suffering – which most of the time I do not care about. Thank you for suffering and – still – caring about me. Please, give me the peace to embrace my suffering as a non-event to the rest of the world. Please, give me the wisdom to know when I should respond to the tears of others while I am crying myself. Please, give me enough kindness so that I could respond.

Stations of the Cross

Ninth Station – Jesus falls the third time.



**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

Jesus was at the foot of Calvary, he could already see Skull Hill (Golgotha) the place of his crucifixion. Imagine how exhausted he was, how much pain he was in. The Roman guards continue to beat him mercilessly and it gets worse every time he falls.

Yet Jesus continued on, knowing that his pain, his torture and ultimately his death would be for us, for the forgiveness of our sins. If Jesus had not endured the torture and pain, we would all be condemned.

Meditation:

- Will we continue to walk forward in life, when it seems we just keep falling and failing?
- Would we get up and move on for our sake, for our family, for Jesus?
- If we knew only pain was ahead for us, could we have the strength to continue for our family's sake, for God's sake?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for being with me when I need to get up and bring myself closer to even more suffering. Please, give me strength. For our Father's sake. For all my loved ones' sake.



Stations of the Cross

Tenth Station – Jesus is stripped of his garments.

**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

In front of everyone, to humiliate him Jesus had all of his clothes removed. He stood in front of multitudes of spectators, having his clothes removed. As they removed the strips of clothing left over it also pulled his wounds apart.

Everyone stood and watched the event, as he was humiliated and stripped of every last thing he had. There were those in the crowds who came only because of the entertainment. Some laughed or shouted at him as they removed his clothes.

Meditation:

- Could we stand the pain, standing in front of others completely naked?
- Would we want our community to see us so completely humiliated?
- Do we have secrets in our lives, which if we were exposed would make us embarrassed?
- What would we do if everything was taken from us?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for being with me when I am standing naked in front of the salivating crowd. Please, give me peace and composure so that I can hold on to my dignity when everything else has been ripped away from me.



Stations of the Cross

Eleventh Station – Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

**Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
Church: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.**

Jesus was violently thrown on top of the cross. They nailed his hands and feet to that very wood he had just struggled to carry. Yet Jesus said nothing, he remained silent in his suffering. He did this for his Holy Father and for us.

Jesus did not complain while having to carry this cross through the streets, he didn't cry out when he fell face first onto the stone walkway. Even now as the ultimate pain was inflicted on him, he failed to cry out. He accepted it willingly, readily and without complaint.

Meditation:

- Are we affected by past pain?
- Do we lose our will to go on when the pain become more hurtful?
- Can we keep our faith when it seems the pain only gets worse?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for being with me at the moment when I realize that pain has an even deeper level than I could imagine. Please, be with me when I need your peace and healing the most.

Stations of the Cross

Twelfth Station – Jesus is raised upon the Cross and dies.



Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You

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

Jesus dies for us on the cross. He cries out for the only time, “God, my God why have you forsaken me?” He was alone on the cross and must have felt alone in the world after such cruel and violent treatment. Yet he took it on knowing it would come to this end.

More so than the feeling of being alone on this world, imagine the feeling of being separated from God. Needing God, but receiving no response when you call out to him. We may be surrounded by others and yet still suffer alone.

Meditation:

- Have you ever felt alone in life?
- How would it feel if you thought God was not there?
- What is gained by suffering alone?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for choosing to share with me the pain of not feeling God. Thank you for being with me when I cannot feel you on my side. Thank you for being with me when I doubt you exist. Thank you for loving me when I curse you in my pain.

Stations of the Cross

Thirteenth Station – Jesus is taken down from the Cross and placed in the arms of his Mother.



Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You

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

Jesus did not come down from the cross but remained there until death. When he was taken down, he was placed in his mothers' arms. His body was broken, bruised, stabbed, bloodied and cold.

He was received and cared for, after death, by his mother, his friends and people from his community. They washed him, cared for his body and wrapped him. Imagine how many tears were shed as they had to run their hands over all of the wounds he had suffered. Imagine how sad those people were as they cared for his body.

Mediation:

- Have we ever had pain in our life because of someone else's suffering?
- Did that pain stop us from what needed to be done, like helping them?
- Should we allow that pain to affect us so much that we can not move forward?

Prayer:

Jesus, please give me healing when I witness someone else's suffering. Please, help me not let it accumulate in me. Please, be my way to peace and joy in a world of endless suffering pouring over me in my daily life.

Stations of the Cross

Fourteenth Station – Jesus is laid in the tomb (Sepulchre).



Priest: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You

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

Jesus was laid in a tomb, not even his own because he had none for himself. He was beaten, crucified and had not a thing to his name, not even a place to lay his body.

They rolled a giant stone to close the tomb and many may have felt despair as he was now gone. This man who healed and preached also succumbed to death, even if willingly. It's as if they closed the chapter on hope, peace and truth...

Meditation:

- Do we have the courage to accept the reality which may come with pain in our life?
- Would we have the strength to roll a giant stone and close up our dreams, our hopes?
- Do we believe in ourselves, or do we put ourselves in the tomb and believe that is all?
- Do we bury our dreams?

Prayer:

Jesus, please be with me when I am standing at the tomb of a dream of mine. Please, teach me how to bury dreams without burying hope and faith along with them.

Stations of the Cross

Fifteen – Resurrection.



They were speechless when they realized the stone was rolled away from the tomb. They were at first mad, confused and worried as Jesus' body was missing. Then they realized he was alive, he was resurrected.

Jesus came to them in a shining and bright white glow of heaven and delivered them peace and happiness in the knowledge that he had died for our sins and was going to be in heaven with God his Father.

Mediation:

- Can you think of a time where you doubted God's great power?
- Have you ever felt you could not accomplish a task?
- Did you ask God for help?
- What miracles have you seen in your life?

Prayer:

Jesus, I am opening my heart to you. I am asking you to enter it – you the one who conquered death. Please lead me from the realm of what humans can accomplish on their own to the kingdom where you accomplish things and we are your instruments. Jesus, I am opening my heart to you. Please enter.

Hosanna! Alleluia! Amen!