



## DEVELOPING & SUPPORTING **SCHOOL &** **PARISH LINKS**

### **EXPLANATION OF THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS TABLEAUX**

Planning: Year 3 and 4 children in groups portray one of the *Stations of the Cross* and freeze frame it in the best way they wish.



The children are then placed around the school grounds but if your church is next to the school, to include the parish community, some of the stations could be in the church grounds. Alternatively, the stations could be done at Church if the church is some distance away. Risk assessments would need to be done.

Each reflection sheet (one for each station) is handed to a group leader who will read it, pausing, so that there are moments of reflection. There is no talking except for the reading at each station.



## Stations of the Cross

### **The first Station: Jesus is condemned to death**

Jesus' first stop on the way of the cross is the Governor's palace. Many Jewish leaders want Jesus out of the way. "Crucify him," they insist. And they influence Pilate the Governor to condemn Jesus to death.

Jesus loves us very deeply and wants to free us to love one another.

When we feel that we can't make a difference help us to keep going.

When we see someone lonely in the playground, help us to keep going. Teach us to share your love.

### **The second station: Jesus carries his cross**

The Roman Soldiers bring a large wooden cross for Jesus to carry. It is very heavy and rough. Though Jesus is tired, sick, and weak, he reaches out and accepts the cross lovingly.

Let us make the sign of the cross together now. Remember the cross which Jesus carried out of love for us.

When we feel scared and afraid, help us to be brave.

Lord, give us the courage to speak out and change our world. So that all of us, have a fair share.

### **Third station: Jesus falls for the first time**

Soon after he begins to carry the cross, Jesus falls. He is very exhausted and the weight of the cross crushes him.

When you have many difficult things to bear, such as worries or fears or sadness, especially when they happen to you all at once, think of Jesus. He falls under the burden of his cross, so you shouldn't be surprised if you fall.

Jesus gets up and begins again. When you are able to get up and go onward, you are like Jesus.

Lord, when we fall help us to rise and walk once more with you.

### **The Fourth Station: Jesus meets with his mother**

On the narrow roadway, Jesus turns the corner and looks ahead to see his mother. She reaches out to touch him. He is thankful that she is there. She doesn't say anything to him, but he knows that she loves him and is proud of him, even though she feels sad and helpless to do anything.

Sometimes we don't want our mothers to see us in trouble, and yet we are comforted when they appear to tell us they still love us.

Please Lord, when we don't want to listen open our ears to hear. When it would be easier to look away, open our eyes to see.

### **The Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus**

The soldiers notice that Jesus is very weak. He is staggering under the load, so they pull a man from the crowd – a stranger - and force him to help Jesus carry his cross. The stranger, whose name is Simon Cyrene, doesn't dare disobey the soldiers, even though he is frightened and embarrassed to be seen helping Jesus. He doesn't know who Jesus is.

What if the soldiers had asked you to help Jesus? Would you want to help him?

Jesus you know what it means to depend on someone and need their help. When my friends need me, help me to share my time with them and be a true friend.

### **The Sixth Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus**

A woman named Veronica steps out from the crowd with a towel. Jesus' hands are holding his cross, so she wipes his face, which is dripping with blood and sweat. Veronica does a simple act of kindness. It is all she can do. She cannot lift the cross or stop the soldiers. She cares in a way she knows. Her act of kindness is one of the nicest things that happens to Jesus on his way.

Sometimes the simplest acts of kindness, like a hug or somebody holding your hand, means very much.

### **The Seventh Station: Jesus falls for the second time**

The soldiers let Simon go his way and Jesus is carrying the cross by himself. The walk to Calvary is only half over, there is still a long way to go. Jesus stumbles, staggers and falls. He is breathing very heavily and has no strength left. Yet he stands up. And because of his strong love, he is able to go forward.

When you are going to a place that you don't like, and it seems difficult to go on, Jesus understands how you feel.

When we find it hard to be strong

Remind us that your love is the strength we need

Then show us how we can offer that hope

And love to others

### **The Eighth Station: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem**

On his way, Jesus meets a group of women from Jerusalem. They are weeping for him because he is suffering so much and because many officials have treated him cruelly.

Jesus tells them to weep for themselves and their children, because cruelty in the world will surely touch them just as it is touching him.

Have there been cruel people in your life who have hurt you?

Have cruel people hurt someone you love? Jesus knows how that feels.

Lord, as we hear stories about children who live in poorer countries, give us the courage to speak out like you, so that together we can work for change.

### **The ninth station: Jesus falls for the third time**

A third time Jesus falls. He has no more strength left. He has lost much blood, the hot sun burns his skin, he has climbed a hill carrying his heavy cross. Again he struggles to stand up because he has chosen to live the way of the cross out of love for us.

No matter how many times we fall or fail, Jesus tells us that we can start over again. Sometimes that's the only way we can show our love – by starting over again.

Lord, walk with us when we lose hope and when we feel very sad.

### **The tenth station: Jesus is stripped of his garments**

Jesus has reached the top of the hill. The soldiers let him drop the cross to the ground. And while Jesus stands there in front of the crowds, the soldiers pull off his clothes leaving him embarrassed and humiliated. He is being treated as a common criminal, as if he were a worthless human being.

When you are made to feel embarrassed and treated as if you were without value, know that Jesus understands because he has experienced the shame.

Lord, when we see someone being treated unfairly, being bullied and picked on, give us the courage to stand up to them. We are your family made of many different colours and cultures. Make us one family united in you.

### **The eleventh station: Jesus is nailed to the cross**

Now the soldiers make Jesus lie down on the cross. They stretch out his arms and fasten them with nails. They also nail his feet so that he is securely fastened to the cross. He cannot escape. Only his great love for us enables Jesus to bear his pain and suffering.

When you are in great pain and can't move, remember how much Jesus loves you and remember that he knows how it feels to be trapped and unable to get free.

Lord, help us to remember that everyone is equal, that we are all made in your image.

### **The twelfth station: Jesus dies on the cross**

The cross is standing and Jesus is hanging on it. Time goes by very slowly, for Jesus is full of pain.

But more important than the pain is his love for us and his willingness to die for us to be free from sin.

Even on the cross he is able to care for his mother and for the people around him.

Even when you are in pain and suffering very much, even when you are dying, you can still love because Jesus will help you.

Lord, show us how to pray for our brothers and sisters that we do not know and will not meet, but who are always loved by you.

### **The thirteenth station: His body is taken down from the cross**

After Jesus dies, a few friends gently take his body down from the cross and put it in the arms of his mother. She held Jesus like this when he was a baby, but his body has no life left in it.

Her heart is filled with sadness and emptiness as she remembers all the wonderful days she spent with him.

When you are sad because you lose a friend or a special person, Jesus' mother understands your loss and your sadness.

Lord, teach us to see you in everybody, to be kind, to be loving, to be strong, to be like you.

### **The fourteenth station: Jesus' body is laid in the tomb**

The final stopping place for Jesus on this dark Friday is a tomb. His friends place his body on the stone slab, wipe off the blood, wash his body clean, and cover it with cloth and nice smelling spices. His friends and mother touch his body for the very last time before they leave.

They are discouraged and feel that all their hopes for Jesus are gone.

If you ever feel you are discouraged and have lost hope, then you know how Jesus' friends must have felt.

Lord, help us to be generous and gentle, kind and loving.

