



In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Stations of the Cross depict the last few hours of Jesus's life.

Almost two thousand years ago, an event took place in Jerusalem that changed the history of our lives. Today, we are here to remember that day: the day on which the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, took up his cross and walked a path of love that led Him to give up his life for us on the Cross.

By doing this, the Lord Jesus shows how much He loves us. He shows us how powerful and strong love is—that it gives us strength to carry heavy crosses and bear big sufferings, that it helps us to be kind and forgiving, even to those who hurt us.

Love is so powerful that it can change hearts.

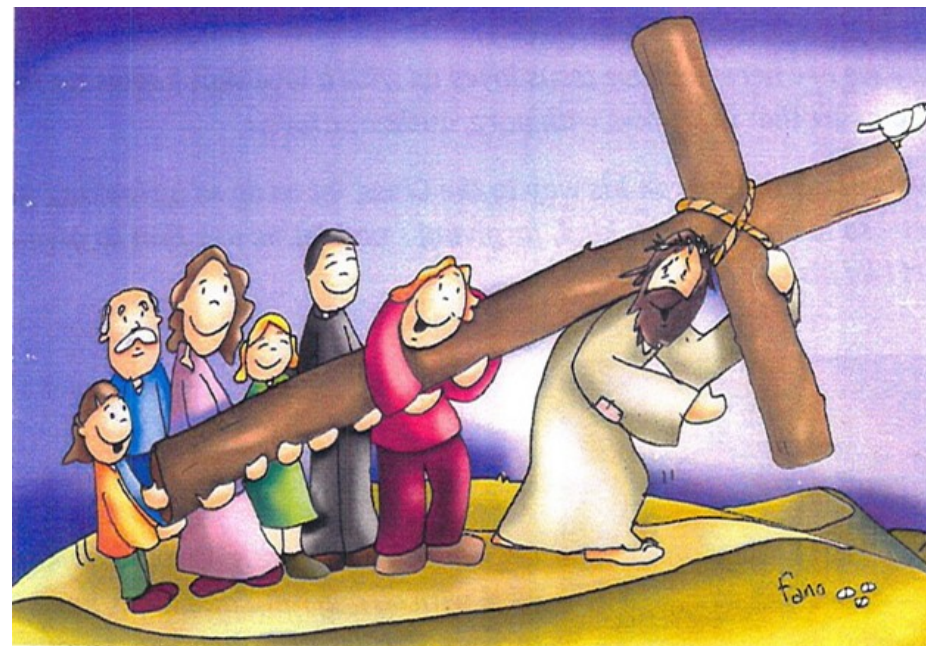
Our Lady requested of Bernadette that people should come to Lourdes to do penance.

*To help us understand our need of penance we meditate
on the Passion and Death of our Blessed Lord.*

Jesus, I wish to take this walk to Calvary with You.

I know that you suffered for love of me. Help me always to love You.

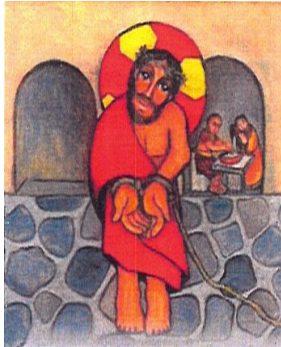
Stations of the Cross



“Stay with us, Lord, on our journey.”

First Station

JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider how Jesus, after having been scourged and crowned with thorns, was unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the Cross.

Pause

Just as Jesus was condemned by Pilate who was under pressure from others, so we too condemn others, often to avoid looking weak in front of friends. We do this to our family and our friends every time we gossip or spread rumours; when we do not give the benefit of the doubt to others or condemn them without hearing their side of the story.

How did you feel when someone condemns you unjustly?

Prayer

Lord, help me to see you in others and to realise when I condemn them I am also condemning you. I know that with your help I can overcome my harsh judgements and prejudices against others.

Fourteenth Station

JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider how the disciples, accompanied by his holy Mother, carried the body of Jesus to bury it. They closed the tomb and all came away full of sorrow.

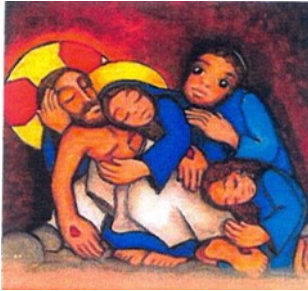
Pause

Mary is with her dead son and sees him placed in the tomb. Death is never easy to accept and understand at any age because it appears to rob us of someone that we love. Grief is a great sorrow to both experience and to see in others and is never easy to handle. We need to be aware of our feelings and not to be afraid to express them or try to avoid them.

Lord, may I share the strength of Mary your Mother when confronted by death and grief. Help me to accept those things that I cannot change or understand.

Thirteenth Station

JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider how, after Our Lord had died, two of his disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, took him down from the Cross and placed him in the arms of his Mother.

Pause

Before Jesus is taken down from the Cross, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance - there came out blood and water. Jesus himself said that a man has no greater love for a friend than to lay down his life for him. This is the love of Jesus for us...it is total. Our love for others must be as total as the love that Jesus showed for us in dying on the cross. To love those that reject us is one of the greatest expressions of love and as followers of Christ we are called to this.

What is the quality of your love for family, friends and all the people you meet?

Prayer

Lord, may my love for you and others always be as great as your love for me. For whether I am the greatest saint or greatest sinner on earth, you Jesus, out of love, would have died for me.

Second Station

JESUS RECEIVES HIS CROSS



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider how Jesus, in making this journey with the Cross on his shoulders, thought of us and offered for us to his Father the death he was about to undergo.

Pause

Sometimes life seems very hard. Often we have to do things that we would rather not do and they become for us, heavy burdens like the Cross. Jesus tells us that if we are to follow him we must take up our cross daily. This means we are to take up our daily tasks, no matter how boring and to do them with acceptance knowing that Jesus has also done this before us to show us the way.

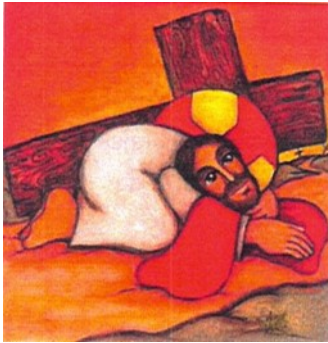
How did you feel and what did you do the last time you had to do something that was boring and you did not want to do?

Prayer

Lord, when I am tired and fed up or would rather be doing something more enjoyable, help me to do those things that I would rather not do. I am sorry if my selfishness results in someone else being disappointed in me.

Third Station

JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider this first fall of Jesus under his Cross. His flesh was torn by the scourges, his head was crowned with thorns; he had lost a great quantity of blood. So weakened he could scarcely walk, he yet had to carry this great load upon his shoulders. The soldiers struck him rudely and he fell several times.

Pause

There are times when we have good intentions but it all seems to go wrong and things turn out badly. We feel a sense of failure; in fact we can even feel ourselves to be failures. Perhaps we have even hurt a friend or relative and even though we didn't mean to, we feel sad. We feel as though we have fallen, we have made a mistake.

How did you feel the last time your good intentions went wrong?

Prayer

Lord, you teach me my value and my worth. You loved me so much that you died for me. Help me to see that no matter what happens I am never a failure and without goodness in your eyes.

Twelfth Station

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider how Jesus, being consumed with anguish after three hours' agony on the Cross, abandoned himself to the weight of his body, bowed his head and died.

Pause

Before he dies, Jesus asks his Father to forgive those who have crucified him. We too should forgive those who have hurt us. This is not always easy; especially as those that we love the most can hurt us the greatest. If Jesus, who is dying as a result of the actions of others, can forgive them, how much more should we try to forgive others?

Are there any family members or friends that you should try harder to forgive?

Prayer

Lord, you taught me to pray to your Father in heaven and to ask him to forgive me my trespasses as I forgive those that trespass against me. May I learn to forgive others so that I may receive the forgiveness of my Father in heaven. For only in forgiveness will my feelings of anger, bitterness and resentment disappear and the chance for reconciliation be made more real.

Eleventh Station

JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider how Jesus, having been placed upon the Cross, extended his hands and offered to his Eternal Father the sacrifice of his life for our salvation. They fastened him to the Cross with nails.

Pause

We have the ability to cause others pain. We do not have to use an instrument; we can do this with a glance, a turn of the back; by walking away or a harsh word. We know that we have hurt another by our actions because, sadly, we have learnt from how others have done it to us. Every time we are hurt, or we hurt others, Jesus is also hurt by these actions or words.

Did you hurt someone by what you said or did how do you think it made them feel?

Prayer

Lord, when I feel hurt or I am in an argument I might not win, I feel tempted to say or do something that will hurt the other person. Help me to realise more fully that each one of us has great dignity and therefore deserves respect as a child of God the Father.

Fourth Station

JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider the meeting of the Son and the Mother, which took place on this journey. Their looks become like so many arrows to wound those hearts which love each other so tenderly.

Pause

We can try to imagine the agony that Mary must have experienced when she saw her son Jesus carrying his cross to his death. Perhaps we have seen the pain and sadness in the eyes of our parents, sisters, brothers, friends when we have caused them pain. This sadness reflects their love and care for us.

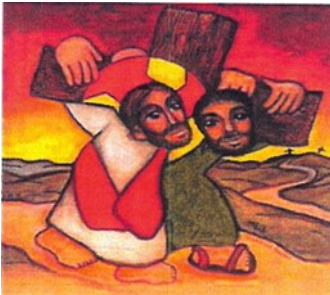
When was the last time you showed someone that you appreciated their love and concern for you?

Prayer

Lord, I thank you for all those who love me and care about me. I thank you for all those who have cried for and with me. Grant that I may always accept their love and support and never hurt them.

Fifth Station

JESUS IS HELPED BY SIMON OF CYRENE



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider how his cruel tormentors, seeing Jesus was on the point of expiring and fearing he would die on the way, constrained Simon of Cyrene to carry the Cross behind Our Lord.

Pause

We see Jesus in his need helped by Simon. We too have been helped by others at a time when we need it. There will have been occasions when we have seen others struggling in our family, our school/colleges or even complete strangers. There will have been times and there will be times to come when we, like Simon can be with others and support them in their sorrows and hardships.

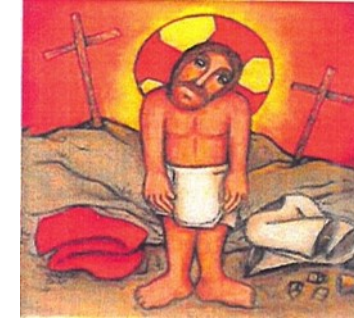
How do you feel when you have helped someone in difficulties?

Prayer

Lord, you know how often I have been helped by someone who cares and I thank you that by their lives they have made my world a better place to be in. Help me to help others as I have myself been helped. May I never lack the courage to stand by those that need my support, even if it makes me unpopular with others.

Tenth Station

JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider the violence with which Jesus was stripped. His inner garments adhered to his torn flesh and they dragged them off so roughly that the skin came with them.

Pause

Humiliation is always hard to bear. There are times when just a few words spoken by others can really embarrass us and make us feel naked. There are those things that have happened in our lives that we are ashamed of and we wish to keep hidden. When our secret inmost self is laid bare God still loves us and accepts us no matter what people may say about us.

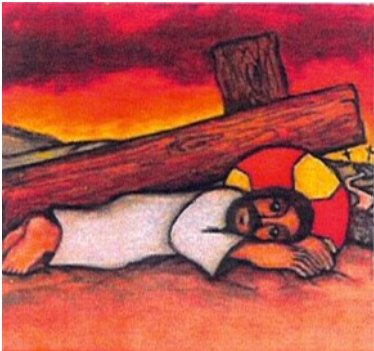
How did you feel the last time someone made you look small in front of others?

Prayer

Lord, when I want to hide away from the world, my family and my friends, may I always remember that I am precious in your eyes for you love me and have redeemed me. You are always there holding me when I feel unloved.

Ninth Station

JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider the third fall of Jesus Christ. His weakness was extreme, and the cruelty of his executioners excessive who tried to hasten his steps when he could scarcely move.

Pause

When we continue to make the same mistakes and when, as is often the case, our sins in confession are always the same, we should remember that after falling a third time, Jesus, weary as he is, gets up and tries to carry his burden. We may not always succeed but we should never give up trying. This is especially true when we have to consider the way in which we treat others.

Is there someone with whom you could get on better with if you tried again?

Prayer

Lord, there are those that are always easy to love but I need your help when it comes to loving those who I find so hard to love. I know that when I keep falling in my relationships with others, you would want me to try again; grant me the patience and perseverance to do this.

Sixth Station

VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider how the holy woman named Veronica, seeing Jesus so ill used and covered in sweat and blood, wiped his face with a towel.

Pause

Jesus, the greatest man to walk on earth, the Son of God, allows Veronica to wipe his face, to show in her small way that she cares. There are occasions when others will show that they care for us and we too like Jesus have to allow them to do this for us because we need it. We have to lose our pride for this to happen. We can also see that Jesus shares our suffering and allows himself to be hurt and in so doing shows us that when this happens good can come out of it because people will be able to show their love for us... God's love for us.

When did you last allow someone to show you that they cared?

Prayer

Lord, do not let me become hardened so that I hide my pain and sadness when hurt. Help me to accept the care and concern of others for by their compassion they teach me of your love.

Seventh Station

JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider the second fall of Jesus under the Cross; a fall which renews the pain of all the wounds in his head and members.

Pause

As we see Jesus fall a second time. We can imagine his exhaustion and frustration. He is not angry or resentful. He is not bitter and does not bear grudges towards those who have made him suffer.

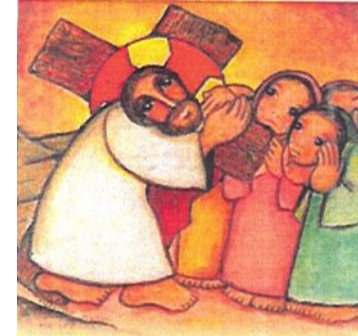
How many times have others put you down and hurt you and how did you react to this situation?

Prayer

Lord, your gentleness was your strength even when you were physically down and emotionally tried. May I always be gentle and non-aggressive. Grant that I may always follow your example in times of trouble and conflict.

Eighth Station

JESUS CONSOLES THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM



We adore you, O Christ and praise you.

Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Consider how these women wept with compassion at seeing Jesus in such a pitiful state, streaming with blood as he walked along. 'Daughters of Jerusalem' he said, 'weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children'.

Pause

Jesus, in the middle of great suffering sees the sorrow of the women and stops to console them. Despite his own situation his heart is still concerned with the feelings of others.

Have you ever been too preoccupied with your own feelings and ignored the needs of others?

Prayer

Lord, may I always be open to the need of others for my comfort and consolation even when I am feeling sad myself.