

A Prayer Journey

Through the Stations of the Cross



*Prayers written by
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First Station

Jesus is Condemned to Death

Jesus stands in judgment before the whole world.

He undergoes all the rank injustices of a verdict carried out by vicious men. He is innocent, yet stands condemned. “For which of my good deeds are you trying to kill Me?” He asks. And they have no answer.

He touched them and healed their wounds.

He made blind men see and deaf persons hear.

He forgave their sins and gave them hope and joy.

Now some horrible evil has filled the hearts of the authorities. How can this be happening?

Father, He who knew no sin was made sin for us, to save us and restore us to Your friendship. Lord Jesus, teach us that real power comes from discovering and doing the Will of Your Father. “A humble and contrite heart, O God, You will not spurn.” Amen.



Second Station

Jesus Accepts His Cross

Jesus is bruised and beaten. The soldiers mock Him. But He stands tall and calm. He lifts the cross to His shoulder, and even in this dreadful moment He shows great gentleness and strength.

The cross is Jesus' sacrifice for us, as is His sacrifice on the altar every Mass. There are altars everywhere: a workbench, the kitchen sink, the desk at the office or school, a tractor or truck. These are all altars where we celebrate the liturgy with Christ. The liturgy of the Cross, the liturgy of the altar and the liturgy of daily living are all one.

“Take up your cross daily and follow Me.” Look with love on those who suffer because of our indifference. Come to their aid, and turn our uncaring hearts to works of justice and love. Amen.



Third Station

Jesus Falls the First Time

The soldiers are pushing Him, and the crowds are pressing in from all sides. The noise and the heat are oppressive. He falls and they laugh at Him. There is no pity in their hearts. How can they enjoy such suffering?

Jesus, I have fallen too, and only with Your strength can I struggle to my feet again. I have fallen into sin by failing to recognize the goodness the Father has created within me. I haven't appreciated the gift of my own life nor the grace and talents God has given me. This fall, my first fall, has been the failure to know myself.

No one expected a fall, a failure, so soon. Can we face what is ahead? Can we get back up? And can we go on with YOU? Jesus, You comfort us in our afflictions and thus enable us to comfort those who are in trouble with the same consolation. Amen.



Fourth Station

Jesus Meets His Mother

Mary was always there for her Son. At this critical time she walks alongside Him. She gave Him birth in the flesh, and now is with Him in spirit. She is about to become a mother in a new sense—Mother of the Church.

Mary understands that if this is God's will, then it must be. God has never failed the trust she has placed in Him. She remembers the words of her Son about the mysteries of God's Kingdom: "God, Your will be done."

**Grieving mother, helpless to assist your child.
Strong mother of a faith who has learned to live
with the hard questions of life. Symbol of hope for
those in hopeless situations. Be for your children
a symbol of strength within the struggle. Amen.**



Fifth Station

Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

Jesus is faltering, moving slowly. The cross on His shoulders seems to grow heavier with every step. The soldiers call out a man in the crowd, Simon from Cyrene. Simon backs away and looks for a way to escape. But then he looks into the eyes of Jesus, and he is changed. No longer reluctant, he takes the cross upon his own back.

Simon reminds us of the Lord's call to service. We are asked to be ready and willing to offer a cup of water to the thirsty, food to the hungry, clothing to the naked. We are invited to visit the sick and the imprisoned.

Raise up people of great dreams and desires, Lord, people of action, providing good things for family, the community and the Church. Liberate the oppressed. Oppress NOT the liberated! Amen.



Sixth Station

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

A woman breaks through the crowd. There are tears in her eyes. She takes off her veil as she comes to Jesus. The woman is Veronica, and she uses her veil to wipe away the dust and blood from Jesus' face.

The crowd is amazed at her boldness, and for the first time since the awful day began the shouting and jeering have ceased. In this quiet moment Jesus looks at her with gratitude and love. In boldness and simplicity, the compassion of Veronica shatters the evil of the moment.

**Raise up people with a deep, intuitive grasp of
Your message, Lord. Let Your people become
the heart of the world, the guardians of
decency, exposing injustice. May they be
nurturing and life-giving. Amen.**



Seventh Station

Jesus Falls a Second Time

Despite the help Jesus received from Simon and Veronica, He falls again. There is concern that He may die before He reaches the place of crucifixion. The tension of anticipation is beginning to fill the crowd. They know He cannot last much longer.

When we feel weak in our resolve and our enthusiasm wanes, we can look to Jesus as our example. Even though His body weakened, His spirit and His faith never wavered. He carried out God's will for Him.

Strengthen within our hearts the faith You have given us. Let not temptations ever quench the fire that Your love has enkindled. Many dreams have been shattered, and we have made lots of mistakes. Help us follow the example of Your Son's patience in suffering. Amen.



Eighth Station

Jesus Meets Some Women From Jerusalem

A group of women are standing along the road. They are crying in pity as they see Jesus' bruised, broken body. Jesus speaks to them in a soft voice:
"Daughters of Jerusalem, don't weep for Me but for yourselves and for your children."

These mothers were protesting the evil of death and darkness, since they felt that the Light of the world was going out. In a deeper sense every Christian takes on every child in the world as his or her own.

Christians, being the Body of Christ, cherish all life because it is from God. The protective instinct in them rebukes anything ugly and vicious, anything which harms young life. Amen.



Ninth Station

Jesus Falls a Third Time

The air has become still. Every step Jesus takes now is painfully slow and deliberate. Exhaustion overwhelms Him. His legs give way, and He falls to the earth again. Two of the soldiers take Him by the arms and lift Him up. They support Him on each side as they lead Him to the crest of the hill.

My own third fall is my failure to love God above all things. I am truly sorry for being blind to the presence of God in my life. Forgive me for the many times I've placed myself, my ambitions and my desires ahead of everything... including You.

For the truly spiritual person, the one truth is to love; the one evil is to fear. The last stretch on the road home, Lord, is worrisome. Help us to remember Your love and Your faithfulness. Look upon our anxiety; let us share the riches of Your peace. Amen.



Tenth Station

Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

The soldiers bring Jesus to the foot of the cross and begin to strip away His garments. The cloth has dried into the bloody wounds on His body and, as it's pulled away, the wounds are reopened. Some in the crowd are overwhelmed with emotion, no longer wanting to be part of this cruelty. Others, though, begin to taunt Him again.

May the suffering Christ help us to think of those who have been stripped of their human dignity: the old man in rags, the woman on the streets, the children orphaned by death or war, the dispossessed.

“If You, O Lord, laid bare our guilt Who could endure it?” Help us to be a voice, a support for those who are stripped of their human dignity. Do not allow greed to possess us, but let our love be a mirror of Your Love. Amen.



Eleventh Station

Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

The soldiers take Jesus by the arms and lower Him to the cross. They fasten His hands and feet to the wood. Mary turns her eyes away, but she can hear the blows of the hammer—and each one crushes her heart. She hears a whisper from her Son: “Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do.”

In a moment when He could have resorted to violence and retribution, Jesus chose to forgive. This most human of actions validates the belief in His divinity.

Sin is the great divider, the piercing nail, the driven lance. The tools of Your trade built you an altar, the cross. There is only Lord, one faith, one baptism; one family of God, One Food, one LOVE. Amen.



Twelfth Station

Jesus Dies on the Cross

The moment of His death is Jesus' ultimate testimony of faith. He shows us once and for all what it means to be a person of faith. At the end, in a loud voice, He cries out, "It is finished, Father! Into Your hands I commend My spirit." ... He is dead.

"Greater love no man has than to lay down his life for his friends," said Jesus — and we made Him prove it. Now no person can stand before that cross and be indifferent... we must commit ourselves with a "yes" or "no."

"Who is like You among the gods, O Lord?" How long will our hearts be closed? "At Jesus' name every knee must bend in the Heaven, on the earth and under the earth, and every tongue proclaim to the glory of God the Father; JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!" Amen.



Thirteenth Station

Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

At midday darkness covered the whole country. Three hours later, the curtain hanging in the Temple was torn in two at the very moment Jesus died. The people fled back to the city. Only a handful remained: a few relatives, the soldiers and some of the chief priests.

The soldiers took Jesus down from the cross. John received the body in his arms and placed Him on the ground. Mary held His broken body in her arms.

A mother's tears begin to wash away the numbing pain of grief. The memory of this dreadful day will never disappear, but the agony is over now. The sorrowing heart will find comfort. The emptiness will be partially filled by remembering better days.

Mary, you are the chosen one, blessed among all women. Inspiration for all followers of your Son, you show us what faith, love, hope and courage can do for the redemption of the world. Amen.



Fourteenth Station

Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

Joseph of Arimathea had gone to Pilate for permission to take the body for burial. Jesus is buried in a cave in a cemetery for criminals. Joseph wraps His body in a linen cloth. A stone is rolled in place to cover the entrance.

Mary remembers the words of her Son: “On the third day I will rise again.” The hope begins to stir in her heart that this tomb will not confine Him.

“In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Amen.



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*Photographs from King's House Retreat and Renewal Center
in Belleville, Illinois.*

*Designed by the Missionary Association of Mary Immaculate USA.
Printed in the USA.*

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