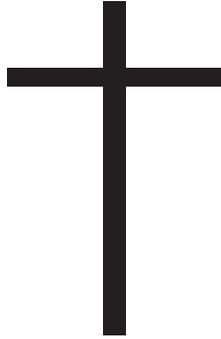


SAINT TERESA OF AVILA
STATIONS
of the
CROSS



As we follow Jesus on the Way of the Cross, the fourteen stations arranged around the walls of the Church give us a glimpse into the tragic drama of the struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness, between truth and falsehood. This is not just a sentimental story and we do not remain mere bystanders. At each stop along the journey we encounter a God who is not distant or indifferent, but who comes into our midst, shares in our suffering and death, and invites us to share in His own divine life. And as we come face to face with God who is Love, we are invited to put ourselves among the various characters and actions of each Station [*and to see where we would be during Jesus' suffering and death*]. Seeing the face of Love should help us to overcome the temptation to [*only focus on ourselves and inspire us to give to God and to others.*]

- Fr Nathan March

1st Station

Jesus Is Condemned To Die



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: Pilate again said to them in reply, “*Then what do you want to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?*”. They shouted again, “*Crucify Him*”. Pilate said to them, “*Why? What evil has He done?*”. They only shouted the louder, “*Crucify Him*”. So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, after having Him whipped, handed him over to be crucified. (Mark 15:12-15)

Jesus is about to die for all of those who shouted for His crucifixion. He is about to die for us.

ALL: *Jesus do I often ignore you at school or at work in the person no one wants to talk to? How often do my words condemn you in the way that I speak about others? It was not only the people there that condemned you, but I stand next to them shouting just as loud, “Crucify Him!”.*

Jesus forgive me for the ways in which I condemn and pierce others with my words and actions. Help me to love like you and to learn from your example.

2nd Station

Jesus Carries The Cross



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: So the soldiers took Jesus, and carrying the cross Himself, He went out to what is called the place of the skull. (John 19:17-18)

The wood of the cross is stained with the blood of the Lamb of God. Though His suffering brings life, His walk is one of death. With each step forward, Christ takes on our sin. He takes our punishment as His own.

ALL: *How often do I forget that you have carried the load for me? How often do I try to carry things on my own, not allowing you to help me? It was not only the sins of the world that you carried; it was my sin, my selfishness, my pride, my anger. Each sin added more weight to the load. And it was not only my sin you carried but also my burdens, my worries, my fears, my sadness, my insecurities. Each you carried step by step up towards Golgatha, the place of the skull.*

Jesus, help me not to forget the load that you carried for me. Give me the strength and the courage to let go of those things that separate me from you.

3rd Station

Jesus Falls For The First Time



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. (Matthew 5:11-12)

The crowds follow Jesus, unaware of His saving action. As His broken body hits the rocky ground under the weight of the cross, Jesus finds the strength to get up. Our Lord prepares us to seek His strength when we fall under the pressures in life as we try to follow Him.

ALL: *How many times have I fallen in my walk to follow you? Too many to count, I'm sure. So many times when I fall I don't feel like getting back up and trying again. There are too many temptations that I am faced with that feel too fun and easy to do because so many around me are doing them.*

Jesus, help me to remember your courage and perseverance when you fell. Give me the courage to get back up when I fall. Help me remember that it is worth it to live as you lived.

4th Station

Jesus Meets His Mother



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

ALL: [Genuflect] ***Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.***

LEADER: And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His Mother, “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted, and you yourself a sword will pierce.” (Luke 2:34-35)

The prophecy of Mary's own suffering unfolds before her tear-filled eyes. Yet, she trusts in the hope that salvation is worth watching her son go through this pain. She walks with her only child, that she held in her arms as an infant, to the foot of the cross, where she will watch Him die.

ALL: *There are so many times when I feel alone in my struggles. It seems that no one understands what I am going through. How many times have I hidden things from my loved ones, out of fear of what they would say when all they want is to love me?*

Jesus, help me to remember that I am never alone in my struggles. Help me to see my loved ones as you saw yours. Help me know their love for me and when things are hard between us, help me to remember the light of your Mother in my life.

5th Station

Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian name Simon; this man they pressed into service to carry Jesus' cross. (Matthew 27:32)

As Jesus' human body grows increasingly weak, He cannot bear the weight of the cross alone any longer. The soldiers grab Simon to help with the weight of the cross. Although Simon helps Jesus with His physical cross, Jesus continues, carrying the cross that we are to weak to carry: the cross of our sin.

ALL: *How often do I pass up an opportunity to help someone in need? Do I let what others may think of me stop me from reaching out?*

Jesus, open my ears to hear the ways that you call me to serve. Help me follow Simon's example of helping others. Help me to know what it means to be a true and faithful servant.

6th Station

Veronica Wipes The Face of Jesus



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you? Or naked and clothe you? When did we see you in prison and visit you? And the King will say to them in reply, “Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for Me.” (Matthew 25:37-40)

Sacred blood runs down the Savior’s face. Sweat drips into his swollen eyes as dust clings to his face. Jesus sees a figure moving slowly toward Him. Veronica extends a cloth to wipe the face of our Lord. She offers a sign of a loving heart to a loving soul. Evil may have spit in the face of Love, but now, Love washes it clean again.

ALL: *How many times have I forgotten that each person is made in your image and likeness and therefore deserves my respect? Do I make others objects of my pleasure and ignore their humanity? Veronica courageously stepped forward and dared to treat you differently than everyone else. Could I do the same?*

Jesus, help me to see your presence in others. Give me the courage to follow Veronica's example of treating others with love even when no one else does.

7th Station

Jesus Falls The Second Time



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: Yet it was our pain that He bore, our sufferings He endured. We thought of Him as stricken, struck down by God and afflicted. But He was pierced for our sins, crushed for our iniquity. (Isaiah 53:4-5)

Jesus falls from physical exhaustion, as the wood of the heavy cross tears deeper into the flesh of His back. Yet, the weight of the cross is not nearly as heavy as the weight of our sin. Although Christ falls, He gets up, showing us that His love is bigger than our sin.

ALL: *How many times have I failed to follow through on my promises? Or worst yet, how often have I lied even to people I care about? Do I remember your faithfulness even when I fail?*

Jesus, help me to believe in your faithfulness and love for me. Give me the grace to follow through on my word to others. Help me to be a person of integrity.

8th Station

Jesus Meets The Women Of Jerusalem



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented Him. Jesus turned to them and said, “*Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children.*” (Luke 23:27-28)

Crying can be heard over taunts and jeers. A passionate wailing catches our Lord’s attention, even in the midst of His own passion. Jesus consoles those women who weep, but challenges them to look beyond this moment. Suffering and death is not the end – not in Christ.

ALL: *Do I listen to your words in my life? How often have the things I’ve watched or listened to led me away from you? Have I allowed the Gospel of Life to reign in my heart?*

Jesus, help me to listen to your words of life. Show me ways that I can put you first.

9th Station

Jesus Falls For The Third Time



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: If the world hates you, realize that it hated me first. (John 15:18)

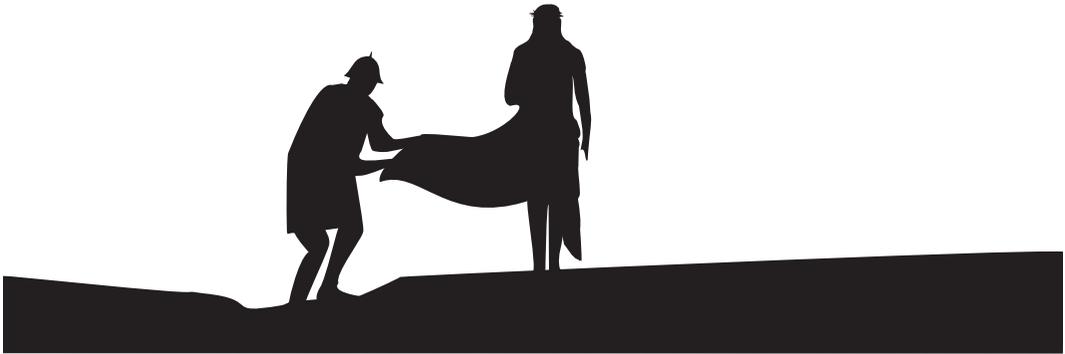
As He falls this third time, Jesus feels the pain we feel each time that we are beaten down, persecuted, mocked, ridiculed, rejected, and abandoned. So close to his destination, our Lord's body collapses beneath Him. But He rises, to complete His mission. His love for us is never ending.

ALL: *How many times have I chosen to sin rather than to follow your way, or to not love instead of loving? Was it my sin that became too heavy and caused you to fall a third time?*

Jesus, help me to follow your ways. Help me to remember your victory over my sin. Give me the grace to recognize when I sin and the desire to sin no more.

10th Station

Jesus Is Stripped Of His Garments



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: They took His clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier. They also took His tunic, but the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top down. So they said to one another, “Let’s not tear it, but cast lots for it see whose it will be.” (John 19:23-24)

Christ is utterly humiliated, as He is stripped naked before mocking onlookers. All the while, Christ prays for His murderers and thinks of us, His sinful people, whom He loves enough to undergo this horrific suffering and death.

ALL: *How often have I judged others by the way they look or what they are wearing? Do I find my own self-worth and self-identity by the clothes I wear or the way I look?*

Jesus, help me to look past the outside of others. Help me not to judge them by how they look or what they wear. Help me to find my self-worth and identity in you.

11th Station

Jesus Is Nailed To The Cross



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: When they came to the place called the skull, they crucified Him and the criminals there, one on His right and one on His left. (Luke 23:33)

The time has come. Shouts of pain echo as the hammer strikes the nail. Nails tear through sacred flesh and the blood that has won our salvation flows onto the wooden cross. Jesus is dying on a cross for us.

ALL: *In reflection, I am angered by the soldiers. I can't understand why they are doing this to you and yet, what is hardest to realize is that not only am I in the crowd watching all of this, but I am also one who is nailing you to the cross.*

How many times has my sin become a strike of the nail into your body? How often do I turn away from your mercy?

Jesus, I am sorry for nailing you to the cross with my own sin. Help me to seek your forgiveness and mercy for the times that I sin.

12th Station

Jesus Dies On The Cross



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit.*” And when He had said this, He breathed His last. (Luke 23:46)

The crowds watch as Christ’s agony ends and they slowly begin to disperse. The spectacle is finished. Jesus has died on the cross. The skies are dark and it seems as if all hope is lost. But the promise of Christ does not end at the cross. The light will overcome the darkness. Death will not have the last word. Our God promises resurrection. He promises new life.

ALL: (Kneel and pause)

Jesus, help me never forget your love for me. Help me to know that you died for me. Help me to remember that whatever I may go through in my life, you have been there too and know what it’s like. You never abandon me.

13th Station

Jesus Is Taken Down From The Cross



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: Joseph of Arimathea, secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body. And Pilate permitted it. So he came and took His body. (John 19:38)

Jesus' body is removed from the bloody cross. The empty cross seems like a sign of defeat. That Friday night seemed like the night that evil won and God died. But one bold person would not accept that this was the end. One person, who would not walk away, came to retrieve and reverence the broken body of our Lord. We too must refuse to believe that evil is victorious. We cannot fearfully leave the cross. For we are called to boldly minister to the broken Body of Christ.

ALL: *How many times have I lost hope in you? How often have I doubted your ability to be God in my life over all things?*

Jesus, help me to trust in you. Help me to place all of my hope in you and give me peace in knowing that you are Lord over all things.

14th Station

Jesus Is Placed In The Tomb



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

ALL: [Genuflect] *Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*

LEADER: Having brought a linen cloth, he took Him down, wrapped Jesus in the linen cloth and laid Him in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. (Mark 15:46)

All is quiet now. The Corpus Christi – the Body of Christ – has been laid in the tomb. A tomb holds Christ now, but death will not. Darkness fills the tomb, our hearts, and the world. Faith is shaken, but our hope is not. Love wins this fight. But for now, it is silent.

ALL: *How many times has death felt like the end? When losing a loved one it can be so hard to remember the victory. How often do I miss the opportunities to say, “I love you” to those special people in my life? Do my family and friends know how I feel about them?*

Jesus, help me always remember that death is not the end. Give me the strength to say the words “I love you” to those people in my life that I do love. Help me to love every person not just in my words, but also with my actions.

Jesus, I love you, I need you, and I trust you. Amen.