



STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR WOMEN

Mary's Way of the Cross

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

Amen

We gather on as Christian women and men united in prayer. In the midst of our busy lives we pause to pray as we reflect on the suffering journey of Christ. As we accompany Jesus on his journey to Calvary, let us take a moment to remember how difficult that journey was. He carried his cross through the narrow crowded streets of Jerusalem. It was Passover time and so the city was full of people, many of whom mocked, jostled and took pleasure in watching as Jesus struggled with his heavy burden. The way was often steep. The journey that Jesus made on that day remains a symbol of Christianity in the world, as it struggles with its own crosses and failures, and the challenges of modern life. The streets of our towns are filled with people who carry their personal crosses, who are bruised, battered and broken. Through these Stations of the Cross, Jesus is inviting us to journey with him and to reflect on his suffering as it continues in the lives of his people. In solidarity with all who suffer, let us pray that we will be open to whatever he wants us to see, hear and understand.

Song: Come faithful Christians, join in meditation
Jesus is judged now through false accusation.
Pilate condemns Him with two felons shameless,
Our Savior blameless.

Station 1- Jesus is Condemned to Death

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation

It was early Friday morning when I saw my son. That was the first glimpse I had of him since they took him away. His bruised and bleeding skin sent a sword of pain deep into my heart and tears down my cheeks. Then Pilate, from his chair of judgment, asked the crowd why they wanted my son executed. All around me they shouted “Crucify him!”

I wanted to plead with them to stop, but I knew this had to be. So I stood by and cried silently.

Prayer – All together

Lord Jesus, it is hard for me to imagine the anguish your mother felt at your condemnation. But what about today, when I hold a grudge...? “Crucify him”

When I judge others... “Crucify him”.

Doesn't this bring tears of anguish to both you and your mother.
Forgive me, Jesus.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: Christ takes the cross now, mankind's soul embracing,
That wayward souls, each by His steps retracing
Might through His passion, sign of Christ oblation,
Find their salvation.

Station 2 - Christ takes His Cross

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Regaining a little strength. I walked with the crowds to the entrance of the square. A door few open and my son stumbled out, the guards laughing behind him. Two men dragged over a heavy wooden cross and dropped it on his shoulders. Then they shoved him down the road. My pain for him was unbearable. I wanted to take the cross from him and carry it myself. But I knew this had to be, so I walked on silently.

Prayer – All together

Lord Jesus, I beg you to forgive me for the many times I have added more weight to your cross by closing my eyes to the pain and loneliness of my neighbor. Forgive me for gossiping about others and for always trying to find excuses to avoid certain people who wish to talk with me. Help me to be like Mary, always seeking to lighten the cross of others.

Forgive Jesus.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: Under the burden He grows weak, unsteady;
Jesus is falling; mankind must stand ready,
Ready to help Him, soothe the fallen Victim
When we afflict Him.

Station 3 - Jesus Falls a First Time

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation

I followed close behind my son as he stumbled toward Calvary. Nothing had ever hurt me more than to see him in such pain. I saw the cross digging into his shoulders. My heart dropped when I saw him fall face to the ground, the heavy cross landing squarely on his back. For a moment I thought my beloved son was dead. Now, my whole body began to tremble. Then the guards kicked him. He rose slowly and began to walk again, yet the still whipped him. I wanted to protect him with my own body. But, I knew this had to be so I walked on and wept silently.

Prayer – All together

Lord, how often have I seen you fall, and, unlike Mary, have left you there without concern? How often have I seen people make mistakes and laughed at them? How often do I find myself getting angry when someone does things differently than I? Mary offered you her support through your entire passion. Help me to do the same for you by support I give to others.

Lord have mercy on me.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: Mary meets Jesus, doomed to crucifixion.
How deep their anguish, painful their affliction,
Bearing their crosses; Son and loving mother
Facing each other.

Station 4 - Jesus Meets His Mother

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation

I managed to break through the crowd and was walking side by side with my son. I called to him through the shouting voices. He stopped. Our eyes met, mine full of tears and anguish, his full of pain and confusion. I felt helpless; then his eyes said to me, "Courage! There is a purpose for this" As he stumbled on, I knew he was right. So I followed and prayed silently.

Prayer – All together

Lord Jesus, forgive me the many times our eyes met and I turned mine away. Forgive me the times things did not go my way and I let everyone know about it. Forgive me the times I brooded over little inconveniences or became discouraged and did not heed your call to courage! Yes, Lord, our eyes have met many times, but fruitlessly.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: Simon of Cyrene now the cross is bearing;
Helping the Savior, in His burden sharing.
Pray that we also turn from Jesus never,
But aid Him ever.

Station 5 - Jesus is Helped by Simon

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation

I could now see almost complete helplessness on the face of my son as he tried to carry his heavy load. Each step looked as if it would be his last. I felt his every pain in my heart and I wanted the whole thing to end. Then I noticed some commotion near Jesus. The guards had pulled a protesting man from the crowd. They forced him to pick up the back of the cross to help lighten my son's load. He asked the guard why this had to be. I knew, and so followed silently.

Prayer – All together

Dear Jesus, I have many times refused to help you. I have been a selfish person who has often questioned your word. Don't let me remain like Simon, but help me to be like your mother, Mary, who always silently followed and obeyed.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: Sainly Veronica, now her Jesus meeting,
Wipes His face gently; bitterly is weeping.
Face of our Savior on her veil imprinted
Through love unstinted.

Station 6 – Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation

As I continued close by Jesus, a woman pushed past the guards, took off her veil, and began to wipe my son's sweating, bloody face. The guards immediately pulled her back. Her face seemed to say, "Why are you doing this to him?" I knew, so I walked on in faith, silently.

Prayer – All together

Lord, this woman gave you the best she could. On the other hand, I have wanted to take more than I give.

So many opportunities arise every day for me to give to you by giving to others-but I pass them by. My Savior, never let me ask why again, but help me to give all I have to you.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: See the dear Lord showing His exhaustion;

As the cross presses heavily upon Him.

Blood flows so freely; see the Savior languish;

He falls in anguish.

Station 7 - Jesus Falls a Second Time

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Again my son fell, and again my grief was overwhelming at the thought that he might die. I started to move toward him, but the soldiers prevented me. He rose and stumbled ahead slowly. Seeing my son fall, get up again, and continue on, was bitter anguish to me. But, since I knew this had to be, I walked on silently.

Prayer – All together

Lord, of all people Mary was your most faithful follower, never stopping in spite of all the pain she felt for you. I have many times turned away from you by my sins and have caused others to turn away from you. I beg you to have mercy on me.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: Seeing the women deep in lamentation,

Jesus in pity speaks in consolation.

Lord pray we now, in ev'ry future morrow

Comfort our sorrow.

Station 8 - Jesus Speaks to the Women

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation

I was walking a few steps behind Jesus when I saw him stop. Some women were there crying for him and pitying him. They had them not to shed tears for him. They had the opportunity to accept him as the Messiah; like many others, they rejected him instead. He told them to shed tears for themselves, tears that would bring their conversion. They did not see the connection between that and his walk to death. I did, and as he walked on, I followed silently.

Prayer – All together

My Savior, many times have I acted like these women, always seeing the faults of others and pitying them. Yet, very rarely have I seen my own sinfulness and asked your pardon. Lord, you have taught me through these women. Forgive me, Lord, for my blindness.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: Once more He falls, His cross its toll is taking;
Three times He fell, His heart and body aching.
Jesus now grovels in the dust, so lowly;
God's Son most holy.

Station 9 - Jesus Falls a Third Time

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world

Meditation

The fall of Jesus was agony to me. Not only had he fallen on the rocky ground again, but now he was almost at the top of the hill of crucifixion. The soldiers screamed at him and abused him, almost dragging him the last few steps. My heart pounded as I imagined what they would do to him next. But, I knew this had to be, so I climbed the hill silently behind him.

Prayer – All together

My loving Jesus, I know that many times I have offered my hand to help people but when it became inconvenient or painful to me I left them, making excuses for myself. Help me, Lord, to be like your mother, Mary, and never take my supporting hand away from those who need it.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: See the dear Lord, Who clothed this earth in splendor,
Who bathed the heav'ns in starlight calm and tender,
Stripped of His garments, mocked in cruel fashion;
Lord of compassion.

Station 10 - Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world

Meditation

With my son finally relived of the weight of the cross, I thought he would have a chance to rest. But the guards immediately started to rip his clothes off his blood-clotted skin. The sight of my son in such pain was unbearable. Yet, since I knew this had to be, I stood by and cried silently.

Prayer – All together

Lord, in my own way I too have stripped you. I have taken away the good bane of another by foolish talk, and have stripped people of human dignity by prejudice. Jesus, there are so many ways I have offended you through the hurt I have caused others. Help me to see you in all people.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: So to complete our Lord's most holy passion,
They wound His body in most grievous fashion.
Callous tormentors, to the cross they nail Him.
Our blameless Victim.

Station 11 - Jesus is Nailed to The Cross

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world

Meditation

As they threw Jesus on the cross, he willingly allowed himself to be nailed. As they punctured his hands and his feet I felt the pain in my heart. Then they lifted up the cross. There he was, my son, whom I love so much, being scorned as he struggled for the last few moments of earthly life. But I knew this had to be, so I stood by and prayed silently.

Prayer – All together

Lord, what pain you endured for me,. And what pain your mother went through, seeing her only son die for love of me! Yet, both you and she are ready to forgive me as soon as I repent of my sin. Help me, Lord, to turn away from my sinfulness.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: Raised is His cross in view of all the scornful,
Bearing the King of pain, a sight so mournful.
True God, true man, death's lonely keeping;
Mourn Him with weeping.

Station 12 - Jesus Dies on the Cross

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world

Meditation

What greater pain is there for a mother than to see her son die right before her eyes! I, who had brought this savior into the world and watched him grow, stood helplessly beneath his cross as he lowered his head and died. His earthly anguish was finished, but mine was greater than ever. Yet, this had to be and I had to accept it, so I stood by and I mourned silently.

Prayer – All together

My Jesus, have mercy on me for what my sins have done to you and others. I thank you for your great act of love. You have said that true love is laying down your life for your friends. Let me always be your friend. Teach me to live my life for others, and not fail you again.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Song: Time to remove His wounded, lifeless body:

Mary receives Him, Son so pure and holy.

Her arms embrace Him; she is filled with grieving,

And barely living.

Station 13 - Jesus is Taken Down from The Cross

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world

Meditation

The crowd had gone; the noise had stopped. I stood quietly with one of Jesus's friends and looked up at the dead body of our savior, my son. Then two men took the body from the cross and placed it in my arms. A deep sorrow engulfed my being. Yet, I also felt deep joy. Life had ended cruelly for my son, but it had also brought life to all of us. I knew this had to be, and I prayed silently.

Prayer – All together

Dear Lord, your passion has ended. Yet, it still goes on whenever I choose sin over you. I have done my part in your crucifixion and now, my Savior, I beg your forgiveness with all my heart. Help me to live a life worthy of you and your mother.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Christ's broken body in the tomb is buried.

May he forever in our hearts be carried.

Each heart in sorrow, open wide your portal

For God immortal.

Station 14 - Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

Priest: We adore you, O Christ and we bless you

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world

Meditation

We brought Jesus' body to a tomb and I arranged it there myself, silently weeping, silently rejoicing. I took one more look at my loving son, and then walked out. They closed the tomb and before I left, I thought, I knew this had to be... it had to be for you! I would wait in faith silently.

Prayer – All together

Yes, my Lord, this had to be because you love me, and for no other reason. All you asked is that I live a good life. You never said such a life would be easy. I am willing to leave sin behind and live for you alone, in my brothers and sisters.

Have mercy on us o Lord

All: Have mercy on us

Our Father ... Hail Mary... Glory be to the Father ...

P: Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, fill me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. Good Jesus, hear me. Within your wound hide me. May I not be separated from you. Defend me from the malicious one. In the hour of my death call me. And bid me come to you. That with your saints I may praise you forever. Amen.

All sing three times: Lord for us your wound were suffered
O my Jesus have mercy on us.

Let us pray:

P: Almighty God, loving Father, help us through the Stations to understand and to appreciate what Jesus did for us. Through a constant memory of His Passion, may we let live and reign in us the love of Him who died for love of us. May that divine love so change us that, through us, Jesus Christ may be seen once more walking the face of the earth. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

All: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

Lenten Hymn: On the cross

On the cross, for the sins of man, our Lord was crucified,
On the cross, 'mid great pain and suffering He bled and died.

*Lord, forgive us when we fail Thee, Lord forgive when we
betray Thee, Lord forgive.*

From the cross, filled with mercy, our dear Lord looked down on us.
From the cross, torn with sorrow, yet He would forgive us

Ref:

With the cross, hope of all who would confess and come to Him
With the cross, He would gather all who would believe in Him

Ref:

To the cross, all our love and hope we trust on Calvary

To the cross, we would give our life, our hearts, our all to Thee.

Ref: