



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

Jesus told his disciples “if any want to become my followers let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. Mat 16:24

Peace to you all

### **And also with you**

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 that it helps us to be kind and forgiving, even to those who hurt us. Love is so powerful that it can change hearts.

### **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?

Pause

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

### **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?

Pause

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?

Pause

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

### **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?

Pause

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?

Pause

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

#### **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?

Pause

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?

Pause

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?

Pause

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

### **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?

Pause

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.

### **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?

Pause

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

### **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?

Pause

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.

### **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?

Pause

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.

### **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?

Pause

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.

### **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.

Pause

Prayer: 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.

### **Fifteenth Station JESUS IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD**

**We adore you, O Christ and praise you. Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

The life of Jesus does not stop at the Cross. If it did, our faith would be in vain. His resurrection gave us new hope. As we go through life, we need to try our best to imitate Jesus in all that we say and do. We should always remember what Jesus taught us. Love God above all else and love your neighbour as yourself. Let us remember that for every Good Friday there is always an Easter Sunday. Christ has died, alleluia! Christ is risen, alleluia! Christ will come again, alleluia! Alleluia

### **PRAYER OF SAINT RICHARD**

Thanks be to you, our Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits which you have given us, for all the pains and insults which you have borne for us. Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother, may we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

**HYMN:** When I survey the wondrous cross

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

### **CONCLUSION**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross and death between your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our

death, give mercy and grace to the living, pardon and rest to the dead: to your holy Church peace and concord: and to us sinners everlasting life and glory: for you live and reign now and forever. Amen

**End in Silence**