



The Stations of the Cross

It would be an inspiring family devotion to make simple stations and arrange them in the home during Lent; perhaps along a hallway or around the walls of the living room. To pray The Way of the Cross requires only that you meditate at each station.

Since our older students were planning to lead a Stations of the Cross this Wednesday, I invite you to take some time this week to pray this meditation

together. (Usually 30 minutes should be plenty of time to set aside for this.) For families with very young children possibly do a couple of stations each evening if that suits the children's attention span and family activities better. It can be a simple quiet prayerful interlude or an opportunity for conversation, sharing each other's thoughts and meditations about the station.

Before each station you say: "We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world." After each station you say an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be...

Here is a simple series of meditations for a family Stations of the Cross. I have included a Stations of the Cross coloring book, suitable for coloring or for creating stations for your home.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, take me along that holy way you once took to your death. Take my mind, my memory, above all my reluctant heart, and let me see what once you did for love of me and all the world.

The First Station:

Jesus is Condemned to Death

Jesus is brought to stand in front of Pontius Pilate, the judge. He is innocent but Pontius Pilate condemns him anyway and sentences Him to death.

It is really our bad thoughts, mean words, and angry actions that you are being punished for, Jesus. We are praying the Stations of the Cross to tell You that we are sorry for all our sins.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Second Station:

Jesus Takes His Cross

Jesus has been beaten by the soldiers. He has been laughed at and spat upon. Now he must pick up the heavy cross and carry it while the crowd yells. He is so tired and sad, but no one cares.

We care that you are tired, Jesus. We are sorry that you are sad. We would like to help You carry Your cross with our prayers.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Third Station:

Jesus Falls The First Time

The cross is too heavy. It is so heavy that Jesus falls down under its weight. The blood from the crown of thorns is running into His eyes and His back aches from the scourging. People are still screaming and throwing things at Him. His heart must be as heavy as the cross He carries.

It is our sins that make your cross so heavy, Jesus. We are sorry. We love you and we try to be good for You with our prayers and with our lives.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Fourth Station:

Jesus Meets His Blessed Mother

Suddenly, Jesus sees His Mother. She is standing at the side of the road surrounded by the crowd. Her eyes fill with tears when she sees Jesus. She wants to help Him but she can not. Both their hearts ache at the other's pain.

Jesus, You and your Blessed Mother help us whenever we ask. Our hearts ache too with the pain of the Stations of the Cross. We promise to pray to you both often, for help in our lives.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Fifth Station:

Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus Carry the Cross

The soldiers are in a hurry. They grab Simon of Cyrene out of the crowd to carry the cross and make Jesus go faster. Jesus was grateful to Simon for his help.

Simon did not know he was blessed when he was carrying Your cross--he only felt how heavy it was. Praying the Stations of the Cross will help us to remember that carrying our crosses helps You too.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Sixth Station:

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Jesus' face is covered with sweat, blood and dust. It is itchy and uncomfortable. In pity, Veronica runs out to the road to wipe the dirt from Jesus' face. This small act of kindness is all she can do to help Him.

Jesus, we want to see and touch Your face, shining in glory in Heaven. We know that our small acts of kindness and our prayers help us grow closer to You and Your Father in Heaven.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Seventh Station:

Jesus Falls the Second Time

The road is so long and the cross is so heavy. Exhausted, Jesus falls down again. The soldiers yell at Him and whip Him to make him get up. Don't they know that they are hurting Him more? Jesus knows that He is suffering for the sins of the world. He gets up and keeps walking.

Jesus, sometimes we get tired, discouraged and impatient with the world. When we fail and fall into sin, it hurts You more. We are sorry and we ask You to help us be as patient and brave as You.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Eighth Station:

Jesus Speaks to Women of Jerusalem

Next, Jesus meets some of the women he taught. They are crying. They are crying for Jesus, and for their own loss ... what will they do without Jesus? Jesus tells them not to weep for Him, but for all the sinners of the world.

Jesus, you told the women of Jerusalem to weep for us. Even in your pain, You remembered us. Thank you. We will pray for sinners too.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Ninth Station:

Christ's Third Fall

Jesus reaches the last hill before Calvary. He looks up to see how far he has to go. When he sees the hill where He knows he is going to die, His strength leaves Him and He falls to the ground. There is still more pain, still more sorrow to endure. But Jesus loves us, so He keeps going.

Jesus, You kept going even though you were tired, scared and sad. You loved us then, and You love us now. We offer our prayers to tell you that we love you, and want to comfort you in Your great sacrifice.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Tenth Station:

Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

The crowd has followed Jesus and the soldiers to the top of Calvary hill. Now they laugh as the guards pull off his clothes - His robe has stuck to the blood on His back. The guards push and shove Jesus. They do not care Who He is, they only see that He is a object of scorn.

Jesus, even wounded, bleeding, roughly treated by the guards and mocked by the crowds, You were and are still our King. We ask you to remember us in Your Kingdom.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be..

The Eleventh Station:

Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

Is this the worst? The feet that carried the message of God's Love and the hands that healed are pierced with nails as Jesus is nailed to the cross. More wounds, more pain and more humiliation for Jesus.

Jesus, they tried to stop your hands and feet from doing Your Father's work by nailing you to a cross. You endured the pain of it for us, as you gave your whole life for us. We thank you and we love you.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Twelfth Station:

Jesus Dies upon the Cross

The sword that Simeon prophesied has pierced Mary's heart. The hopes of the Apostles are crushed. The veil of the Temple, symbol of the old covenant of God's Love, is torn in two as Jesus' death opens a New Covenant with God.

Jesus, you spoke lovingly to everyone gathered at the foot of Your cross. You knew the new life that Your death made possible. Speak lovingly to us when we come before You and make us worthy of that new life in You.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Thirteenth Station:

Jesus is taken from the Cross

Now, all that is left is to take Jesus' body down from the cross. All the gentleness, reverence and love denied through this terrible day is possible now. Mary and the Apostles wonder, Is it too late? Is it over?

Jesus, with our prayers, we join in taking your body down from the cross. We touch You; take the nails out, wash your wounds, take off the crown of thorns, with love and sorrow. We grieve with Mary, and want to comfort her.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

The Fourteenth Station:

Jesus is Laid in the Sepulcher

Even in this time of sorrow, there is help. Joseph of Arimathea arranges for Jesus to be buried in a nearby tomb. His body is wrapped in clothes and sealed away. Everyone walk away, weeping. Finally, all is quiet, peaceful even.

Jesus, we sometimes think that You are gone, that it is all over, that we will never be happy or good again. Your death and resurrection shows us that You will never leave us. We should always try to follow you with our lives and our prayers.

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be...

Closing Prayer

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth;
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord,

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.