

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

A reading from the Holy Gospel
according to Luke.
(Luke 9:22-24)



The Son of Man is destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected, and to be raised up on the third day. If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, will save it.

Lord Jesus, help us to be open to your closeness and presence as we begin this journey to Calvary with you. Help us to find in your Passion and Death the strength we need to take up our crosses and follow you.

First Station: Pilate Condemns Jesus to Death



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
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.

Lord Jesus, often I judge others and fail to be understanding or loving. Help me to see the people in my life through your eyes, not the eyes of a Pontius Pilate.

*Judge of all He stands convicted,
Of the sin that we've committed.
All for love He bears our guilt.*

Second Station: Jesus Accepts His Cross



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
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 flew 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.

Lord Jesus, you embraced your cross to redeem the world. Help me to embrace the crosses in my life - the hardships, struggles, disappointments, pain. Only recognizing my own weakness, can I discover your strength.

*Now the cross as Jesus bore it,
Has become for us who share it,
Symbol of our victory.*

Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
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 they 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.

Lord Jesus, you know how often I fall trying to follow you. Yet you are always there to lift me up. Help me to always trust in your loving care for me.

*For the sins of His own nation,
Jesus walked in desolation,
'Til He fell upon His knees.*

Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.*

MEDITATION :

I had 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.

Lord Jesus, your mother Mary's grief was surpassed by her love for you. So often you come to me in others and their love gives me new life. Help me to see how often you love me through the people in my life.

*Can the human heart refrain,
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold.*

Fifth Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
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 guards why this had to be. I knew, and so followed silently.

Lord Jesus, sometimes I am indifferent to the needs of others in my life. I even neglect those whom I love. Help me to see that loving others is the surest way to find you in my life.

*Simon bears with hesitation,
Glorious sign of our salvation,
That which we should bear with joy.*

Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
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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.

Lord Jesus, at times I am afraid to reach out to others. I do nothing when I should act, I say nothing when I should speak out. Give me a deeper and more courageous faith. Help me to trust that you are with me.

*With the cloth she wipes His face,
Tears of pain she can't erase,
From the face of love on earth.*

Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
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.

Lord Jesus, failure and disappointment sometimes lead me to despair. I hide behind my pride and self-pity, withdrawing from you and others. Give me the hope I need and help me never to be afraid to begin again.

*Jesus falls upon the ground,
Struggles forth without a sound,
To continue on His way.*

Eighth Station: Jesus Speaks to the Women



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
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. He told 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.

Lord Jesus, your great compassion for others overwhelms me. I feel petty and selfish when I think of you and the way you love. Help me to pour out my love, that you might fill me with your love.

*Like the women at His passion,
Loving hearts within us fashion,
That we might share others' pain.*

Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.*

MEDITATION:

This fall of Jesus was agony to me. Not only had he fallen on the rocky ground again, but now 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.

Lord Jesus, your failing strength makes me see how helpless I am. Without you, I can do nothing. Help me to rely on your strength, to see how much I need you.

*Pain in head and back He bore,
Near to death, He fell once more,
Yet obedient to God's will.*

Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.*

MEDITATION:

With my son finally relieved 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.

Lord Jesus, seeing you so cruelly humiliated makes me realize how I cling to my accomplishments, my possessions, my way. Help me to let go of those things in my life that prevent me from growing closer to you and others.

*Garments stripped, He stands alone,
Soldiers mock, no mercy shown,
To the Son of God that day.*

Eleventh Station: Jesus is Crucified



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
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.

Lord Jesus, I can never doubt your great love for me when I see you crucified. Help me to see your cross as the great sign of your love for me.

*Arms spread wide our pain embracing,
Stain of blood our sin erasing,
Though nailed fast, His hands still heal.*

Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
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.

Lord Jesus, your broken and lifeless body calls me to deeper faith. You chose death, even death on a cross. Help me to see my crosses as ways of loving you.

*Word of Life, of death defiant,
Bowed His head – the world is silent;
Through His death came life anew.*

Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
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' friends and looked up at the dead body of our savior - my son. Then the 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.

Lord Jesus, seeing your body taken from the cross reminds me how fearful I am of letting go of my own life. I am frightened when I think of being unimportant, useless, helpless. Help me to place my life in your hands.

*Earth's sky black in midst of day,
In His Mother's arms He lay,
Now at length His suffering passed.*

Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Tomb



*We adore you, Lord Jesus,
and we praise you.
Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.*

MEDITATION:

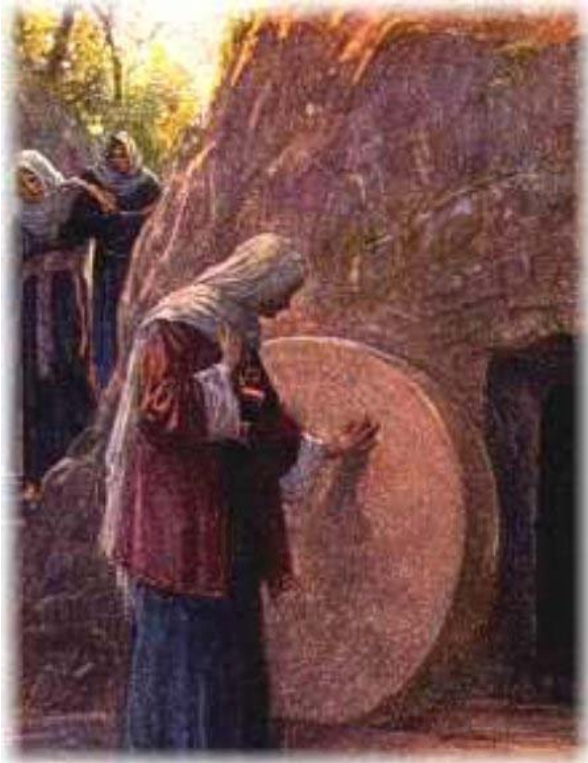
We brought Jesus' body to a tomb and I arranged it there myself, silently weeping, silently rejoicing, I took one more look at my loving son, and then walked out. They closed the tomb and before I left, I thought, I knew this had to be ... it had to be for you! I would wait in faith silently.

Lord Jesus, when I see the great stone sealing your tomb, I feel alone and abandoned. Even though you sometimes seem distant or absent in my life, help me always to believe in your closeness and loving presence.

*Hidden from the sight of heaven,
Earth's dark womb receives our victim,
Now we wait for Him to rise.*

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

**A reading from the Holy Gospel
according to Luke.
(Luke 24:1-8)**



On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, they went to the tomb with spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. But, on entering, they discovered that the body of the Lord Jesus was not there. As they stood there not knowing what to think, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. Terrified, the women lowered their eyes. But the two men said to them, "Why look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he has risen. Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee: that the Son of Man had to be handed over into the power of sinful people and be crucified, and rise again on the third day?"

And they remembered his words.

Lord Jesus, help us to walk with you each day, even to Calvary. The sorrows and joys, the pains and healings, the failures and triumphs of our lives are truly small deaths and resurrections that lead us to closeness with you. Give us faith and trust to walk with you always.

Amen.