



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

for Healing from Clergy Sexual Abuse

PREPARATORY PRAYER

(to be said kneeling before the altar)

ALL: My Lord, Jesus Christ,

You have made this journey to die for me with unspeakable love; and we as your Church have so many times ungratefully abandoned you. In a particular way, those in positions of authority in your Church have abandoned and hurt your little ones, those whom you love the most. As we accompany you on this journey to the Cross, let us again seek to love you with all of our hearts, to make reparation for the crimes committed against you and your Mystical Body, and to vow never again to allow such crimes to be cloaked in darkness and secrecy. Pardon your Church, our God, and permit us to accompany you on this journey.

*At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful Mother weeping
Close to Jesus to the last*

THE FIRST STATION PILATE CONDEMNS JESUS TO DEATH

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider how stunning it is when powerful people wash their hands of the responsibilities they have to protect and care for those people entrusted to them. Just as Jesus was the victim of Pilate's indifference, so too we may feel abandoned by those people who exercise authority in the Church as they have so often failed to cherish and protect the vulnerable. The injustice is staggering, and yet our Lord endured what he knew was still to come, even in the midst of such betrayal, for the sake of his Bride, the Church.

Let us pray

Give us the courage, O God, to cleanse our hearts and turn back to you. In our indifference and our inaction, we have hurt one another and affected the little ones. Give us the strength of mind, heart, and soul to honor you as we reach out to all those who have been betrayed by the hands that should have blessed them. I love you, Jesus, with my whole heart; never allow me to wash my hands of you.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

*Through her heart, His sorrow sharing
All His bitter anguish bearing
Now at length the sword has passed*

THE SECOND STATION JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that among the many ways in which to be sentenced to death, the cross was a most painful and torturous instrument. Yet the Cross of Jesus is the banner of our redemption. Jesus invites us to “take up” the cross and to embrace the cause of what is right and good. Jesus transforms the instrument of torture and death into the sign of what is right and justice. In the name of Jesus, let us bear it willingly and with courage when others would avoid it.

Let us pray

O God, many followers of Jesus have been crucified in our World that is often cruel and hurtful. Indeed, there are many in the Church who have been crucified by their own brothers and sisters in Christ. Amidst such a great pain, grant that a renewed spirit of solidarity may be given amongst Christians, that in his name comfort and aid would be given to those who have been hurt, and relief to those who have for so long and silently carried heavy burdens by themselves.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

*O, how sad and sore depressed
Was that Mother highly blessed
Of the sole Begotten One*

THE THIRD STATION JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that Jesus fell beneath his cross because of the abuse and violence he suffered at the hands of those who compromised their human decency. Sometimes we forget our calling to be fully human. Sometimes we hurt others for our own pleasure and comfort. We must repent of all those thoughts, words, and deeds by which we hurt others for the sake of ourselves, and remember that we are called to lift up one another.

Let us pray

O, dear fallen Jesus, give aid to all those who have fallen under the crosses of their own sins and failures or of those of others. Grant us the courage to confront injustice in both the World and our Church; strengthen us to lift up the fallen and the hurting. May we never be a stumbling block or obstacle to those we are called to serve and love.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

*Christ above in torment hangs
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying, glorious Son*

THE FOURTH STATION JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider Mary, whose countenance bears the wounds of the child before her. Her tears, her cry, her pain is no less than the hurts and wounds of the child. Our hearts are broken. At times we have failed to work with the mind and heart of a mother.

Let us pray

Humbly, O God, we come before you with the broken heart of a mother's love and a father's care. Grant that we may hear the cries and taste the tears of the parents whose children have been assaulted. Bless us with the gift of tears that we may repent and embrace those who are wounded and broken. Give us the heart of a loving mother and a caring father. Strengthen us to work for the freedom of all children everywhere from the cages of oppression, the politics of selfishness, and the abuse of indifference and denial.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

*Is there one who would not weep,
'whelmed in miseries so deep
Christ's dear Mother to behold.*

THE FIFTH STATION SIMON COMES TO THE AID OF JESUS

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that Jesus, unable to carry the load any further, needed assistance carrying his cross. Like Simon, we have a duty to come to the aid of others in need to offer healing, justice, and reconciliation. Like Simon, who reluctantly took the Cross of Jesus, we too must embrace the pain and sorrow and hurt in the service of those most in need of aid.

Let us pray

O God, we pray for you always to come to the aid of your people and your Church, and especially those little ones in most need of your assistance. Grant us the courage and strength to aid those who have been hurt by the malpractice and injustice of those who should have been agents of your love. Raise up among us Simons of generous care and uncompromising love.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

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

THE SIXTH STATION VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Masked by the bruises, blood, and sweat, the disfigured face of Jesus can also be seen in the victims of abuse and neglect. His tears can be seen in all of those who have been assaulted in body, mind, and spirit. And yet, in a singular act of compassion, Veronica gives aid to the suffering Jesus, allowing his humanity to again be manifested to those gathered; left behind on her veil, the true image of Christ the Servant shines forth through the care and service she has given to Jesus.

Let us pray

O Lord Jesus, may we be reborn in your true image as you come to wipe away our tears. We are so sorry for all the tears we have caused others. Cleanse your Church anew in the tears of Jesus, that from this day forward the peoples of the Church and the World will see in us nothing but your face smiling upon them with care, love, and peace.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled

She beheld her tender Child

All with bloody scourges rent.

THE SEVENTH STATION JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that the weight of the cross and of those unjust actions committed against Jesus cause him to fall a second time. As the same unjust actions committed by those in positions of authority cause the Body of Christ to falter under such a burden, the old scars are opened up again, just as new wounds are inflicted. Even still, Jesus' love for us allows him to continue the journey.

Let us pray

Deliver us, O God, from all temptations to be vengeful and spiteful. Grant that we may be filled with love and compassion in our hearts during moments of injustice and injury. Renew the image of Jesus in the face of the Church. Fill us with compassion so that others may see in our empathy and works your love and abiding concern for their well-being, healing, and protection.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

For the sins of His own nation

Saw Him hang in desolation

Till His spirit forth He sent.

THE EIGHTH STATION JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider how, abandoned by almost all of his followers, Jesus meets the women toward whom he had shown tender compassion and mercy. While others shunned them, Jesus recognized that behind every issue in life there are real people; people whose lives were transformed in the experience of the love of Christ.

Let us pray

Grant to us, O God, the generosity of your Son, who saw in others what so many refused to see in him. In the moments of his anguish, he became one with the anguish of others. May we not ignore their suffering, or become de-sensitized to it, but grant that our only concern would be the welfare and dignity of others. O Jesus, help us to be a source of comfort and joy in our work and outreach to those most in need of your love and tender care.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

O sweet Mother! Fount of Love,

Touch my spirit from above

Make my heart with yours accord.

THE NINTH STATION JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that the injustices inflicted upon Jesus cause him to stumble and fall yet again. It would be enough for anyone to give up. And yet, Jesus perseveres. In this fallen world, with sinful leaders, we too must endure injustice at times, and yet, as members of Christ's mystical body, we too must persevere in bearing one another's burdens. Although we ourselves are in need of Christ's loving forgiveness, we need not be perfect in order to stand up for what is right and just. As Jesus falls under the weight of injustice, he reveals what it means to stand up in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, the unemployed and the hungry, the lowly and rejected.

Let us pray

Grant, Lord, that we might have the fortitude to stand yet again when the transgressions of others knock us to the ground. We pray that, like your son Jesus, we might be merciful as we beg your mercy and forgiveness. Help us to give to others what we receive from you. May we have the courage of Jesus to forgive and love in times of conflict, and division, and being downfallen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Make me feel as You have felt

Make my soul to glow and melt

With the love of Christ, my Lord.

THE TENTH STATION JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that Jesus, having had his garments stripped, was left naked and beaten for all of those present to mock and scorn him. So, too, have many of our brothers and sisters been stripped of their dignity, their rights, their joy. The poor, the imprisoned, the homeless and the sick are often found exposed to the violence of greed and political expediency. We must clothe ourselves in Jesus, bearing the virtues of his sacred heart in every affair of life. We must learn to clothe others with the garments of their dignity and self-respect.

Let us pray

Loving God, clothed now in Glory, hear our prayers for those exposed to the ravages of hatred and injury. Give us the purity of heart to see the beauty of others and the splendor of creation as the revelation of your own splendor and beauty. May we see in others and all creatures not objects of our desires, but your children and our sisters and brothers. Help us to remember that to see them is to see the face of Jesus.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Holy Mother, pierce me through

In my heart each wound renew

Of my Savior crucified.

THE ELEVENTH STATION JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that Jesus, all dignity stripped away, suffers the horror and the agony of being crucified. In so doing, he unites himself in a special way to those agonies suffered by victims today and in every time. The injustice of this evil invokes feelings of anger, remorse, confusion, and shame. Yet, we too, have helped to inflict these wounds upon our Loving Savior.

Let us pray

My Lord Jesus, I beg your forgiveness for my sins, which have nailed you to the Cross, and for those sins committed by members of your Church in their abuse of your children. Gracious God, help me to unite my sufferings to your Cross, that they might manifest your healing love in the lives of abuse victims. Help us to realize the power of mercy, forgiveness, understanding, and courage when the nails of betrayal and the sins of brutality, abuse, and self-justification injure our bodies and darken our soul.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Let me share with you His pain,

Who for all our sins was slain,

Who for me in torments died.

THE TWELFTH STATION JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that Jesus, having suffered the agony of his Passion by hanging for three hours on the Cross, is finally overwhelmed. He abandons himself to the weight of his body, bows his head and dies.

Let us pray

O, Lord Jesus, grant us the courage to be your loving and compassionate presence in a broken Church and a divided World, sacrificing our desires so that we may serve you and love those who have suffered with you through the injustices that the World and the Church have inflicted upon them.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Let me mingle tears with thee

Mourning Him who mourned for me,

All the days that I may live.

THE THIRTEENTH STATION JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that when Jesus was born, Mary placed him in a manger so the World could be fed. Now, the princes of this world have placed his crucified and broken Body in her lap. When all others ran away in betrayal and denial, she and a few faithful disciples witnessed his self-giving, held him in death, and buried him with great love and care. May we not be like those disciples who fled for fear, but rather give tender reverence to the broken, dead body of our Lord.

Let us pray

My loving Jesus, you have died for love of me. Grant that no mother or father would ever need to hold their beloved because they have been neglected, abused, scorned, or hated. Mother Mary, show us the love of your son, that he would be manged in our hearts and that we might be his light shining in the darkness. Manger Jesus in the Church anew that She might be his faithful witness in the World.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

By the cross with you to stay

There with you to weep and pray

Is all I ask of you to give.

THE FOURTEENTH STATION JESUS IS BURIED IN THE TOMB

P. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the World.

Consider that while Jesus is crucified like a thief, he is buried like a king. He is buried like the good seed that will bear fruit in the soil of our hearts. He is buried like the Treasure in the fields of our souls. He is buried like the Pearl of great price. He is buried in the ground of our anguish and brokenness as the grain destined to be our abundance. In the agony of the Cross is our only hope.

Let us pray

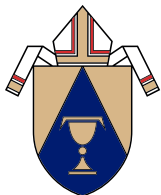
Holy Lord Jesus, be close to us in our hour of loss and grief. Bless us with your grace that we may hear your voice in the darkness and uncertainty. Grant us the light of your wisdom in the confusion and fear of the present moment. Pour out the Holy Spirit into our hearts that we might embrace the children with love and care, welcome the stranger and alien with generosity, and renew your Mystical Body, hurt and weakened from the wrongs inflicted upon it by its own members. Give to us your peace, that it may calm the storm of this present crisis; and bring us into still waters, that we may find rest in you.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Virgin of all virgins blest!

Listen to my fond request:

Let me share your grief divine.



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Adapted from Stations of the Cross by St. Alphonsus Liguori

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