

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Via Crucis – The Road to Heaven

(Redacted from Bishop Philip Egan)

Making the Way of the Cross originated in Jerusalem in the late second century where the places along the Lord's route through the city were identified and venerated. Christians would come on pilgrimage to visit these stations, to meditate on the Lord's Passion and death. They would stop to reflect and pray, to unite themselves with Jesus and repent of their sins that lead to His crucifixion.

Begin at the altar with the Prayer before the Journey.

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

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory be...

God our Father, as we set out on our sorrowful journey, grant us your grace. We thank and praise you for the gift of life but even more we thank and praise you for the gift of your Son. By dying He destroyed sin, suffering and death and by His resurrection, He offers us the gift of eternal life. As we follow Him now along the Road to Calvary, change our lives by your Holy Spirit that we may live the new way of living He has called us to. Grant us the grace to carry the cross in union with Him and grant your love and strength to all who carry heavy burdens especially the poor and needy. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Stabat Mater)

At the Cross her station keeping,- stood the mournful Mother weeping,- close to Jesus to the last,

The First Station – Jesus is condemned to death

Psalm 34:22 'The Lord redeems the life of His servants: None of those who take refuge in him will be condemned'.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise You:

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

(Leader)

Consider how Jesus the Son Incarnate, after being scourged and crowned with thorns, was abused and insulted by the crowds and unjustly condemned to death by Pontius Pilate.

We are often quick to judge, criticise and even condemn others, yet this is one of the hardest things when it happens to us.

(Pause for reflection)

We pray now to Our Lord Jesus for the grace to forgive those who have wronged us and for God's forgiveness for the times we have harshly judged others. We also pray for those on trial today, for the unjustly condemned, for prisoners and those who look after them.

(Leader}Lord in your mercy. (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love you, Jesus, my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what you will.

Stabat Mater

Through her heart, His sorrow sharing, - all His bitter anguish bearing, - now at length the sword has passed.

The Second Station- Jesus is made to carry the Cross

(Matthew 16:24-26)

'Then 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. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life?"

(Leader) We adore you O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise you.

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

(Leader)

Consider how Jesus as He carried the Cross on His Shoulders, was thinking about you and me, offering to the Father the death He was about to undergo to bring us to salvation and happiness.

(Pause for reflection)

(Leader)

We pray to Jesus for the grace to hear His voice speaking to our hearts, to fulfil our vocation in life and persevere in it. We remember in prayer those people who carry heavy crosses such as poor health, financial worries, broken marriages, for those who are lonely or sad today, for those people who are victims of violence or terrorism and for migrants and refugees.

Lord in your mercy **(Response)** Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love You, Jesus, my Love above all things, I repent with my whole heart for having offended You, never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love you always, then do with me what You will.

Stabat Mater

Oh how sad and sore distressed- was that Mother highly blessed, - of the sole-begotten One.

The Third Station- Jesus falls for the first time.

(Psalm 145:14)

‘The Lord upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down’.

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we love you.

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) Consider the first time that Jesus fell under the enormous weight of the cross. Loss of blood from the scourging and the crown of thorns had gravely weakened Him, yet the Roman soldiers mercilessly drove Him on through the streets to his imminent death.

(Pause for reflection)

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

(Leader) 'Ours were the sufferings he bore, ours the sorrows he carried.... Yet through his wounds we are healed' (Isaiah 53:4)

At this station we make an act of contrition. Father God we are sorry for our sins and ask for your forgiveness, especially for falling into sinful thoughts, words, attitudes and deeds. We pray for a firm resolution to rise up again and amend our lives. Help us to make reparation to you and atone also for the failings of others.

Lord in your mercy. (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love you Jesus, my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what You will.

Stabat Mater

Christ above the torment hangs; - she beneath beholds the pangs - of her dying glorious Son.

The Fourth Station- Jesus meets His Mother

"Behold this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed and a sword will pierce through your own heart also, so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed ".(Luke 2:34-35)

(Leader) We adore You, O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise You.

(Response) Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) What a poignant meeting when Jesus and Mary met on the way to the cross. Jesus, His heart full of compassion, Mary there to support him in His sacrifice for our sins, in his suffering self-sacrifice for our benefit.

(Pause for reflection)

'Woman, this is your Son' (John 19:26)

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Mary the mother of the Church is our mother too; she loves us with a maternal concern.

(Leader) We ask our Mother Mary and Queen of the New Evangelisation to intercede for us, for our needs and the needs of the Diocese and also the whole Church. We pray especially for Pope Francis, Bishop Philip and all the Bishops, priests, deacons, religious and lay faithful that we may be more effective evangelisers of contemporary culture.

Mary, Mother of Christ (Response) Pray for us.

(All)

I love You, Jesus, my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what You will.

Stabat Mater

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

The Fifth Station- Simon helps Jesus carry the Cross

'The merciful lend to their neighbours; By holding out a helping hand they keep the Commandments'. (Sirach 29:1)

(Leader) We adore you O Christ (all genuflect), and we praise You

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) We think about Jesus physically and emotionally struggling and it seemed that He would not make it to Calvary. So forced by the soldiers Simon of Cyrene came forward to help Him. Simon however reluctant at first was literally a Godsend, since without his help Jesus would have literally expired along the way. Perhaps we too have been helped at some time by a generous passer-by?

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

We pray to our loving heavenly Father for a greater love for others and a real sensitivity to their needs, that we will always go the extra mile to help. We pray for God's blessing on all who have helped and supported us along the way of life.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love you, Jesus, my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what You will.

Stabat Mater

Can the human heart refrain - from partaking in her pain, - in that Mother's pain untold?

The Sixth Station – Veronica wipes the Holy Face of Jesus

'The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other greater Commandment than these.'" (Mark 12:31)

(Leader) We adore you O Christ (All genuflect) and we praise You

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) A woman in the crowd stepped forward. Seeing Jesus in terrible suffering and distress, she offered Him a towel. In drying His face with it, He left upon it a sacred image of Himself. The name Veronica means 'true image' and as disciples that is what each one of us is called to be.

We pray that we may become true images of Christ. We pray also for those who govern us, for those who work in the caring professions as public servants, doctors, pharmacists, nurses, and social workers, for those who serve in the armed forces, for the police and emergency services.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

(All)

I love you, Jesus, my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love you always, then do with me what you will.

Stabat Mater

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled, - she beheld her tender child, - till His spirit forth He sent.

The Seventh Station – Jesus falls for a second time

‘But You, O Lord, are a shield around me, my glory and the One who lifts up my head,’ (Psalm 3:3)

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we bless You

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) We think about all the intermediate falls and stumbling of the Lord, carrying himself to Calvary to offer himself to the Father for our salvation. How often are our good intentions only words that we fail to see through?

We pray for the grace to put our faith into action. We pray for all those who fall into vice and difficulty, into alcoholism and the slavery of drug and sexual addictions, that the Lord will preserve them from despair and help them rise again to take up the cross.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love You, Jesus my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what you will.

Stabat Mater

For the sins of his own nation- saw Him hang in desolation, - all with bloody scourges rent.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

The Eighth Station- Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem

‘Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.’ (Proverbs 31:25-26)

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise You

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) The women of Jerusalem, seeing Jesus weak, bruised and struggling, wept for Him. In reply, the Saviour of the world said, “Weep not for me but for your children.”

How many people in life, like Jesus, have given us a brilliant example of self-sacrificing love, when despite their own problems have looked out for us?

We pray for the grace to differentiate in life what is really important and what is not? We pray for a special blessing on all those good men and women who have helped us endure the misfortunes of life, especially our relatives and friends, teachers and clergy.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love you, Jesus, my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love you always, then do with me what You will.

Stabat Mater

O thou Mother, fount of love, - touch my spirit from above, -make my heart with thine accord.

The Ninth Station- Jesus falls a third time

‘I will confront evil, pursue justice, and love mercy.’ (The Resolution)

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise You

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

(Leader) Jesus, the King of Martyrs, gives to the end a perfect example of loving patience and commitment, when weak and exhausted. He fell on His face at the place where He had come to lay down His life.

When we see how terrible is the suffering of many in our world, our own problems and sufferings, however real, can seem slight and short-lived.

We ask the Lord for the strength always to rise from our falls and bear the cross with patience and love. We pray for help for all those who are weighed down by worry and anxiety. We pray for all those who suffer depression and mental illness, and those who counsel and care for them.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love You, Jesus my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what You will.

Stabat Mater

Make me feel as thou has felt; - make my soul to glow and melt – with the love of Christ our Lord.

The Tenth Station- Jesus is stripped of his clothes

‘But the cares of the world, and the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it yields nothing.’ (Mark 4:19)

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise You

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) Having reached Calvary, the place of crucifixion, the clothes of Jesus were pulled so roughly from His body that His skin was also torn away with the cloth, opening up the wounds of His scourging.

We often create personas so that others will think more highly of us, yet when the reality is exposed, our reputation lies in tatters.

At this station we pray for the grace to be less critical and judgemental of others. We pray for universal respect and love for the poor and the weak.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

We pray for the international community, that there may be peace on earth with a just and equitable distribution of the world's resources.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love you, Jesus my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what You will.

Stabat Mater

Holy Mother, pierce me through; - in my heart each wound renew – of my Saviour crucified.

The Eleventh Station – Jesus is nailed to the Cross

'No-one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.'

(John 15:13)

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise You

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) Jesus, stretching out his arms on the wood, was painfully nailed to the Cross. He, the Lamb of God, on the cross was raised up high and, blood flowing from His wounds, was left to die.

(John 19:34) 'One of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear and at once there came out blood and water.'

Bodily pain can be excruciating: we thank God for recent advances in medical science and palliative care. We pray for anyone in physical pain at the moment especially those with arthritis and cancer that God will work in that situation giving strength to endure, to alleviate and heal. We pray for those who will die today that they would receive God's mercy and compassion. We pray that they may be joined to the sacrifice of Jesus, and consoled by His Love.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

(All)

I love you, Jesus my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to be separated from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what You will.

Stabat Mater

Let me share with thee His pain, - Who for all my sins was slain, - Who for me in torments died.

The Twelfth Station- Jesus dies on the Cross

'For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son , so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life.' (John 3:16)

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise You

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) Jesus was crucified between two criminals. At the end of His Passion He cried out, "Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit." He bowed His head and breathed his last breath. (short pause)

(Romans 5:7) ' It is not easy to die, even for a good man.'

Dying and death is daunting, yet Jesus by His Cross has made it the road to Heaven.

We ask God to preserve us from a sudden and unprovided death, to grant us a happy death, assisted by the Sacraments of Mother Church and attended by those we love. We pray for those whom will die alone and unloved, especially the victims of prejudice and war.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love you, Jesus my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what you will.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Stabat Mater

Let me mingle tears with thee, - mourning Him Who mourned for me, - all the days that I may live.

The Thirteenth Station- The Body of Jesus is taken down from the Cross

'It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.' (Deuteronomy 31:8)

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise You

(Response) Because by you Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) See how all the other disciples had deserted Jesus in His last agony, except the Blessed Virgin Mary and John the Beloved Disciple. Now His Sacred Body is taken down from the Cross and laid into the arms of His Mother. "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world."

Often these days the natural order is rejected. The human body and Mother Nature are mistreated. We pray for the grace to live more simply with respect for creation. We pray that everyone on earth may come to know and respect the corporal and spiritual realms of God's creation. We ask the Holy Spirit to give the gift of faith to those who do not believe in God or in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love you, Jesus my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to be separated from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what you will.

Stabat Mater

By the cross with thee to stay, - there with thee to weep and pray, - this I ask of thee to give.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

The Fourteenth Station – Jesus is laid in the tomb

“For surely I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord, “ plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

(Leader) We adore You O Christ (all genuflect) and we praise You

(Response) Because by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

(Leader) Consider how, with the help of Joseph of Arimathea, the wrapped the Body of Jesus in linen cloths, with myrrh and aloes, following the Jewish burial custom, and laid it in a tomb. It was Preparation Day and on the Sabbath, as the Law required, they rested.

“Consummatum est: It is accomplished”. (John 19:30)

The Passion of Jesus was for Mary and the Apostles a devastating ordeal, yet we know that this was not the end of the story. For He who once said, “ I am the Resurrection and the Life”, descended into hell to open the gates of Paradise.

We pray then in confidence for our loved ones who have died, for all the faithful departed, that cleansed of their sins, the Lord will admit them into the communion of saints.

(Leader) Lord in your mercy (Response) Hear our prayer.

(All)

I love you, Jesus my Love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended You. Never permit me to separate myself from You again. Grant that I may love You always, then do with me what You will.

Stabat Mater

Christ, when thou shall call me hence, - be Thy mother my defence. – Be Thy Cross my victory. Amen.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

(All)

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, hail our life our sweetness and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, your eyes of mercy towards us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus: O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

(Leader) Pray for us, most holy Mother of God

(Response) That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

(Leader) God our Father, we have devoutly recalled the Way of the Cross that your Beloved Son travelled on His way to Calvary to die for us for our salvation. Graciously hear the prayers we have offered to you. Help us to carry our own cross and the burdens of life. Forgive us our sins and make us holy, that one day we may be found worthy to pass over with Christ into the joys of Paradise. Through the same Christ our Lord.

(Response) Amen.

(Leader) Finally for the intentions of the Holy Father:

(All) Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... In the name of the Father +...

(Leader) Let us depart in peace to serve the Lord by our lives.