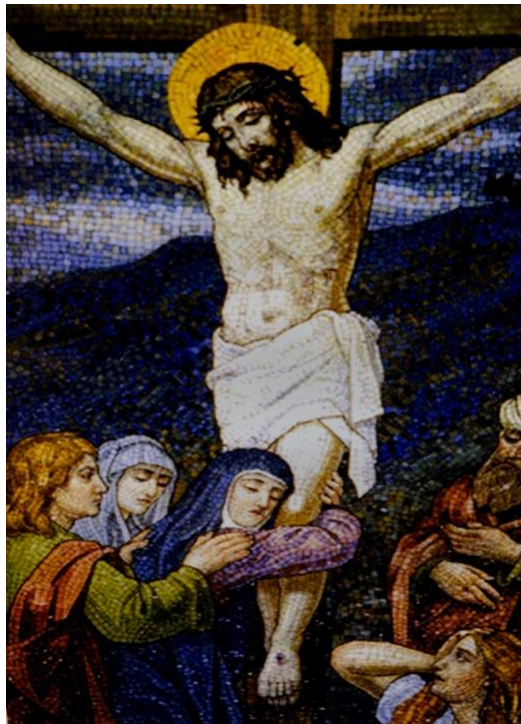




St. Paul of Tarsus
CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Stations



of the Cross



Presider: Loving God, you have made our lives a journey toward yourself. Often, we become distracted, seeking life's vanities rather than the prize you set before us. May our walking this road of loving sacrifice with Jesus deepen our awareness of the great price you paid for loving us and help us avoid the detours we often find so tempting. May we commit ourselves anew to loving others as we love ourselves, and to love you with all we have within us.

May the anguish Jesus suffered remind us that no pain is wasted, no affliction unredeemed, so long as we unite our pain with His as an offering of love for this world you created so beautiful and good. May this sad journey lead us to rise with Christ on Easter to new and more abundant life.

ALL: Amen.

FIRST STATION
Jesus is Condemned



Reader: The people brought Jesus to Pilate, to be judged. The people wanted Jesus to be punished. Even though Pilate knew Jesus was innocent, he gave into the crowd. Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified. The soldiers pressed a crown of thorns into his head. He was scourged and beaten. Jesus was condemned to death on the cross.

Presider: Let us pray. All-powerful and eternal God, for proclaiming the truth your Son, Jesus Christ, is condemned to death by crucifixion. Stir up your love in our hearts so that we might be ever faithful to all that You have told us and fear nothing more than the loss of your friendship through sin. You accepted criticism and undeserved punishment and didn't complain. Help us stand up for what is right.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Please help me be strong like you are and try to choose to do the right thing.

Help us to always accept what God wants us to do.

Lord help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*At the cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.*

SECOND STATION
Jesus Takes up His Cross



Reader: The soldiers brought the cross to Jesus and put it on His shoulders. Jesus accepted all our sins and took up the cross. He knew he was not guilty of any crime, but He accepted the heavy cross and carried it to show us how much He loves us.

Presider: Let us pray. Father in heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ, still carries His Cross in his persecuted brothers and sisters throughout the world. Make us feel the needs of all persons so that we might as readily help them as we would help Jesus himself. Some people have harder crosses to bear than others. Help us to reach out to others in need. When we are about to complain about our cross, help us to remember Christ and His cross.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

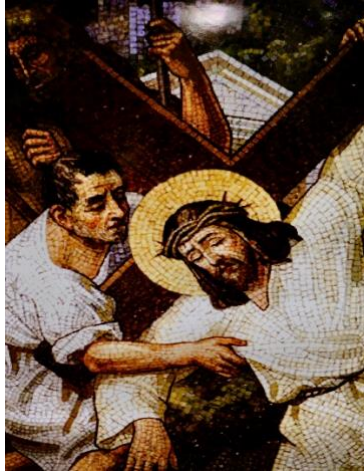
Give me strength to do the things I don't like to do.

Help us to carry our heavy crosses like you did.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

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

THIRD STATION
Jesus Falls the First Time



Reader: Carrying the cross was not easy. It was rough and heavy. Jesus was tired and weak, and hurt from the beatings the soldiers gave Him. He fell to His knees under the weight of the cross.

Presider: Let us pray. O God, to free us from sin and weakness your Son, Jesus Christ, embraced his fearful passion and crucifixion. Strengthen us in our baptismal resolution by which we renounced sin and Satan, so that through the passion of this life's sufferings we might rise to a new life of joyful service free of all selfishness. When we are having a difficult time, let us ask for courage to keep on going.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Please help me to be strong and keep going when things get tough.

Help us to keep trying to do our best for You.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*Oh, how sad and sore distressed
Was that mother highly blest
Of the sole begotten One!*

FOURTH STATION
Jesus Meets His Mother



Reader: As Jesus looked around Him, He saw and heard people yelling at Him and some were even laughing at Him. He also saw His mother, Mary, who could not get close enough to speak to Him. He saw the pain in her eyes. But He was happy she was near to give Him strength.

Presider: Let us pray. O blessed Lord, at your passion a sword pierced the loving heart of your mother as Simeon had foretold. Grant that we, who look back on her sorrows with compassion, might receive the healing fruits of your sufferings. Mary always believed in God. We too must be people of hope.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

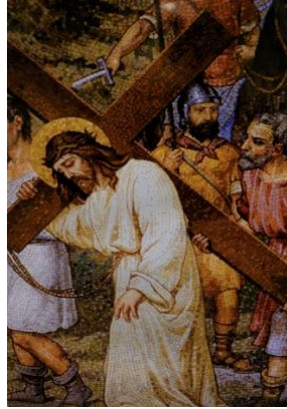
Thank you for my parents who love me. Please help me to show them I love them.

Help us to be grateful for those who love us.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

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

FIFTH STATION
Simon Helps to Carry Jesus' Cross



Reader: As Jesus carried the cross up the hill, the soldiers saw that He was very tired and weak. They did not want Him to die on the road, so they pulled Simon out of the crowd and told him to help. At times we are afraid to help others. It was hard for Simon to help a man who was on his way to being executed, but Simon did what was needed.

Presider: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ help us to see in the sufferings and shortcomings of our lives a share in Your cross; strengthen and console us in the belief that we bear all things in union with You, who have taken upon Yourself even our guilt. We are called to open our hearts to the needs of others in the world.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Please help me to help others in need when I don't want to.

Make us ready and willing to help our neighbor.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen,

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

SIXTH STATION
Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus



Reader: All during His life, Jesus showed how He loved other people. He gave them food if they were hungry, sight if they were blind. While He was on His way to be crucified, a woman imitated His example of kindness and came out of the crowd to wipe His face to make Him feel better. She dared to help Jesus despite the soldiers watching her.

Presider: Let us pray. Almighty and ever-loving God, we feel your love and understanding in the consolation and support we receive from one another. Give us, we beg You, the courage and dedication to sacrifice and suffer with those who are in need, the least of your people. We are called to live as people of compassion.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Help me to be thoughtful in all that I do.

Please give us the strength and the motivation that Veronica had when we see others suffering from illness or injustice.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

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

SEVENTH STATION
Jesus Falls a Second Time



Reader: The cross seemed heavier and heavier. Jesus was suffering terribly. He stumbled and fell again. Jesus found it very hard to get up after He fell a second time. The crowds of people pushed and pulled at Him to make Him get up and keep going. Jesus stood up and began to walk again.

Presider: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, You shared in our weaknesses and accepted our guilt. Grant us the favor of rejoicing over our human weaknesses, so that in all we do, Your strength, dwelling in us, may be shown to all others. All around the world people suffer and fall each day. They need our help and our prayers.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Give me the strength to please You even when events of the world try to keep me down.

Teach us to get back on our feet even if we are made fun of for doing what is right.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with bloody scourges rent.*

EIGHTH STATION
Jesus Speaks to the Women and Children



Reader: The sight of Jesus with His torn clothes and bloody face made the women and children cry. In spite of His own suffering, he did not want them to feel sorry for Him. Jesus talked to the women and children and told them not to cry for Him. He told them to pray for themselves and their children who would have to suffer, too.

Presider: Let us pray. Beloved Jesus, with tears of pity these women of Jerusalem responded to You, broken, bruised, and beaten, on the road to Calvary. Deepen our faith, we beg you, so that we may see You in our brothers and sisters, bruised by our envy, beaten down by injustice, and broken by our greed and our indifference. Sometimes we are selfish. We should think of the feelings of other people.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Help me to pay more attention to the needs of others, and to give what I can.

Let us learn by Your example how to comfort the sorrowing.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*For the sins of his own nation,
Saw him hang in desolation
Till his spirit forth he sent.*

NINTH STATION
Jesus Falls the Third Time



Reader: Jesus was very tired and very weak. The rocks tore his knees as he fell a third time. He was so tired; He could barely get up. People even laughed at Him. But he struggled to his feet and picked up the cross again as he continued his final journey.

Presider: Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, You permitted your Son to be weakened, crushed, and profaned so that He might rise from the dead freed from the ravages of sin. Help us to accept our weaknesses and failings as forerunners of our glorious resurrection in union with your Son. In life sometimes we must do what is difficult. Like Jesus, we must lift ourselves up and continue.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

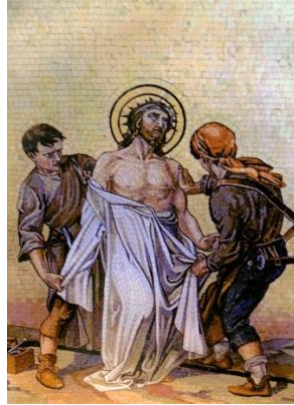
Even when I make mistakes, give me the strength to try again and again.

Help us to work together to become the people You want us to be.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*O sweet Mother! Fount of love,
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with yours accord.*

TENTH STATION
Jesus is Stripped of His Clothes



Reader: At last Jesus came to the top of the hill where He was to be crucified. The soldiers tried to humiliate Jesus by ripping off his clothes.

Presider: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, stripped of everything, You stood exposed to the jeers and contempt of the people whom You loved. Clothe us with genuine love of others, so that nothing we suffer may ever fill our hearts with hatred or bitterness. Jesus gave everything – even the clothes off His back – for us. We should give ourselves, our time and our help to others.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Help me not to be afraid of what others think or say about me.

Please make us strong when others are weak.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*Make me feel as you have felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ, my Lord.*

ELEVENTH STATION
Jesus is Nailed to the Cross



Reader: The soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross by driving spikes through His hands and feet. But even as they did this, Jesus prayed for them saying, “Father forgive them, they do not know what they are doing.”

Presider: Let us pray. Lord and Savior, You have told us that we, too, must accept crucifixion if we are to accept resurrection with You. Help us to rejoice in the sufferings that come with the fulfillment of our daily duties, seeing in them the royal road of the cross and resurrection. Jesus forgives us, too, no matter what we may do. We are to forgive others when they hurt us.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Never let me drive a nail into someone else by being hateful, disrespectful or unjust.

Please help us to forgive the hurts others cause us and to seek forgiveness when we hurt someone else.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*Holy Mother, pierce me through,
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Savior crucified.*

TWELFTH STATION
Jesus Dies on the Cross



Reader: Darkness came over the land. Right before He died, Jesus prayed for His mother, Mary, and his friends. He told them He did everything His Father wanted Him to do for the world. Then Jesus cried out, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” He bowed His head and died.

(pause for a moment of silence)

ALL: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Help me to always remember God’s unending love for each of us.

Help us to love others without counting the cost.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*Let me share with you his pain,
Who for all our sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died.*

THIRTEENTH STATION
Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross



Reader: After Jesus died, a centurion who witnessed everything that had happened glorified God and said, “This man was innocent beyond doubt.” A secret follower of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea, took the body from the cross. He gently placed Jesus in the arms of his mother, Mary. Joseph was very sad as he wiped away the blood and cleaned the cuts that covered the body of Jesus to prepare Him for burial.

Presider: Let us pray. Beloved Savior, You returned to the Father all that He had given You, so that He might restore all to You a hundred-fold in the glorious resurrection. Help us, we beg You, to give generously of ourselves in all that we do for You, so that like You we might be made perfect in a new resurrection. Many people in our world need help. We should be like Joseph and step forward to do what is needed.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Help me to show love for others by sharing all that You have given to me.

Teach us to care for everyone. Help us to be kind to everyone we meet.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live.*

FOURTEENTH STATION
Jesus is Laid in the Tomb



Reader: Joseph of Arimathea wrapped the body of Jesus in a cloth. He laid Jesus in his own tomb, which was made out of rock. He rolled a huge stone across the entrance and sadly went home. Jesus was buried.

Presider: Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, on the edge of sadness when all seemed lost, You restored to us the Savior, who we thought was defeated and conquered. Help us, we beg You, to empty ourselves of self-concern that we might see your hand in every failure and your victory in every defeat. Jesus has given His very life for us. We must share our gifts, our talents, and our lives with others.

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

Help me to always follow the road of Christ.

Please help us to accept what we cannot change; and to change what we can for the betterment of mankind.

Lord, help us to live in your love and walk in peace all the days of our life. Amen.

*By the cross with you to stay,
There with you to weep and pray,
This I ask of you to give.*

CLOSING PRAYER

ALL:

Dear Jesus,

I want to follow you. But life is filled with trials that seem to pull me farther away from you. Help me to conquer my difficulties so that I may have a little taste of the endless joy of your resurrection.

Thank you for suffering for me. Although my actions seem small in comparison to the salvation you have gained for me, teach me to offer the achievements and mistakes of each day to you. I love you and praise you, Lord. Amen.