



Fourteenth Station Jesus is laid in the tomb

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

Mary and the friends of Jesus prepare his body for burial and lay it in a tomb cut from solid rock. They have forgotten – or perhaps failed to believe – the promise Jesus made to them. He will rise from the dead. As they roll the stone across the doorway, sealing the tomb, they feel that this special time with Jesus has come to an end. They know their lives will never be the same again.

Discuss:

Has there ever been a time that it was difficult to believe in Jesus' promises? The promise of everlasting life? The promise that God will always love and forgive you? Explain.

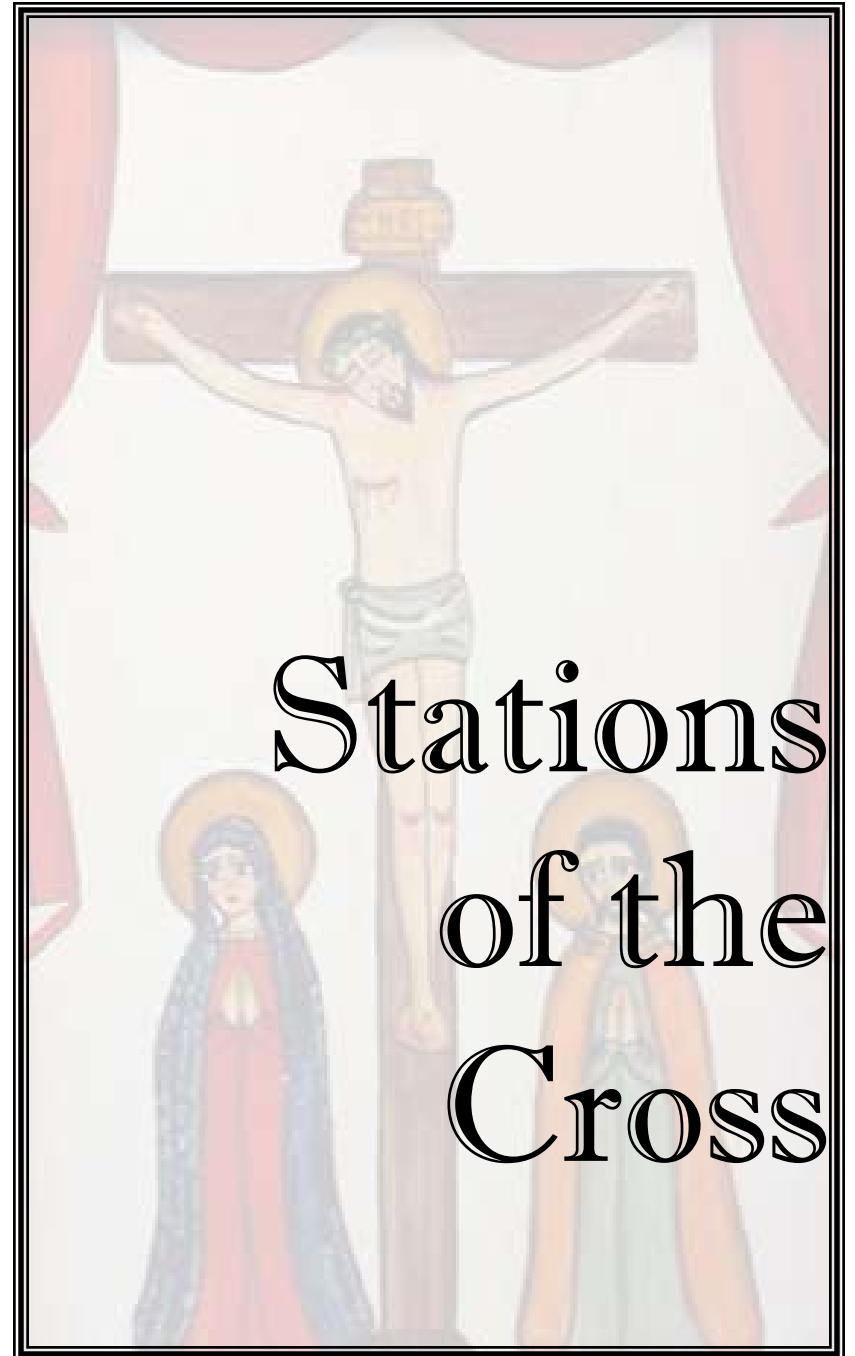
Pray:

By your side, laid in the tomb.

By your side, laid in the tomb.

Jesus, Lord, be ever near

As I walk, by your side.



Stations of the Cross

How to use this booklet

The Stations of the Cross can be meditated on as a family or can be used as an act of solitary prayer.

Your family may choose to meditate on the Stations of the Cross together; praying, reflecting and discussing all the stations in one sitting. Or your family may choose to focus on one station each evening during the last two weeks of Lent.

These stations can also be prayed by each individual family member; the child and/or parent(s) taking quiet time out to pray and reflect on the stations, then respond to the discussion questions in a journal.

NOTE TO PARENTS:

Please use this version of the Stations of the Cross at your discretion. It is meant for children in fifth grade or higher. Some of the reflections on the stations are graphic in nature, and the discussion questions are geared toward older children.



Thirteenth Station Jesus is taken down from the cross

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

When the crowds finally went away, a few of Jesus' followers were brave enough to ask for his body so they could bury it. Two men carefully remove the body from the cross and lay in the arms of his waiting mother. Tears run down Mary's cheeks as she holds the son given to her so many years before.

Discuss:

What are some actions that show your friends and others that you love Jesus? What actions *can* you do as a family to show that you care for Jesus?

Pray:

By your side, they take you down.
By your side, they take you down.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Twelfth Station Jesus dies on the cross

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

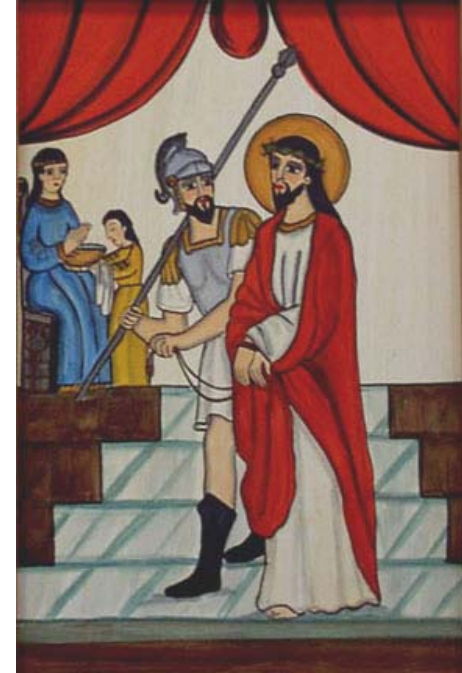
Jesus didn't immediately die when they nailed him to the cross. He suffered for three long, agonizing hours first. The giver of life, who stood side by side with the Father at the moment of creation, was now dead. His mission on earth was nearly accomplished. He gave up his spirit, and gave us his life.

Discuss:

What decisions in your everyday life do you make, big and small? Do you ever ask God to help you make these decisions?

Pray:

By your side, I watch you die.
By your side, I watch you die.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



First Station Jesus Is Condemned To Die

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

Jesus stands, strong in his silence, as he is condemned to die for a crime he did not commit. He has been betrayed by a friend, falsely accused, and judged wrongly. And yet he accepts his punishment without a word of protest.

Discuss:

When have you been misjudged or wrongly accused? When have *you* misjudged or wrongly accused others?

Pray:

By your side, condemned to die.
By your side, condemned to die.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Second Station Jesus is forced to carry his cross

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

Jesus begins his terrible journey up the hill to Calvary. The weight of the cross bites into his shoulders and he is reminded with each step that the pain he bears will be the cause of our joy. Despite his pain, his mind is filled with thoughts of us.

Discuss:

What kinds of burdens do you bear? What kind of pressures do you feel at school or at home?

Pray:

By your side, you bear the load.
By your side, you bear the load.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Eleventh Station Jesus is nailed to the cross

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

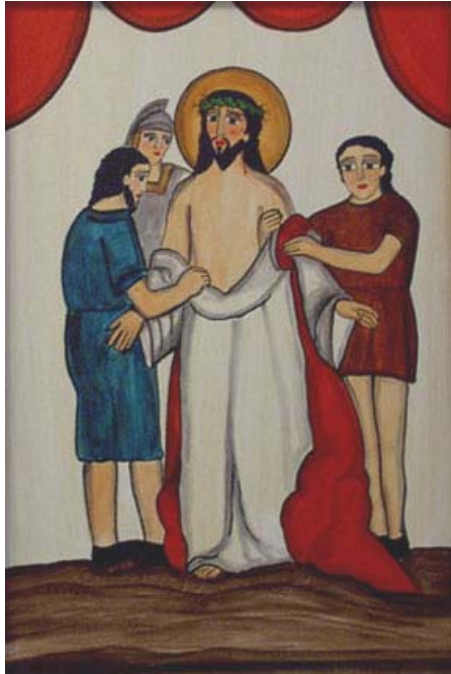
With a thief to his left and right and encircled by a crowd of onlookers, Jesus gently and willingly stretches out his hands and accepts the torture of the nails. In the midst of this most intense agony, his heart remains on his people: "Father, forgive them," he prays, "for they know not what they do."

Discuss:

The gift of life is precious. Do you sometimes take life and the good things of life for granted? Explain.

Pray:

By your side, upon the cross.
By your side, upon the cross.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Tenth Station Jesus is stripped of his garments

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

Jesus finally reaches the top of the hill – the place of his death. His reward for completing this part of the journey is to be savagely and brutally stripped. His open wounds cling to his garments, so the pain is excruciating as the soldiers rip his garments from his body, taking flesh and blood along with the cloth. To be forced to stand naked before the jeering crowds is humiliating for Jesus.

Discuss:

When have you felt humiliated or made to feel foolish? Has anyone made fun of you for your belief in Jesus Christ? How did you, or how *would* you respond?

Pray:

By your side, they take your clothes.
By your side, they take your clothes.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Third Station Jesus falls for the first time

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

Jesus stumbles along the hot, dusty, rocky road. He is crushed under the weight of the wood and is bruised and beaten down by the soldiers. He falls, for even though he is fully God, he is filled with the weakness of being fully human. This is the wonder of our God-become-flesh in Jesus.

Discuss:

When have you felt like you have failed? Failed your friends?
Failed your parents? Failed your brother or sister?

Pray:

By your side, you bend and fall.
By your side, you bend and fall.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Fourth Station Jesus meets his mother

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

Jesus – tired, sore, bruised, bloody and on his way to his own execution – looks up to see the face of his mother along the road. What a moment for both of them. No words are exchanged, but Jesus can see the sadness and pain on her face. He knows that she was chosen for this road, chosen to bear him into the world, but he still knows her pain.

Discuss:

When have you seen the look of sadness in her parents' faces?
Parents, when have you seen the look of sadness in your children's faces?

Pray:

By your side, you see her face.
By your side, you see her face.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Ninth Station Jesus falls a third time

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

Jesus can now see Golgotha in the distance. He knows the end is near. He is parched and dry, so weak from the loss of blood and the sheer pain that he can barely stand, much less carry the heavy cross. He falls again. Still, his executioners mercifully urge him on.

Discuss:

Do you feel God's loving forgiveness, even when you sin, even when you fall, over and over again? Explain.

Pray:

By your side, you fall again.
By your side, you fall again.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Eighth Station

The women of Jerusalem weep for Jesus

Reflect:

As Jesus walked along the road toward his death, some people laughed. Some stood in silence and wondered who he was. Some cheered. But one group of women, seeing him hurting, tired, and beaten down, cried. This small act of faith and courage in the face of hardship supported Jesus in his grief, perhaps when he needed it most.

Discuss:

What things that happen in the world make you sad, make you cry? What can you do about these things as an individual or as a family?

Pray:

By your side, you hear the cries.
By your side, you hear the cries.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Fifth Station

Simon carries Jesus' cross

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

Just when Jesus begins to think that he can go no farther, just when the soldiers begin to doubt that Jesus can make the long journey up the hill, they grab a man from the side of the road and force him to carry the cross. Simon feels the bite of wood on his shoulder, and certainly he must have wondered why he, an innocent man, should be asked to do this.

Discuss:

When have you felt "caught in the middle" of something? How did you respond to the situation?

Pray:

By your side, your pain is eased.
By your side, your pain is eased.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Sixth Station Veronica wipes Jesus' face

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

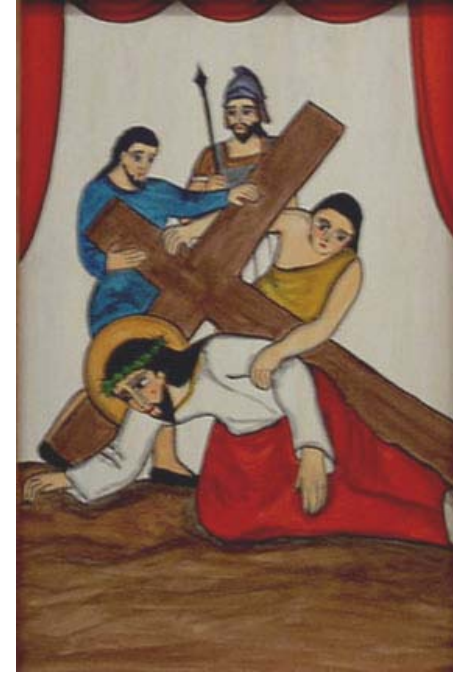
Blood from the crown of thorns and sweat from the hard work of carrying the cross mix in Jesus' face. This is not an easy way to show love. The blood and sweat drip from him and sting his eyes. From out of the crowd steps a woman named Veronica who lovingly wipes the face of Jesus. It is a simple but important act of love and compassion for the giver of all love and compassion.

Discuss:

Have you ever ignored someone who is in need? Or, when have you stopped to help someone in need?

Pray:

By your side, she soothes your face.
By your side, she soothes your face.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.



Seventh Station Jesus falls again

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and bless You.

All kneel: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reflect:

Jesus has been wracked by pain, but he has been comforted by the car of Simon and Veronica. He continues on his journey, feeling the rhythm of the road beneath his feet. As he falls again, all the pain is renewed. A jolt of agony shoots through his body. But he rises again, and continues on his way. He is thinking about you.

Discuss:

When have you felt like giving up, but chose not to? How did God give your strength?

Pray:

By your side, you fall again.
By your side, you fall again.
Jesus, Lord, be ever near
As I walk, by your side.