

❖ THE WAY OF THE CROSS ❖

If possible, the celebrant, crossbearer, and two candlebearers begin by the chair for the greeting and then make a procession from station to station. Very small assemblies may walk with them. Prayer may begin with song, such as "When I Behold the Wondrous Cross" (#242) or "What Wondrous Love" (#218). The traditional hymn "Stabat Mater" ("At the Cross Her Station Keeping") (#200) is included here to sing between stations, as well as verses from "Stations of the Cross" which can be sung to the "Stabat Mater" tune. These verses appear in italics.

118 Stations of the Cross

Introductory verse

*Jesus kneels, in sorrow praying,
Knows his fate, God's will obeying:
"Let your will, not mine, be done."*

STAND

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

May the Lord Jesus, who suffered for us
and by his Paschal Mystery redeemed us,
be with you all.

And with your spirit.

Lord and Father all-holy,
you willed that your Son's Cross
should become the source of all blessings,
the cause of all graces.

Book of Blessings, 1413

Grant that we who on earth hold fast
to the mysteries of his sacred Passion
may in heaven enter into the joys of his Resurrection.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

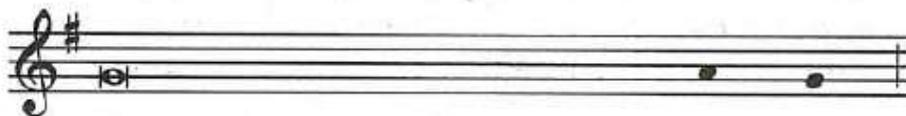
I

Celebrant: Jesus is sentenced to death.

Luke 23:1-2, 23-24

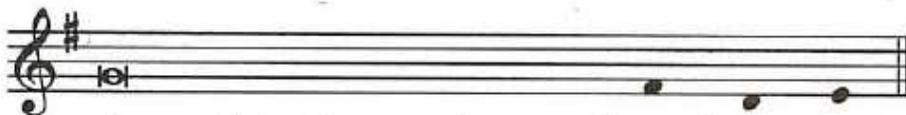
KNEEL

Celebrant:



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

All:



By your holy Cross you have re-deemed the world.

STAND

Reader: Then the whole assembly of them arose and brought [Jesus] before Pilate. They brought charges against him, saying, "We found this man misleading our people; he opposes the payment of taxes to Caesar and maintains that he is the Messiah, a king."

With loud shouts, however, they persisted in calling for his crucifixion, and their voices prevailed. The verdict of Pilate was that their demand should be granted.

All: **Hide me from the malicious crowd,
the mob of evildoers.** *Psalm 64:3-4*
**They sharpen their tongues like swords,
ready their bows for arrows of poison words.**

**At the cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.** *Meeting Pilate's earthly power,
Jesus lives these final hours
Confident in heaven's might.*

II

Celebrant: Jesus accepts the cross. *Matthew 27:27-31*

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: The soldiers of the governor took Jesus inside the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped off his clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak about him. Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews." They spat upon him and took the reed and kept striking him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him.

All: **Like a lamb led to the slaughter
or a sheep before the shearers,
he was silent and opened not his mouth.** *Isaiah 53:7*

**Through her heart, his sorrow sharing,
All his bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword has passed.** *In the weight of crossbeams wooden
Jesus feels the heavy burden
Of our frail humanity.*

III

Celebrant: Jesus falls the first time. *Isaiah 53:4-6*

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: It was our infirmities that he bore,
our sufferings that he endured.
While we thought of him as stricken,
as one smitten by God and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our offenses,
crushed for our sins,
Upon him was the chastisement
that makes us whole,
by his stripes we were healed.

All: **In this tent we groan,** *2 Corinthians 5:2*
longing to be further clothed with our heavenly habitation.

Oh, how sad and sore distressed	<i>Stumbling under weight so crushing,</i>
Was that Mother highly blest	<i>Jeering crowds upon him rushing,</i>
Of the sole begotten One!	<i>Jesus falls, returns to dust.</i>

IV

Celebrant: Jesus meets his mother Mary. *Isaiah 66:10, 12-13*

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad because of her,
all you who love her.
As nurslings, you shall be carried in her arms,
and fondled in her lap;
As a mother comforts her son,
so will I comfort you.

All: **"Amen, amen, I say to you, you will weep and mourn,** *John 16:20*
while the world rejoices; you will grieve,
but your grief will become joy."

Christ above in torment hangs,	<i>She who knew her heart, in sorrow</i>
She beneath beholds the pangs	<i>Would be pierced, here bravely follows</i>
Of her dying, glorious Son.	<i>In her Son's distress and pain.</i>

V

Celebrant: Simon helps Jesus carry the cross. *Luke 23:26*

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: As they led [Jesus] away they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian,
who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on
him, they made him carry it behind Jesus.

All: Jesus said to his disciples, *Matthew 16:24*
"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself,
take up his cross, and follow me."

Is there one who would not weep,
'Whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold?
*Simon, one with Jesus bearing,
Shows the way of our own sharing,
Taking up our daily cross.*

VI

Celebrant: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus. *Sirach 6:14-15*

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter;
he who finds one finds a treasure.
A faithful friend is beyond price,
no sum can balance his worth.

All: **I give you a new commandment: love one another.** *John 13:34*
**As I have loved you,
so you also should love one another.**

Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?
*Boldly facing disapproval
She, in cleansing, sought removal
Of the stains of agony.*

VII

Celebrant: Jesus falls again under the cross. *Song of Songs 5:7-8*

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: The watchmen came upon me
as they made their rounds of the city;
They struck me, and wounded me,
and took my mantle from me,
the guardian of the walls.
I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem,
if you find my lover—
What shall you tell him?—
that I am faint with love.

All: **He humbled himself,
becoming obedient to death,
even death on a cross.** *Philippians 2:8*

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with bloody scourges rent.
*Falling once again, Lord Jesus
Shows the suffering that frees us
As we struggle on our way.*

VIII

Celebrant: Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem.

Luke 23:27-28

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children."

All: **Ruth said, "Do not ask me to abandon or forsake you!
for wherever you go I will go, wherever you lodge I will lodge,
your people shall be my people, and your God my God."** *Ruth 1:16*

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

*Israel's own daughters, weeping
Came to Jesus, comfort seeking
In the time of their distress.*

IX

Celebrant: Jesus falls a third time.

John 12:24

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.

All: **You have folded up my life, like a weaver
who severs the last thread.
Like a swallow I utter shrill cries;
I moan like a dove.** *Isaiah 38:12, 14*

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

*Jesus weakened, bruised and feeble,
Falls again, appears unable
To complete his painful road.*

X

Celebrant: Jesus is stripped of his garments.

Mark 15:22-24

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: They brought [Jesus] to the place of Golgotha (which is translated Place of the Skull). They gave him wine drugged with myrrh, but he did not take it. Then they crucified him and divided his garments by casting lots for them to see what each should take.

All: **Naked I came forth from my mother's womb,
and naked shall I go back again.**

Job 1:21

**The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away;
blessed be the name of the LORD!**

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

*Naked, stark, in desolation,
Jesus knows humiliation,
Robbed of his last dignity.*

XI

Celebrant: Jesus is crucified.

Luke 23:33-34

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified [Jesus] and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. [Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."]

All: **Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert,** *John 3:14-15*
**so must the Son of Man be lifted up,
so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.**

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

*Hands which heal and bless and feed us,
Feet which to the kingdom lead us,
Now are pierced with brutal steel.*

XII

Celebrant: Jesus dies on the cross.

Mark 15:33-37

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: At noon darkness came over the whole land until three o'clock in the afternoon. And at three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" . . . Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

All: **I have told you this so that you might have peace in me.** *John 16:33*
**In the world you will have trouble, but take courage,
I have conquered the world.**

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

*There between the earth and heaven
Death appears, in triumph, proven:
Jesus draws his dying breath.*

XIII

Celebrant: Jesus' mother and friends lower his body from the cross. *Luke 23:50-53*

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: There was a virtuous and righteous man named Joseph who, though he was a member of the council, had not consented to their plan of action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea and was awaiting the kingdom of God. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. After he had taken the body down, he wrapped it in a linen cloth.

All: **Come, all you who pass by the way,** *Lamentations 1:12*
look and see
Whether there is any suffering like my suffering.

Let me mingle tears with thee, *Oh what sorrow, pain and anguish*
Mourning him who mourned for me, *Comes to those who saw him perish*
All the days that I may live. *As they take his body down.*

XIV

Celebrant: Jesus' mother and friends lay his body in the tomb. *Matthew 27:59-60*

KNEEL

Celebrant: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: **By your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.**

STAND

Reader: Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it [in] clean linen and laid it in his new tomb he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed.

All: **My soul, be at rest in God alone,** *Psalm 62:6*
from whom comes my hope.

By the cross with you to stay, *Some believe the awful journey*
There with you to weep and pray, *Finishes all bleak and stony,*
This I ask of you to give. *Yet a new life will arise.*

*If there has been a procession from station to station,
it now moves in front of the altar.*

Celebrant: Jesus rises in glory, victorious over death. *Matthew 28:1-2, 5-6*

Reader: As the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone and sat upon it. Then the angel said to the women, . . . "Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said."

All: **[Lord Jesus said:] "I will see you again,** *John 16:22*
and your hearts will rejoice,
and no one will take your joy away from you."

Celebrant: Let us pray in the words our Savior gave us:

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.**

In conclusion, the celebrant says:

Celebrant: My friends, we have given witness
to the life-giving Passion of the Lord.
Let us go in peace:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

118 Stations of the Cross

Concluding verse

*Let us walk with Christ while praying
As he did, God's will obeying,
"Let your will, not mine, be done."*

Alan J. Hommerding

Text © 2000 World Library Publications, a div. of GIA Publications, Inc.

