

# Stations of the Cross

## Lent 2023



“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

Mt. 26:39

# STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The following reflections on the Stations of the Cross combine the traditional Stations of the Cross with a contemporary interpretation.....how is Jesus walking with us in our world today? How do we enter more fully into the mystery of the Cross, how do we share in Christ's suffering and passion. As Christ died on the cross for our sins, as we walk and pray the Way of the Cross, we ask God for forgiveness in the sure and certain hope that the resurrection to new life will follow.

These Stations of the Cross may be prayed during Holy Week.

## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE?

You are invited to begin each Station with the opening acclamation:

**'We adore you O Christ.....'**

Read passage of scripture accompanying each Station and then for reflection and prayer use option (I) or (II).

You may wish to offer the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be., for the intentions of the Station.

Complete your reflection on each station with the prayer: **'I love you Jesus.....'**

## Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,  
encourage us as we walk with you on the way of the Cross.

Open our hearts to the hope offered by  
the mystery of your dying and rising.

Let the story of your passion  
inspire us anew to walk our path of discipleship.

We pray this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

# I Jesus is Condemned to Death

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.” Then the people as a whole answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. Mt. 27:24-26

You look so alone, so vulnerable. Where is everyone else? Where are your friends, your father, your God? You saved so many, why can’t you save yourself? As we look at you we remember the millions around the world condemned to poverty, pain, disease, death. “Only those who serve with love are able to protect”, Pope Francis said. We think of those unjustly imprisoned and those in prison. We live in an unjust world. Lord, we ask you to be with the condemned.



Lord, in these difficult times, we recall those condemned to lives of poverty, homelessness, hardship and misery. We pray for those who advocate on their behalf, the ones who stir the conscience of others reminding them of the call to love their neighbour. As the cost of living increases and energy bills rise, we pray for those struggling to make ends meet, those who are hungry, those condemned to a life of poverty, those who have lost their homes. Lord, help us to help those in need. Forgive us for the times we remained indifferent to the needs of others, for the times we failed to speak up, or turned away.



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

# II

## Jesus Takes Up His Cross

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. Jn. 19:16-17

### (I)

You look so brave. A heavy cross placed on your shoulders, a burden not of your own making. Was this a free choice, or God's will, or both. As we look at you, we remember people who carry heavy burdens. We think of our own loved ones under physical, emotional, financial, mental pressure. Help us to help them. Lord, be with the overburdened.



### (II)

Lord, we pray for people and communities throughout the world carrying the weight of uncertainty, hunger and thirst. We pray particularly for the people of Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen in the grip of famine, food insecurity, and conflict.

We pray for the resilience of humanity, for those whose survival depends on their ability to carry water or food. We pray for livestock and crops.....provide water to drink and wash, rain to irrigate their crops and sustain their animals.

We pray for leaders who exploit the hardship of people's misfortune, those who inflate food prices, ration water, and those who foster fear, panic, and conflict.

Forgive us Lord, for our lack of gratitude for the abundant food and water we enjoy. Forgive us for feasting, when others are starving. Forgive us for our lack of generosity and kindness.

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# III

## Jesus Falls the First Time

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. Is. 53:4-5

It's too heavy. This cross. This pain. This burden. Did you look too far down the road and falter? Did you feel afraid? Was all this just one big mistake. We remember those who fear failure, who fear the future, who fall when they can't face what lies ahead. Lord, be with those living in fear, suffering from depression, anxiety, or panic.



Lord, we pray for those who carry the heavy cross of despair, those who feel surrounded by emptiness, darkness and hopelessness. We pray for those who suffer with depression, those who struggle with their mental health and feel the overwhelming weight of their condition.

Give them the inner strength, fortitude, and determination to carry this burden, to reach out for help, to hope in a brighter future. Bless them with a calmness of spirit, and clarity of thought. Bless them with good friends, who actively listen and offer words of encouragement and support.

Lord, forgive us for our lack of understanding, our lack of empathy or patience. Forgive us for the times we have been judgemental of others and stigmatised their struggle.

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# IV

## Jesus Meets His Mother Mary

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” Lk. 2:34-35

### (I)

‘And a sword will pierce your heart too.’ Did those words come back to haunt you? You suffered in his coming, now you stand silent and suffering at the foot of the cross as the one you love hangs despised, taunted, betrayed, ridiculed and rejected. Only a mother’s love could endure so much. No mother should have to see her child like this. We remember mothers everywhere, mothers who fear for their children, mothers who lie awake at night waiting for their children to return home safely, mothers who watch their children suffering, mothers who have lost their children. Lord, be with our Mothers.



### (II)

As Jesus meets His mother, we think of mothers and parents as they, like Mary, held their child in their arms as infants. We think of the hopes and dreams they have for their children. We recall their gratitude to God for the blessing of parenthood.

Lord, we are reminded of the challenges facing many young people: peer pressure, social media, body image, expectations and opinions, uncertainty, mental health. We think of how technology amplifies the struggles teens face, heightens their sensitivity, and undermines their confidence. Deepen their dependency and trust in you as the One who loves them to the end.

Lord, help them recognise their inherent beauty and dignity, for they are made in the image and likeness of God. Thank you for the hope and love they bring to our lives. Thank you for the creativity, energy, and joy of being young.

Forgive us for the times we have failed to guide young people in the ways of truth. Forgive us for the times we have been quick to judge and slow to encourage and affirm.

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V

## Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus Carry the Cross

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus Lk. 23:26

What were you thinking as you looked back at this stranger; this man plucked from the crowd; Simon of Cyrene. Were you wondering where your best friends were? Where were they when you most needed them? And this stranger steps forward. Often it's the people we expect most of that let us down and those we expect little of rise and surprise us. We remember those who have been unexpectedly kind to us, who's small gestures make a huge impact. We remember especially the people of Ukraine and the many who have fled their homeland seeking refuge. Lord be with the people who make a difference in all our lives.



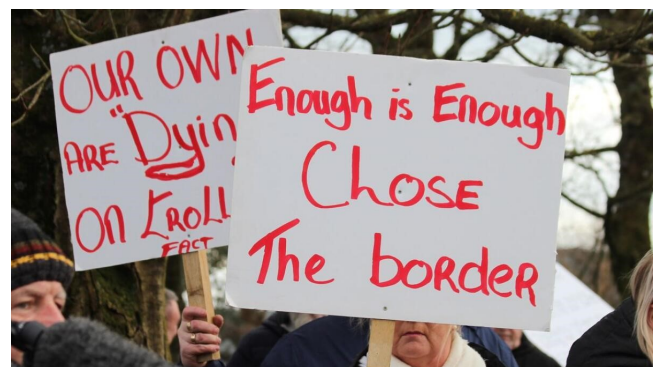
25.9 million refugees in the world.

41.3 million internally displaced people.

3.5 million asylum-seekers across the world.

Lord, we pray for those who have come to our country seeking refuge, asylum, and security from political or religious oppression, war, migration and resettlement. We pray for families separated from one another, family members unaccounted for. We pray for their healing from the trauma of their journey, the ordeal of their experience, the fear of further hospitality. Bless world leaders with the resources, language supports, and accommodation to help them carry their cross.

Lord, forgive us for our prejudices, for the increasing rise of racism and xenophobia. Forgive our indifference to their plight, our lack of welcome and hospitality.



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# VI

## Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.  
Is. 52:2-3

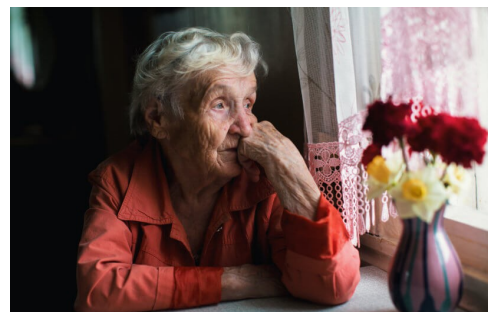
Veronica, what were you thinking? Stepping out from the crowd, getting in harm's way, where angels fear to tread. But maybe that's it; maybe you weren't thinking! Compassionate people use their courage to by-pass the head and follow their heart. Your unthinking courage softened his blows, but left you in a vulnerable position. Pope Francis said, "a little mercy makes the world a little less cold and more just." Lord, be with those who do the right thing, yet suffer the



Lord, we pray for those who experience loneliness and social isolation, those who feel alone and forgotten, those who are overwhelmed with a sense of meaning and purpose. We pray particularly for those no longer able to live an independent life and who feel cut off from friends and family.

May we follow the example of Veronica who reached out to you as you experienced that sense of isolation among the hostile crowd. In wiping your face, she radiated compassion and understanding; she radiated love in the midst of hatred, and her gentleness soothed the pain inflicted by others.

Lord, for the times we have failed to value the elderly, our parents, our grandparents, forgive us. Forgive us for the times we see the elderly as a burden and failed to reach out in kindness, compassion and understanding.



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# VII

## Jesus Falls a Second Time

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



Now that I have fallen, they gather around delighted. They crowd about to jeer at me. They take me by surprise, strike me and tear me to pieces. They provoke me with their mockery and their jibes, as they gnash their teeth at me. Ps. 34:15-16

### (I)

A second slip and you fall. A second mistake, no second chances. How could you, after all the help you just got? It's so shameful to fall again. We remember those who struggle with addiction, relapse, failure. Send to those who help them, patience and to those who fall renewed strength, to find honest courage and try again. Lord, be with all addicts.



### (II)

Lord, we pray for an end to crime and violence in our communities. We are mindful of gangs who assert their control through fear, intimidation, and exploitation. We pray for the young coerced or lured into a life of violence, corruption, criminality, fraud, smuggling, exploitation and trafficking through a series of bad choices, fear, addiction, or manipulation.

We pray for those tragically slain by gangland crime, those who died through the use of illicit drugs, and those who were murdered.

Comfort, heal and bless the victims of crime. May they find support in the midst of their communities. Keep our police force safe as they go about their work. Lord, help those who fall into a destructive pattern of life, to turn their lives around and pick themselves up again.

Lord, forgive us for the times we have been hard of heart. Forgive us for the times we turned a blind eye to the destructive behaviour of others. Forgive us for the times we allowed others to exploit the young and the vulnerable.

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

# VIII

## Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.”

Lk. 23:27-28

### (I)

Did falling make you more human? Is that why you always reached out to the weak and vulnerable. Even now, as you were dying on your feet – you were moved by the women’s sadness. You seemed to understand others and always made time for them. We remember those who despite their own troubles make time for us and our problems. This is their station. Lord, be with those generous with their time.



### (II)

Lord, we pray for the women of Afghanistan and Iran, for women across the world who are deprived of their rights under the constant threat of violence, incarceration, or public humiliation. We pray for women in countries where oppressive regimes exclude them from public life, education, travel, and work. We pray for young girls forced into marriage in these regimes.

Lord, we pray for the women who weep for freedom, weep for their children, and their basic human rights. We pray for the women who put their lives on the line for their children’s freedom and safety. Bless them with resilience and courage. Inspire world leaders to lobby on their behalf for women’s rights.

Forgive us Lord, for the times we have failed to defend the rights of others. Forgive us for the times we remain silent against the violation of human rights. Forgive us for our indifference.

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# IX

## Jesus Falls a Third Time

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself, and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross. Phil. 2:6-8

### (I)

It's all too much. You are at your lowest ebb.

You can't go on. Not one mile. Not one step. You are at breaking point. Close to the edge. Who will save you now? We remember tonight people in darkness, in despair. People who may have thoughts of suicide and people bereaved by suicide. Lord, send your gentle light to all and be with those in darkness.



### (II)

Lord, as we recall how you were 'born in human likeness', we think of the suffering people of Syria and Turkey. As 'one like us in all things but sin, we ask you to walk with them in their suffering, their grief, the loss of their livelihoods and homes. Accompany to safety those who are displaced . Bring them security, alleviate their anxiety and fears.

Inspire the world community in their humanitarian response. Provide them with access to food, shelter, medical supplies. Motivate leaders to open corridors which assist in the rebuilding of homes, infrastructure and their lives.

Lord, forgive us for the times we have been slow to respond to those in need. Forgive us for hearts that are cold, hearts that are focused on ourselves and our own wants, rather than the needs of others.

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# X

## Jesus is Stripped of His Clothes

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail King of the Jews."  
Mt. 27:27-29

The shame, the indignity. The utter vulnerability. Left like a broken child for all to see. To point the finger at. To jeer. To shame. Here we remember all victims of abuse; physical, emotional, mental, sexual. People whose rights have been stripped off, who have been made feel ashamed – the victims of rape and violence in the home.  
Lord, be with the abused.



Lord, we recall the way in which we have irresponsibly stripped our world of its natural resources, of its beauty, and potentially its future.

We think of the impact of deforestation on the lives of indigenous people, the effect of pollutants and emissions of greenhouse gases which affect our way of life and our well-being, how they impact the world's ecosystems, taint our food chains and compromises peoples' health.

Lord, forgive us for the ways in which we have destroyed your creation, our common home. Forgive us for our exploitative greed in which we strip the world of its beauty. Forgive us for our sin against creation, our selfishness and a greedy desire to possess and exploit our world.

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# XI

## Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with Jesus. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, Father forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” Lk. 23:32-34

### (I)

Trapped. Tortured. Betrayed. It is the cruellest of punishments. Nailed naked on a cross like a common criminal. Your loved ones cannot bear to see, to hear you like this. The horror is just too much. We remember the victims of torture everywhere. We remember those ridiculed because they profess their faith in you, especially the young and impressionable. Wherever people are tortured or ridiculed, so Lord are you. Lord, be with all tortured souls.



### (II)

Lord, we pray for our Christian brothers and sisters - the living stones - throughout the Holy Land We pray for an end to the exodus of Christians from the Holy Land. We give thanks for their courageous witness, their faithfulness as followers of Christ, and the inspiration they provide.

In the cradle of Christianity, heal the political and religious divisions that intensify day-to-day tensions. we pray for Christians who feel abandoned in their trials and responsibilities.

Bless all Christians with freedom of movement, the opportunity to provide for their families, education, proper housing, and the possibility to contribute to public life.

We pray for peace throughout the Land of Jesus and for the safety of all pilgrims.

Forgive us Lord for the times we have failed to witness to you in our lives. Forgive us for our lack of concern for the welfare of our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land.

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# XII

## Jesus Dies on the Cross

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachtani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" when some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen he is calling Elijah." And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "wait, let us see whether Elijah will come and take him down." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. Mk. 15:33-37

### (I)

There are no words for this station... only our own prayer..... and ..... silence.



### (II)

Lord, you took on the weight of our sins. You show us the power of love, the meaning of true sacrifice. It is this death that awakens us to new life with Jesus Christ. It is your final breath that redeems the world. We are saved by this mystery of your dying and rising.

Lord Jesus, we pray for all grieve the loss of a loved one. In the midst of their grief, strengthen their hope in the belief that death is not the end.....where you have gone, we hope one day to follow.

We pray for the gentle response of the souls of all who have died. pray for those who have died. The old order has passed away: welcome them into Paradise, where there will be no ore sorrow, no weeping or pain, but fullness of peace and joy with You for ever.

Forgive us Lord, for the times we have doubted the resurrection of the dead. Forgive us for the times we have failed to comfort those who mourn.

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# XIII

## Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

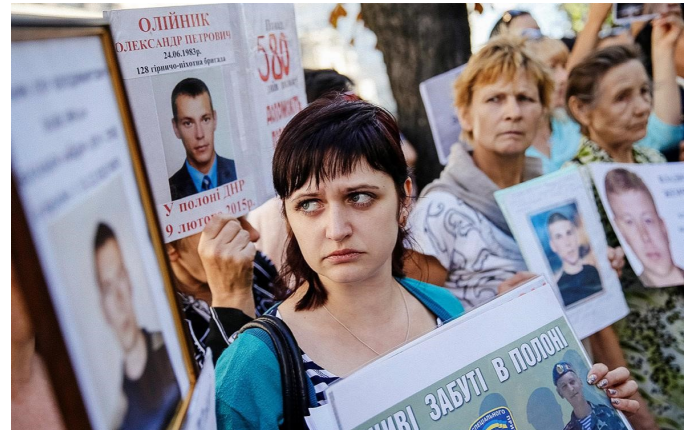
We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave permission; so he came and removed the body. Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus by night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. Jn. 19:38-39

### (I)

No more pain now. It's all over. The struggle is finished. For the soldier the job is done; a mother.....a heart broken; her son.....a mission almost completed. We remember all those who are grieving, those who have loved and lost. Lead them gently into your arms lord. Lord, be with the grieving.



### (II)

It is accomplished! You are placed in the loving arms of your Mother, Lord. Although her heart was broken, her grief all-consuming, she holds you tight. She can mourn and grieve. She can lay you to rest in peace and with dignity.

During the outrage and horror of war, oftentimes families and friends do not get to mourn over their dead. The bodies of their loved ones never return home for burial. There is no place to visit, to pray, to remember. As the war in Ukraine rages on, we pray for peace, for an end to the suffering of innocent people. We pray for the souls of the fallen. Bless that land with peace.

We also pray for 'The Disappeared', those believed to have been abducted, murdered and secretly buried during the troubles in Northern Ireland. We pray for the families who long for a place to lay their loved ones to rest in peace.

In the words of Pope Francis, "Forgive us for war, O Lord!"

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

# XIV

## Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

We Adore You, O Christ, and We Bless You,  
Because by Your Holy Cross You Have Redeemed the World.



Joseph of Arimathea brought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid. Mk. 15:46-47

### (I)

Mary, it's just the two of you now. Everyone is gone. All is quiet. Are you remembering him as a baby? How you cradled your first born child? What are you holding on to – memories, sorrow, pain, trust, hope, love. For love waits and trusts that one day light will shine through loss. Love will conquer death. Remember us Lord, as we look upon your tomb.

### (II)

Lord, we think of the silence of the tomb. The hostility and violence is over.....you now rest in the stillness of peace.

We pray in thanksgiving for the gift of peace in our country, and we ask your blessing on the continued work of peace. We thank you for the light that entered the empty tomb on Easter morning as the stone was rolled away and the disciples witnessed the joy of new beginnings in the Resurrection.

We thank you for the willingness of party leaders enter into dialogue and to earnestly work for peace in a land torn apart by conflict and violence. May every day be a new beginning as neighbours live side by side in peace. As St. Paul reminds us, "Let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light" (2Coe 2:10).

Lord, forgive us for the times we have shown prejudice, bigotry, or hatred towards others. Forgive us for the times we have fuelled that hatred. Forgive us for the times when we ourselves have failed to be agents of peace with others.

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