

THE WAY OF THE CROSS



Invitation

Lay Mission-Helpers shares with you this Way of the Cross as a token of our gratitude and appreciation for your prayerful and financial support of our lay missionary service. We hope that you will find it helpful as you walk with Christ through Lent, joining the great multitude of those who lovingly and devoutly have undertaken this mini-pilgrimage to accompany Christ to his Crucifixion over the centuries. As you pray, may you experience anew Christ's sacrificial love for you and be inspired to respond to that love by drawing ever closer to Christ and His Sorrowful Mother.

How to pray it

Whether in a church or in your own home, give yourself the time to quiet down and follow the steps below.

1. Make the sign of the cross.
2. In your own words, invite the Holy Spirit to help you pray.
3. Read the Opening Prayer.
4. At each station,
 - Genuflect and pray "We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."
 - Read the scripture passage.
 - Reflect in silence and pay attention to your thoughts and feelings.
 - Place yourself in the scene, see and hear what's happening.
 - Who is there?
 - Who catches your attention the most? Why?
 - Read the Prayer for each station.
5. After you have completed all 14 stations:
 - Read the Closing Prayer.
 - Pray Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to walk in your footsteps and give me the grace of gratitude for your infinite love which you revealed by your merciful passion. As I meditate on your sacrifice for the sake of my salvation, help me turn away from sin that hardens my heart and prevents me from loving you and my neighbor. Help my unbelief and grant me the grace of growing ever-closer to you and your Mother. Amen.



The Way of the Cross alone defeats sin, evil and death, for it leads to the radiant light of Christ's resurrection and opens the horizons of a new and fuller life. It is the way of hope, the way of the future. Those who take up this way with generosity and faith give hope and a future to humanity.

-Pope Francis

The First Station: Pilate Condemns Jesus to Die

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: Mark 15:1-5, 15

As soon as morning came, the chief priests with the elders and the scribes, that is, the whole Sanhedrin, held a council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” He said to him in reply, “You say so.” The chief priests accused him of many things. Again, Pilate questioned him, “Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of.” Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed. So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified.



Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, innocent yet unjustly condemned, you died to save me from sin and death. Protect all who are falsely accused, give strength to all who fight for justice and grant courage to our brothers and sisters who are persecuted because of their faith.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and to be just and fair to others.



The Second Station: Jesus Accepts His Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: John 19:6, 15-17

When the chief priests and the guards saw him they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him. I find no guilt in him.” They cried out, “Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your king?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha.



Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you accepted the cross and made it the sign of your love. Look with mercy upon the poor and make every human heart sensitive to their plight.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and to be generous with my time, energy and resources towards those who are burdened and need my compassion.



The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: John 19:1-3

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck him repeatedly.

Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, exhausted by the scourging, weakened by the loss of blood, burdened by the weight of the cross and pained by being abandoned by your friends, you kept going up to Calvary. Comfort those who are overcome by grief, loss, and loneliness.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and to be kind and compassionate to others, especially those too weak to get up on their own from under their crosses.



The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: John 19:25-27

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.



Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, overcome with sorrow and broken-hearted by the evil that befell you, your mother remained close and showed tenderness and love that only a mother can give. Comfort the grieving mothers whose children are dying because of malnutrition, violence, and diseases.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and not be indifferent to the suffering of others.



The Fifth Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: Mark 15:21

They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

Silent meditation

Prayer



Lord Jesus, although forced, Simon of Cyrene helped you carry the cross and for a moment walked alongside you. Have mercy on the children who have to work to sustain themselves and their families and inspire all people of good will to contribute their talents and resources to create a world in which every child can live in peace, have access to education and healthcare, and feel loved.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and to do what I can to help your little brothers and sisters near and far.



The Sixth Station: Veronica Offers Her Veil to Jesus

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:2-3

He grew up like a sapling before him, like a shoot from the parched earth; he had no majestic bearing to catch our eye, no beauty to draw us to him. He was spurned and avoided by men, a man of suffering, knowing pain, like one from whom you turn your face, spurned, and we held him in no esteem.

Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, courageous Veronica publicly showed her love for you. Strengthen and protect all who, moved by compassion, serve without regard for their own needs and comforts, especially those who care for the sick, the homebound and the dying.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and give me courage to allow myself to be guided by love and compassion.



The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: Romans 8:31-39

What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ [Jesus] who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.



What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? As it is written: "For your sake we are being slain all the day; we are looked upon as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, each step you took was excruciatingly painful, yet determined to accomplish Your Father's will, you kept going. Strengthen all who are losing hope and the will to live because of war, famine and other man-made catastrophes. Help me to walk in your footsteps and to be an instrument of peace, generosity and compassion in my family and community.

The Eighth Station: Jesus Speaks to the Women

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: Luke 23:27-31

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, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.’ At that time people will say to the mountains, ‘Fall upon us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?”



Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, in the midst of your own agony you recognized the pain of others. Give comfort and consolation to mothers whose children disappeared, suffer from addictions, or have been recruited by gangs and cartels or drafted by paramilitary groups.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and not be caught up in my own pain but rather able to offer comfort and support to my family, friends, and those who are in need.



The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: Psalm 38:7-9, 11-13, 18, 22-23

I am stooped and deeply bowed;
every day I go about mourning.
My loins burn with fever; there is
no wholesomeness in my flesh. I
am numb and utterly crushed; I
wail with anguish of heart. My
heart shudders, my strength
forsakes me; the very light of my
eyes has failed. Friends and
companions shun my disease; my
neighbors stand far off. Those
who seek my life lay snares for



me; they seek my misfortune, they speak of ruin; they plot treachery every day. I
am very near to falling; my wounds are with me always. Do not forsake me, O
LORD; my God, be not far from me! Come quickly to help me, my Lord and my
salvation!

Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, pain and exhaustion made you fall three times, but love and compassion made you rise and keep going. Heal the victims of domestic violence, abuse and torture and change the hearts of those who violate the dignity of others and dehumanize them.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and not turn a blind eye or a deaf ear to the plight of those who are being victimized.



The Tenth Station: Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: John 19:23-24

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier. They also took his tunic, but the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top down. So they said to one another, “Let’s not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it will be,” in order that the passage of scripture might be fulfilled [that says]: “They divided my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots.” This is what the soldiers did.



Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, stripped of your clothes and dignity, you were utterly humiliated by those for whom you died, and yet you did not fight back. Bless and protect the outcasts in my family, community, nation and the world.

Help me to walk in your footsteps, heal the wounds others inflicted on me, and heal those whom I hurt by my words, actions, silence and inactions.



The Eleventh Station: Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: Luke 23:33-34

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him 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.” They divided his garments by casting lots.

Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you could have stopped it in an instant, yet you subjected yourself to be nailed to the cross. I know it was not the nails that kept you there but your unconditional love for me. You chose to die so that I can live. Help all who are dependent on others for sustenance and care, especially the elderly, the orphans, and the sick.

Help me to walk in your footsteps so that I am not indifferent to the suffering of others.



The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies Upon the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: Luke 23:44-46

It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit;" and when he had said this he breathed his last.



Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, with your last breath, you satisfied your thirst for completing God's will to save me. You died for me because you love me. Bring close to your loving heart all who are exploited, neglected, and abandoned and give them to drink the living water of your unconditional love.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and to be ever grateful for saving me by shedding your precious blood.



The Thirteenth Station: Jesus Is Taken Down from the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: John 19:38-39

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus. And Pilate permitted it. So he came and took his body. Nicodemus, the one who had first come to him at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds.



Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, broken-hearted yet surely relieved that your suffering was finally over, Mary cradled your lifeless body. Be with all who are dying alone, abandoned and have no one to weep for them.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and to be a friend to the poor, the lonely, and the abandoned.



The Fourteenth Station: Jesus Is Placed in the Tomb

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture: John 19:40-42

They took the body of Jesus and bound it with burial cloths along with the spices, according to the Jewish burial custom. Now in the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried. So, they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day; for the tomb was close by.



Silent meditation

Prayer

Lord Jesus, dejected and crushed Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus remained to the end and laid you in the tomb. Welcome into your kingdom all who die alone, abandoned and forgotten and all who are buried in nameless graves.

Help me to walk in your footsteps and to act lovingly towards all.



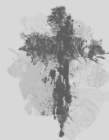
Closing prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for allowing me to walk with you and to meditate on your unconditional love for me. You died for me on the cross so that I could be saved and you rose from the dead so that I might have eternal life. Help me to walk in your footsteps, forgive me my sins, and give me the strength to live an authentically God-centered life by imitating you and living by your life-giving Gospel. Amen.

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory be...



Prayers composed by Damian Kabot, LMH Executive Director (2024)

Scripture quotes from the *Revised New American Bible*, 2019-2024 USCCB

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