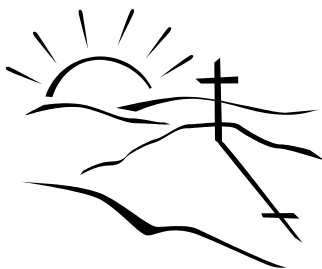


THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR ME AND WITH ME

Three Lenten Prayer Periods



**Compiled
by
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Overview

The Stations of the Cross were a part of early Christian traditions and Lenten observations. The term Stations of the Cross refers to the stopping places of Jesus on His journey to His crucifixion and death. After Jesus' Ascension, some legends say that Jesus' Mother Mary was seen walking and pondering the last stopping points her Son traveled on the way to Calvary, and these stopping points evolved into the stations.

Some early versions of the Stations of the Cross were as few as five to as many as 35 stopping places. During the 1900's, the 14 stations, that some Christian traditions pray and ponder through today, are often located in churches where the Stations of the Cross are a part of that faith traditions prayer practices.

This prayer booklet is designed to encourage and support the Stations of the Cross as a Lenten prayer practice. Lent is a Penitential time during the Easter Season in the Christian Church Year. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends during Holy Week and Easter. The three suggested prayer periods in this booklet may be prayed as three individual prayer periods or three prayer periods stretched out over the 40 days of Lent.

Jesus died FOR ME and continues to die WITH ME. Prayer Period One is designed to allow the "pray-er" to experience Jesus's initial love and forgiveness FOR ME. Prayer Period Two is designed to sustain the "pray-er's" discipleship with Christ and to experience Jesus love and forgiveness WITH ME in my daily life.

Prayer Period One

Grace: To prayerfully know Jesus more intimately so that I may share daily in His mind and heart.

The Stations of the Cross FOR ME

Select your favorite version of the Stations of the Cross or select a version which appeals to you. For your convenience, the Way of the Cross for Children has been provided and adapted to the FOR ME format. Decide on which method you will use to enter into a prayerful presence to Jesus as He enters into His Passion and Death on the cross.

- (1) Will you place a crucifix in your prayer space at home?**
- (2) Will you come to the church alone and say the Stations of the Cross FOR ME?**
- (3) Will you say the Stations as a group and just add the phrase FOR ME when the leader says the title of the Station?**

Once you complete this prayer period, record some of the thoughts that occurred to you during this prayer experience.

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR ME

Adapted from the Way of the Cross for Children

Edited by Louis M. Savary.

(Currently this publication is out of print)

Station 1-Jesus Meets Pilate For Me.

Jesus' first stop on the way of the cross is the Governor's palace. Many Jewish leaders want Him out of the way. "Crucify Him," they insist. And they influence Pilate the Governor to condemn Jesus to death.

Jesus loves you very deeply and wants to free you to love one another.

He is being condemned even though He is innocent. He is sad that people reject His love. You understand His sadness when you are not appreciated for being loving and caring to others.

Station 2-Jesus takes the Cross For Me.

The Roman soldiers bring a large wooden cross for Jesus to carry. It is very heavy and rough. Though Jesus is tired, sick and weak, He reaches out and lovingly accepts the cross.

For Jesus, the cross stands for all the world's evil hatred and cruelty. By His love He transforms this cross into a symbol of hope and salvation for you.

When you make the Sign of the Cross on your body, remember this cross which Jesus carried out of love for you.

Station 3-Jesus Falls For Me.

Soon after He begins to carry the cross, Jesus falls. He is very exhausted and the weight of the cross crushes Him.

When you have many difficult things to bear, such as worries or fears or sadness, especially when they happen to you all at once, think of Jesus. He falls under the burden of the cross, **so** you shouldn't be surprised if you fall.

Jesus gets up and begins again. When you are able to get up and go onward, you are like Jesus.

Station 4-Jesus Meets His Mother For Me.

On the narrow roadway, Jesus turns the corner and looks ahead to see His mother. She reaches out to touch Him. He is thankful she is there. She doesn't say anything to Him, but He knows she loves Him and is proud of Him, even though she feels so sad and helpless to do anything.

Sometimes you don't want your mother to see you in trouble, and yet you are comforted when they appear to tell you they still love you.

Station 5-Simon Helps Jesus For Me.

The soldiers notice Jesus is very weak. He is staggering under the load, so they pull a man from the crowd-a stranger-and force him to help Jesus carry His cross. The stranger, whose name is Simon Cyrene, doesn't dare disobey the soldiers, even though he is frightened and embarrassed to be seen helping Jesus. He doesn't know who Jesus is.

What if the soldiers had asked you to help Jesus? Would you want to help Him?

Station 6-Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face For Me

A woman named Veronica steps out from the crowd with a towel. Jesus' hands are holding His cross, so she wipes his face, which is dripping with blood and sweat. Veronica does a simple act of kindness. It is all she can do. She cannot lift the cross or stop the soldiers. She cares in a way she

knows. Her act of kindness is one of the nicest things that happen to Jesus on His way.

Sometimes the simplest acts of kindness, like a hug or somebody holding your hand, means very much.

Station 7-Jesus Falls Again For Me.

The soldiers let Simon go His way and Jesus again is carrying His cross by Himself. The walk to Calvary is only half over; there is still a long way to go. Jesus stumbles, staggers, and falls. He is breathing very heavily and has no strength left. Yet He stands up. And because of His strong love, He is able to go forward.

When you are going to a place you do not like, and it seems difficult to go on, Jesus understands how you feel.

Station 8-Jesus Meets Some Women For Me.

On His way, Jesus meets some women from Jerusalem. They are weeping for Him because He is suffering so much and because so many officials have treated Him cruelly.

Jesus tells them to weep for themselves and their children, because the cruelty of the world will surely touch them as it is touching Him.

Have there been cruel people in your life who have hurt you? Have cruel people hurt someone you love? Jesus knows how that feels.

Station 9-Jesus Falls a Third Time For Me.

A third time Jesus falls. He has no strength left. He has lost much blood, the hot sun burns His skin, He has climbed a hill carrying His heavy cross. Again He struggles to stand up because He has chosen to live the way of the cross out of love for you..

No matter how many times you fall or fail, Jesus tells you that you can start over again. Sometimes that is the only way you can show your love-by starting over again.

Station 10-Jesus Is Stripped For Me.

Jesus has reached the top of the hill. The soldiers let Him drop the cross to the ground. And while Jesus stands there in front of the crowds, the soldiers pull off His clothes leaving Him embarrassed and humiliated. He is being treated like a common criminal, as if He were a worthless human being.

When you are made to feel embarrassed and treated as if you were without value, know that Jesus understands because He has experienced shame.

Station 11-Jesus Is Nailed To The Cross For Me.

Now the soldiers make Jesus lie down on the cross. They stretch out His arms and fasten them with nails. They also nail His feet so that He is securely fastened to the cross. He cannot escape. Only His great love for you enables Jesus to bear His pain and suffering.

When you are in great pain and can't move, remember how much Jesus loves you and remember He knows how it feels to be trapped and unable to get free.

Station 12-Jesus Dies For Me.

The cross is standing and Jesus is hanging on it. Time goes by very slowly, for Jesus is full of pain.

But more important than the pain is His love for you and His willingness to die for you to be free from sin.

Even on the cross He is able to care for His mother and the people around Him.

Even when you are in pain and suffering very much, even when you are dying, you can still love because Jesus will help you.

Station 13-Jesus Is Placed in Mary's Arms For Me.

After Jesus dies, a few friends gently take His body down from the cross and put it in the arms of His mother. She held Jesus like this when He was a baby, but now His body has no life left in it.

Her hearts is filled with sadness and emptiness as she remembers all the wonderful days she spent with him.

When you are sad because you lose a friend or a special person, Jesus' mother understands your loss and your sadness.

Station 14-Jesus Is Buried For Me.

The final stopping place for Jesus on this dark Friday is a tomb. His friends place His body on the stone slab, wipe off the blood, wash His body clean, and cover it with cloth and nice-smelling spices. His friends and mother touch His body for the last time before they leave.

They are discouraged and feel that all their hopes for Jesus are gone.

If you ever feel you are discouraged and have lost hope, then you know how Jesus' friends must have felt.

Prayer Period Two

Grace: To prayerfully know Jesus more intimately so that I may share daily in His mind and heart.

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Prayer Period Three

Grace: To prayerfully know Jesus more intimately so that I may share daily in His mind and heart.

- (1) Reread what you recorded when you completed the Stations of the Cross FOR ME and**
- (2) Reread what you recorded when you completed the Stations of the Cross WITH ME.**
- (3) Record your final thoughts about both prayer experiences.**
- (4) In the space below, write an Action Plan about what you intend to do for and with Christ.**



'Rooted and living in the light of God's love.'

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