

## THE FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH - *JUDGEMENT*



It is an unfair conviction. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent. But he went along with the crowd. How often do we go along with the crowd? How often do we make bad decisions? But we may think, "I would never judge Jesus unfairly." Yet we do. Every time we judge another person, we judge Jesus. Because Jesus lives in all of us. We condemn Jesus when we gossip or when we decide another person is not good enough. We are as bad as Pilate when we judge another person because we never know the full story.

**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, I am so sorry You were falsely accused and had to suffer. I am sorry for all the times my own bad judgement caused someone to suffer. Please help me to make good decisions. Help me remember that when I am judging or criticizing someone else, I am judging You alive in them.

## THE SECOND STATION: JESUS CARRIES THE CROSS - *RESPONSIBILITY*

We all have crosses to carry. Maybe it is social pressure. Maybe it is work, study or home care. Maybe it is responsibility for someone who is sick or weak. We may think our cross is too heavy. We may think we would just like to trade our responsibility or our cross with someone else — with someone we think has an easier or better life than ours. But everyone has a cross to bear — even Jesus. Sometimes we are just so busy feeling sorry for ourselves that we do not see the burden someone else is carrying.



**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, please help me to be better at carrying the responsibilities and crosses that You have assigned to me. When I am tempted to complain, remind me of the terrible cross You carried for me. Help me also be sensitive to the responsibilities that those around me must carry.

## THE THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME - *PRIDE*



It's embarrassing to trip and fall. We try to get up as quickly as we can. We hope that no one saw us. We might try to pretend it didn't happen. But worse than the embarrassment of a physical fall is when we fall into temptation. We cannot be so proud that we pretend we did not do something wrong. We need to apologize for what we did. By falling and getting up again, Jesus shows us we can go on even after a bad mistake.

**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, please help me not to fall into bad habits or sin. When I do something that is wrong, help me to admit my mistake. Help me to learn how to say I am sorry. Please don't let me be so proud that I think I am perfect and everything I do is good.

## THE FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER - *LOVE*

When we really love someone, we stand by them no matter what. If we can't be with them, we think about them or pray for them. Mary had that kind of great love for Jesus. She was standing right by the cross when Jesus died, and Jesus said to her, "Woman, behold, Your son" (Jn 19:26). With those words, he asked Mary to love all of us just like she loved her Son, Jesus. And He asked all of us to love Mary, just as if she was our own mother.



**PRAYER:** Dear Mary, you loved Jesus so much. How it must have hurt you to see Him suffer and die. Thank you for loving me just like I was your own child. Help me to remember to come to you when I am sad or lonely or scared. I know you will always be there for me.

## THE FIFTH STATION: SIMON HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS - *HUMILITY*



Poor Jesus had been up all night. He had been whipped. He was exhausted beyond belief. He needed help. Surely God could have sent an invisible angel to help carry the heavy cross and no one would have known. But it is important to remember Jesus did accept help from another man, because we all need help. We cannot get to heaven alone. We need each other. And, like Jesus, we need to be humble enough to accept the help that is offered.

**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, sometimes I want to get all the credit. Or I want to be in charge. I do not want anyone else to help me. I think I can do it all by myself. But You made us to live and work together in families and communities. Help me be better at accepting help and also offering to help others.

## THE SIXTH STATION: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS - *KINDNESS*

While others were making fun of Jesus, Veronica courageously stepped forward to wipe the sweat and blood from His face. Legend says the image of Our Lord's ravaged face was forever stamped upon this kind woman's veil. It is true that when we are kind to someone else, it can leave a permanent mark on them and also on us. We may remember the smile of the person for whom we held the door, which made our whole day better. We may become great friends with a neighbor we helped.



**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, please help me to become kinder and more compassionate to all those I meet today both in and outside my family. Help me to see Your face in those who need a helping hand or a simple smile. Just as Veronica's veil was marked, let my heart be marked by the good things I do.

## THE SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME - *COURAGE*



Wouldn't it have been easier for Jesus, when He fell the second time, to just die there in the street before they could nail Him to a cross? But, even knowing what He faced, Jesus got up. That took great courage. Courage doesn't mean we are not afraid. It means we do what we are supposed to do, even when we are afraid. When Jesus got up after the second fall, He showed us exactly what courage meant.

**PRAYER:** Dear Lord, please give me courage when I am afraid. Help me to step up and do the right things. Help me to know that You are always walking with me. Please take my hand, even when I fall, and show me how to be brave.

## THE EIGHTH STATION: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM - *GRIEF*

In the midst of His own pain and suffering, Jesus stops to talk to some women who are crying. They are sad that Jesus is going to die. We learn two important lessons from this quick minute Jesus spends with the weeping women.



First, Jesus cares whenever we are sad. He has a very special place in His heart for people who are mourning. If we just go to Him, He will help make us feel better. Second, by His example, Jesus shows us how important it is for us to stop and help anyone who is sad or crying.

**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, sometimes I do not know what to do when a person is upset or grieving. So I just turn away. But You did not turn away from the crying women. Please help me know what to say and how to help the people in my life who are sad right now.

**THE NINTH STATION:  
JESUS FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME - COMMITMENT**



Now Jesus is truly exhausted. He is tired beyond anything we have ever known. We all have days when we just want to pull the covers over our heads and not even get out of bed. Jesus shows us we have to go on. We have to get up day after day and do the things that are required of us. Just

like Jesus, we have to stay committed to the work - whatever it might be - that God is asking us to do in our lives.

**PRAYER:** Dear Lord, forgive me for the times when I just get tired of my duties and responsibilities at home, school or work. Forgive me for the times I want to lay down and do nothing. Please give me strength to get up and do what You are calling me to do, just like You got up with that heavy cross on Your shoulders.

**THE TENTH STATION:  
JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS - GRATITUDE**

Clothes are very important to us. They can keep us warm. They can help us feel special. But sometimes we put too much emphasis on clothes or the other things we have. None of those things are as important as who we are before God.



Even after they stripped Jesus of His clothes, He was still God. Fortunately, God has not stripped us of all we own. He has given us many good blessings. But sometimes when we keep wanting more and more for ourselves, we can strip others of what they need. Do we know how to be both grateful and generous?

**PRAYER:** Dear Lord, thank You for the warm clothes and good things I have. Help me to realize that everything I have is a gift from You. Show me how You want me to share my blessings with others so they have enough to be warm and safe like me.

**THE ELEVENTH STATION:  
JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS - TRUST**



Have you ever gotten a shot with a needle? Even that little metal needle can hurt. Imagine how the big, sharp nails felt going through Our Lord's hands and feet. Just as we trust the doctor or nurse, Jesus trusted His heavenly Father. Dying in agony, Jesus prayed, "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit" (Lk 23:46). This is a prayer of total trust. With these words, Jesus showed us we, too, must believe God will make everything turn out right. When we trust God, we can relax and surrender.

**PRAYER:** Dear God, please help me to trust You more. Sometimes I think I am in charge of everything. I worry too much. Or I take too much credit. Help me remember that even when things seem bad You are able to make it all be okay. Help me just trust in You.

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**THE TWELFTH STATION:  
JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS - FAITH**



Some people may wonder why Jesus did not fly off that cross like a superhero with fireworks, angels and music all around. Then everyone would have believed He was truly God. But God wanted us to have a choice. He does not just drop the gift of faith in our laps

and demand, "Here, you must have this." Instead, faith comes wrapped in messy layers of grief, sadness, crosses, nails, thorns and even death. Faith is a decision each of us must make. We must decide that, yes, in the darkest night, God can rise in our hearts and glow with the brilliance of an everlasting love.

**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God. Thank You for this great gift of faith. May I never forget You are always there for me, alive in my heart, in my family and in the goodness of the world.

**THE THIRTEENTH STATION  
JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS - SILENCE**

The whole world is silent now. The shouting crowds and crying women are gone. All of creation whispers, "What have we done?" Through lies and schemes, the Son of God has been killed. In our own time, we, too, need to stop and be silent. It is often only in stillness that any of us realize what mistakes we have made. But our world is so noisy today that we don't take time to be quiet and alone with God. So, we just keep doing the same wrong, stupid things. We need to come to God in silence, for that is where He hides.



**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, help me shut out the noise of our world. Help me put down the phone, turn off the video, and simply be quiet and alone with You. Then whisper in my soul how I can do better. Remind me that when I hurt others, I am hurting You, because You quietly live in all of us.

**THE FOURTEENTH STATION:  
JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB - HOPE**



The lifeless body of Jesus is laid in a cold, dark tomb and a huge stone is rolled in front of the entrance. All seems lifeless and over. But God can change things! On Holy Thursday, He showed us He could change plain bread and wine into the sacred body and blood of Jesus. On Easter, He shows us He can change death into glorious resurrection. And God can transform our lives, too. We can take whatever is bitter, anxious, terrible, selfish or hateful in our own lives and lay it in the tomb with Jesus and the love of God will change it for us. As He told us in the Old Testament, we may not know the plans God has for us, but He will give us, "a future of hope" (Jer 29:11).

**PRAYER:** Dear God, let me never forget how amazing and powerful You are. You can conquer death! You can conquer whatever seems wrong, lifeless or sad in my own life, too. Thank You for that great hope, dear Lord.



***We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you.  
Because, by your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world!***