Close to Jesus to the Last

Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross is a devotional practice that originated in Jerusalem during the early history of the Church. Pilgrims wanted to retrace the steps of Jesus on his journey to Calvary, and so various points or “stations” were listed along the way to commemorate major incidents in the passion known from Scripture or added later from tradition. The devotion eventually was practiced virtually everywhere in the Church, using images or depictions of 14 Stations placed inside churches.

THE FIRST STATION

Presider begins but all join: **In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The First Station: Jesus Is Condemned To Death

Reader 2: Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus called Messiah?"

Narrator: They all said,

All: **Let him be crucified!**

Reader 2: Pilate said, "I am innocent of this man's blood. Look to it yourselves."

Narrator: After he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

Reader 3: How like Pilate I can – and often do – respond. Pilate had the authority, power, and opportunity to free you, but he did not. There are times when I, too, take the easy way out. I see injustice but do not stand up and speak out. Lord, help me to stand and speak on behalf of those in need, even when it is difficult to do so.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sisters and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE SECOND STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Second Station: Jesus Takes Up His Cross

Narrator: So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skill, in Hebrew, Golgotha.

Reader 2: I am here, Lord. I don't know if you see me, but I am here. I feel so helpless. The crowds are so loud. The road is so long. The cross is so heavy. But I am here and I shall walk with you. Even when it seems that I can do nothing for someone who is suffering, help me remember that I can always walk beside them.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE THIRD STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

Narrator: Perfume and incense gladden the heart, but by grief the soul is torn asunder.

Reader 2: When I watched you fall, I collapsed too. I remembered my burdens and responsibilities. Sometimes they seem so overwhelming that I wonder whether I'll be able to make it through the day. Lord, I saw you fall, but I also saw you rise and go on. Help me to do the same each time I fall.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE FOURTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother

Narrator: Jesus' father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,

Reader 2: "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

Reader 3: I wonder what Mary felt as she watched her precious son slowly drag his body along the stony road. I wonder how my mother felt as she watched me make my way, stumbling, along my path. I suspect she had anxious moments, uncertain that she had done all she could to prepare me for the detours and curves of life. Lord, help me impart guidance and strength to those who look up to me.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE FIFTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

Reader 2: They pressed into service a passerby, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

Reader 3: I am often like Simon, needing to be pushed into service. I get too comfortable in my daily routines, thinking only of my own personal needs and wants. How many people do not have someone who offers a warm smile, a friendly word, or a momentary visit? Lord, help me live my faith by offering loving, unselfish service to others.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE SIXTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes The Face of Jesus

Reader 2: "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"

Narrator: Jesus said to him,

Presider: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Reader 3: I can feel the distance between us, Jesus; I'm not like Veronica. I call you Brother, but you are not an ordinary brother. I cannot imagine you eating at my table, playing with my games or staying for the night. Lord, help me come nearer to you, indeed, even touch you.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE SEVENTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls The Second Time

Narrator: Then Jesus said to his disciples,

Presider: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those wh want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it".

Reader 2: I try to follow you, but then I fail and despair. I begin anew with fresh resolve, and again I stumble. It is difficult for me to see how this losing becomes winning. When I stumble, Lord, help me to fall in the direction of your loving arms.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE EIGHTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Eighth Station: Jesus Speaks To The Women Of Jerusalem

Reader 2: A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him.

Narrator: Jesus turned to them and said,

Presider: "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children."

Reader 3: Wherever I look I see children. What a gift they are, and what promise of a brighter tomorrow. Who protects them from the world's adult-sized tragedies? I worry about their future, and about mine. Lord, help me embrace the children in my life and to shower them with love, patience, and laughter.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE NINTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls The Third Time

Reader 2: As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and spoke to them as they walked along.

Narrator: And Jesus told them,

Presider: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day."

Reader 3: I don't know how you keep going, Lord. Some days all it takes is a clogged grain, a sick parent or a failed test to make me scream and give up. It never occurs to me to think of the people who have no drain or fresh water, have no health care or family, have no teacher or books. Lord, help me keep my difficulties in perspective, and wait in joyful hope for the coming of your kingdom.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE TENTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Tenth Station: Jesus Is Stripped Of His Garments

Reader 2: And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him out…

Reader 3: I put so much time and effort into my outer appearance, yet appearances are fleeting. We are here today and gone tomorrow. How much wiser for me to spend my time fashioning my interior garment! Lord, help me clothe myself with your grace.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE ELEVENTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Eleventh Station: Jesus Is Nailed To The Cross

Reader 2: 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.

Narrator: Then Jesus said,

Presider: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

Reader 3: I have difficulty forgiving people who hurt me, even when done unintentionally. You show me another way. You forgive even with nails extending from your hands. Lord, help me forgive others as you forgive me.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE TWELFTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies On The Cross

Reader 2: 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.

Narrator: Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

Presider: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit";

Narrator: and when he had said this, he breathed his last.

All kneel

Reader 3: I don't like the dark. I can't see where I am, have been, or am going. I would much rather have a bright light and a road map with directions to keep me on the right path. The darkness, like the unknown, can be scary. Help me trust in you, Lord, so I, too, may say every day, "Into your hands I commend my spirit."

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All rise

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE THIRTEENTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Thirteenth Station: Jesus Is Taken Down From The Cross

Reader 2: Joseph of Arimathea, a distinguished member of the council, who was himself awaiting the kingdom of God, came and courageously went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. And when he learned that Jesus had already died, he gave the body to Joseph.

Reader 3: I want to be like Joseph. I want to live for you, Jesus, and not count the cost. Help me to trust the divine promise that "Eye has not seen, ear has not heard what wonders await those who love you."

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)

THE FOURTEENTH STATION

Presider: Who do you say that I am?

All: **You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Brother and Savior, who lived, died, and rose again for us.**

Reader 1: The Fourteenth Station: Jesus Is Laid In The Tomb

Reader 2: Nicodemus came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. 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.

Reader 3: Nicodemus brought you his best. I want to do no less. You have given me your love and your grace, and have surrounded my table with friends. Help me always to live in faith, hope and love, so as to give glory to your holy name.

Brief silent reflection

Presider: Sister and brothers, I call you friends. Come with me on my journey and let us always walk together.

All: **Glory and honor to Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who sets us free to live in faith, hope, and love.**

(Extinguish candle)