

Walk with Me the Way of the Cross



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Introduction

Reader: In praying the Stations of the Cross, we are privileged to accompany Jesus in his journey to save all humanity. From start to finish, the Stations are all about the passionate love the Lord Jesus has for each of us. We follow him in these Stations not as spectators, but as his disciples, those he has called by name to follow him.

The Stations of the Cross embody the Christian life; we must take up our own crosses and follow the Master. The Stations remind us that we have made a commitment to follow Jesus at all times and under any circumstances, in good times and in bad. Discipleship is not so much *what we do* but *who we are*. We are proud to profess our faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and God. (*Pause.*)



The Master beckons; let us follow him.

Note: Some of the descriptive details in this booklet are based on studies of the Shroud of Turin.



FIRST STATION

Jesus Is Condemned to Death

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

People: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: Jesus is brought before Pilate. Pilate asks the crowd, “Which of these do you want me to release: Barabbas, or Jesus, called the Christ?” The people shout, “Barabbas!” Pilate asks, “What then should I do with Jesus?” “Crucify him!” Pilate hands Jesus over to be crucified (cf. Mt 27:11–26).

Jesus: I stand before Pilate, accused of all sorts of crimes and blasphemies. Yet I am innocent, guilty only of loving you with an infinite love.

The crowd had to choose: Me, or Barabbas? You must now also choose: Me, or the world? Who or what do you enthrone in your heart as Lord of lords? As you

ponder this choice, remember I love you more than you love yourself, and I want more for you than you want for yourself. I want your whole heart, not simply part of it. And to help you, I give you all that I am: my Body, Blood, soul, and divinity, in the sacrament of love, the Holy Eucharist. Choose me, for I have chosen you. That is the message of my cross.

People: My Lord and Savior, I do choose you, this day and every day. It is difficult, to be sure. Many things vie to occupy the throne of my heart, but I know deep down that you alone can satisfy the longings of the human heart. Strengthen me by your most holy passion, to follow you, no matter where you lead me.





SECOND STATION

Jesus Accepts His Cross

Reader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

People: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader: The soldiers strip Jesus and put a scarlet cloak on him. They twist some thorns into a crown and put it on his head. To ridicule Jesus, the soldiers kneel before him and say, “Hail, King of the Jews.” They spit on him and strike his face repeatedly. Others pull portions of his beard from his face. After all this, the soldiers strip off the cloak and lead him away to be crucified (cf. Mt 27:27–31).

Jesus: My cross . . . it weighs almost one hundred pounds. But as painful as it is for me to bear the cross over my lacerated shoulders, my greatest cross is to see my love ignored. I do *all this* for love of you. You make a

difference to *me*; let my love make a difference in your life. I know you too bear crosses. The strength you need to carry your cross, no matter what it is, lies in me. Together we can carry any cross, we can overcome any difficulty, but the key is that you let me help.

People: My Jesus, alone I cannot carry my cross. Alone I have no strength. But with you at my side, with you in my heart, I can face the crosses of my life. I know it will be difficult. But your example teaches me that the crosses of my life will draw me closer to you, as your own cross has forever united you to me.

