

STATIONS OF THE CROSS



Composed by John Henry Newman in 1860.

They were prayed in the Colosseum, Rome on Good Friday 2001. Cardinal Newman was Canonised by Pope Francis in October 2019.

Adapted for congregational use in the Parish by Rev. Monsignor Brian O'Loughlin, P.P. for Lent 2020.

Sign of the Cross and greeting.

LET US PRAY.

*Lead, Kindly Light
Amid the encircling gloom
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am
far from home...
Lead Thou me on!
Keep thou my feet:
I do not ask to see
The distant scene-
one step enough for me.*

AMEN.

Presider: St John Henry Newman.

All: Pray for Us.

AT THE CROSS (STABAT MATER)

PLEASE SING BEFORE EACH STATION.

1. At the cross her station keeping,
stood the mournful mother weeping
close to Jesus to the last;

2. Through her heart, his sorrow sharing,
all his bitter anguish bearing,
now at length the sword has passed.

3. Oh, how sad and sore distress'd
was that mother highly blest,
of the sole-begotten One.

4. Christ above in torment hangs;
she beneath beholds the pangs
of her dying glorious Son.

5. Is there one who would not weep,
whelm'd in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear mother to behold?

6. Can the human heart refrain
from partaking in her pain,
in that mother's pain untold?

7. Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
she beheld her tender child,
all with bloody scourges rent;

8. For the sins of his own nation,
saw him hang in desolation,
till his spirit forth he sent.
9. O thou mother! fount of love!
touch my spirit from above,
make my heart with thine accord:
10. Make me feel as thou has felt;
make my soul to glow and melt
with love of Christ my Lord.
11. Holy Mother, pierce me through,
in my heart each wound renew
of my Saviour crucified.
12. Let me share with thee his pain
who for all my sins was slain,
who for me in torments died.
13. Let me mingle tears with thee,
mourning him who mourn'd for me,
all the days that I may live.
14. By the cross with thee to stay,
there with thee to weep and pray,
is all I ask of thee to give.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

At each station

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you.

R. Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

MEDITATIONS OF THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS composed by Cardinal Newman in 1860 and used for Good Friday in Rome in 2001, now Saint John Henry Newman. Adapted for parish use by Monsignor Brian O'Loughlin, P.P. in Lent 2020.

STATION ONE

Jesus is condemned to death

REFLECTION

Leaving the house of Caiphas, and dragged before Pilate and Herod, mocked, beaten, and spit upon, his back torn with scourges, his head crowned with thorns, Jesus. Who on the last day will judge the world, is condemned by unjust judges to a death of ignominy and torture.

Jesus is condemned to *death*. His death warrant is signed and who signed it but I, when I committed my first mortal sins. My first mortal sins, when I fell away from the state of grace into which thou did place me by baptism; these it was that were thy death warrant, O Lord. The innocent suffered for the guilty.

RESPONSE

Those sins of mine were the voices which cried out "Let him be crucified." That willingness and delight of heart with which I commit them was the consent which Pilate gave to this clamorous multitude. And the hardness of heart which followed upon them, my disgust, my despair, my proud impatience, my

obstinate resolve to sin on, the love of sin which took possession of me – what were these contrary and impetuous feelings but the blows and the blasphemies with which the fierce soldiers and the populace received thee, thus carrying out the sentence which Pilate had pronounced?

STATION TWO

Jesus receives his cross

REFLECTION

A strong, and therefore heavy cross, for it is strong enough to bear him upon it when he arrives in Calvary, is placed upon his torn shoulders, he receives it gently and meekly, nay, with gladness of heart, for it is to the salvation of mankind.

True; but recollect, that heavy cross is the weight of our sins. As it fell upon his neck and shoulders, it came down with a shock. Alas! What a sudden, heavy weight have I laid upon thee, O Jesus. And though in the calm and clear foresight of thy mind – for thou sees all things – thou was fully prepared for it, yet thy feeble frame tottered under it when it dropped down on thee.

RESPONSE

Ah! How great a misery is it that I have lifted up my hands against my God. How could I ever fancy he would forgive me! unless he had himself told us that he underwent his bitter passion in order that he might forgive us. I acknowledge, O Jesus, in the anguish and agony of my heart, that it was my sins that struck thee in the face, and bruised thy sacred arms, that tore thy flesh with iron rods, that nailed thee to the cross, and let thee slowly die upon it.

STATION THREE

Jesus falls the first time

REFLECTION

Jesus bowed down under the weight and length of the unwieldy cross, which trailed after him, slowly sets forth on his way, amid the mockeries and insults of the crowd. His agony in the garden itself, was sufficient to exhaust him; but it was only the first of a multitude of sufferings. He sets off with his whole heart, but his limbs fail him, and he falls.

Yes, it is as I feared. Jesus, the strong and mighty Lord, has found for the moment our sins stronger than himself. He falls – yet he bore the load for a while; he tottered but he bore up and walked onward.

RESPONSE

What, then, made him give way? I say, I repeat, it is an intimation and memory to thee, O my soul, of thy falling back into mortal sin. I repented of the sins of my youth. And went on well for a time; but at length a new temptation came when I was off my guard, and suddenly fell away. Then all my good habits seemed to go at once; they were like a garment which is stripped off so quickly and so utterly did grace depart from me. And at that moment I looked at my Lord, and lo! He had fallen down, and I covered my face with my hands and remained in a state of great confusion.

STATION FOUR

Jesus meets his mother

REFLECTION

Jesus rises, though wounded by his fall, journeys on, with his cross still on his shoulders. He is bent down, but at one place, looking up, he sees his mother. For an instant they just see each other and he goes forward.

Mary would rather have had all his sufferings herself could that have been, that not have known what they were by ceasing to be near him. He too, gained a refreshment, as from some soothing and grateful breath of air, to see her sad smile amid the sights and the noises which were about him. She had known him beautiful and glorious, with the freshness of divine innocence and peace upon his countenance; *now* she saw him so changed and deformed that she could scarce have recognized him, save for the piercing, thrilling, peace-inspired look he gave her.

RESPONSE

Still, he was now carrying the load of the world's sins, and all-holy though he was, he carried the image of them on his very face. He looked like some outcast or outlaw who had frightful guilt upon him. He had been made sin for us, who knew no sin; not a feature, not a limb, but spoke of guilt, of a curse, of punishment, of agony.

Oh, what a meeting of Son and mother! Yet there was a mutual comfort, for there was a mutual sympathy. Jesus and Mary – do they forget that passion-tide through all eternity?

STATION FIVE

Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry his cross

REFLECTION

At length his strength fails utterly and he is unable to proceed. The executioners stand perplexed. What are they to do? How is he to get to Calvary? Soon they see a stranger who seems strong and active – Simon of Cyrene. They seize on him, and compel him to carry the cross with Jesus. The sight of the sufferer pierces the man's heart. Oh, what a privilege! O happy soul, elect of God. He takes the part assigned to him with joy.

RESPONSE

This came of Mary's intercession. *He* prayed, not for himself, except that he might drink the full chalice of suffering and do his Father's will; but she showed herself a mother by following him with her prayers, since she could help him in no other way. She then sent this stranger to help him. It was she who led the soldiers to see that they might be too fierce with him. Sweet Mother, even *do* the like for us. Pray for us, whatever be our cross, as we pass along on our way. Pray for us and we shall rise again though we have fallen. Pray for us when sorrow, anxiety, or sickness comes upon us. Pray for us when we are prostrate under the power of temptation and send some faithful servant of thine to succour us. And in the world to come, if found worthy to expiate our sins in the fiery prison, send some good angel to give us a season of refreshment. Pray for us, holy Mother of God.

STATION SIX

Jesus and Veronica

REFLECTION

As Jesus toils along the hill, covered with the sweat of death, a woman makes her way through the crowd, and wipes his face with her veil. In reward for her piety the cloth retains the impression of the sacred countenance upon it.

The relief which a mother's tenderness secured is not yet all she did. Her prayers sent Veronica as well as Simon; Simon to do a man's work, Veronica to do the work of a woman. The devout servant of Jesus did what she could. As Magdalen had poured the ointment at the feast, so Veronica now offered him this veil in his passion. "Ah," she said, "Would I could do more. Why have I not the strength of Simon, to take part of the burden of the cross? But men only can serve the great high priest, now that he is celebrating the solemn act of sacrifice."

RESPONSE

O Jesus! Let us, one and all, minister to thee according to our places and powers. And as thou did accept from thy followers refreshment in thy hour of trial, so give us the support of thy grace when we are hard pressed by our foe. I feel I cannot bear up against temptations, weariness, despondency, and sin. I say to myself, what is the good of being religious? I shall fall, O my dear Saviour, I shall certainly fall, unless thou do 'renew for me my vigour like the eagle's' and breathe life into me by the soothing application and the touch of the holy sacraments which you have appointed.

STATION SEVEN

Jesus falls the second time

REFLECTION

The pains of his wounds and the loss of blood increasing at every step of his way, again his limbs fail him, and he falls to the ground.

What has he done to deserve all this? This is the reward received by the long-awaited Messiah from the chosen people, the children of Israel. I know what to answer. He falls because I have fallen. I have fallen again. I know well that without thy grace, O Lord, I could not stand; and I fancied that I had kept close to the sacraments; yet in spite of going to Mass and to my duties, I am out of grace again. Why is it but because I have lost my devotional spirit, and have come to thy holy ordinances in a cold, formal way, without inward affection. I became lukewarm, tepid.

RESPONSE

I thought the battle of life was over, and became secure. I had no lively faith, no sight of spiritual things. I came to church from habit and because I thought others would observe it. I ought to be a new creature. I ought to live by faith, hope and charity; but I thought more of this world than of the world to come – and at last I forgot that I was a servant of God, and followed the broad way that leads to destruction, not the narrow way which leads to life. And thus I fell from thee.

STATION EIGHT

Jesus comforts the women of Jerusalem

RELECTION

At the sight of the sufferings of Jesus the holy women are so pierced with grief that they cry out and bewail him, careless about what happens to them by so doing. Jesus turning to them said: “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.”

Ah! Can it be, O Lord, that I shall prove one of those sinful children for whom thou bids their mothers to weep. “Weep not for me,” he said, “For I am the lamb of God and am making atonement at my own will for the sins of the world. I am suffering now, but I shall triumph; and when I triumph, those souls for whom I am dying will either be my dearest friends or my deadliest enemies.”

RESPONSE

Is it possible? O my Lord, can I grasp the terrible thought that thou did weep over Jerusalem? Is it possible that I am one of the reprobate? Possible that I shall lose by thy passion and death, not gain by it? Oh, withdraw not from me. I am in a very bad way, I have so much evil in me. I have so little of an earnest, brave spirit to set against that evil. O Lord, what will become of me? It is so difficult to drive away the evil spirit from my heart. Thou alone can effectually cast him out.

STATION NINE

Jesus falls the third time

REFLECTION

Jesus had now reached almost the top of Calvary; but, before he had gained the very spot where he was to be crucified, again he fell, and is again dragged up and goaded onwards by the brutal soldiery.

We are told in Scripture of three falls of Satan, the evil spirit. The first was in the beginning; the second when the gospel and the kingdom of heaven were preached to the world; the third will be at the end of all things. The first is told by St. John the Evangelist; he says: There was a great battle in heaven. Michael and his angels fought with the dragon and the dragon fought with his angels. And they prevailed not, neither was their place found anymore in heaven. And that great dragon was cast out, the old serpent, who is called the devil and Satan" (see Rev. 12:7). The second fall, at the time of the gospel, is spoken by our Lord when he says "I saw Satan, like lightning, falling from heaven." And the third by the same John "There came down fire from God out of heaven... and the devil – was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone."

These three falls – the past, present, and future – the evil spirit had in mind when he moved Judas to betray our Lord. This was just his hour. Our Lord when he was seized, said to his enemies – "This is your hour and the power of darkness." Satan knew his time was short and thought he might use it to good effect. But little dreaming that he would be acting in behalf of the redemption of the world, which our Lord's passion and death were to work out, in revenge, and, as he thought, in triumph, he smote him once, he smote him twice. And he smote him a third time, each a heavier blow. The weight of the cross, the barbarity of the soldiers, and the crown were his instruments.

RESPONSE

O Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, the Word Incarnate, we praise, adore and love thee for thy ineffable condescension, even to allow thy self thus for a time to fall into the hands and under the power of the enemy of God and man, in order thereby to save us from being his servants and companions for eternity.

STATION TEN

Jesus is stripped of his garments

REFLECTION

At length he has arrived at the place of sacrifice, and they begin to prepare him for the cross. His garments are torn from his bleeding body, and he, the holy of holiest, stands exposed to the gaze of the coarse and scoffing multitude.

O thou who in thy passion was stripped of all thy clothes, and held up to the curiosity and mockery of the rabble, strip me of myself here and now, that in the last day I come not in shame on Calvary that I might be spared the shame of the Judgement. Thou had nothing to be ashamed of personally, and the shame which thou did feel was because thou have taken on man's nature. When they took from thee the garments, those innocent limbs of thine were but objects of humble and loving adoration to the highest seraphim. They stood around in speechless awe, wondering at thy beauty, and they trembled at thy divine self-abasement.

RESPONSE

But I, O Lord, how shall I appear if thou shall hold me up hereafter to be gazed upon, stripped of that robe of grace which is thine, and seen in my own personal life and nature? O how hideous I am in myself, even in my best estate. Even when I am cleansed from my mortal sins, what disease and corruption is seen even in my venial sins. How shall I be fit for the society of angels, how for thy presence, until thou burn this foul leprosy in the fires of purgatory.

STATION ELEVEN

Jesus is nailed to the cross

REFLECTION

The cross is laid upon the ground, and Jesus is stretched upon it, and then, swaying heavily to and fro, it is, after much exertion, jerked into the hole ready to receive it. Or, as others think, it is set upright and Jesus is raised and fastened to it. As the savage executioners drive in the huge nails, he offers himself to the Eternal Father, as a ransom for the world. The blows are struck – the blood gushes forth.

RESPONSE

Yes, they set the cross on high, and they placed a ladder against it, and having stripped him of his garments, made him mount. With his hands feebly grasping its sides and cross-woods, and his feet slowly, uncertainly, with much effort, with many slips, mounting up, the soldiers propped him on each side, or he would have fallen. When he reached the projection where his sacred feet were

to be, he turned around with sweet modesty and gentleness towards the fierce rabble, stretching out his arms, as if he would embrace them. Then he lovingly placed the backs of his hands close against the traverse beam, waiting for the executioners to come with their sharp nails and heavy hammers to dig into the palms of his hands and to fasten them securely to the wood. There he hung, a perplexity to the multitude, a terror to the evil spirit, the wonder, the awe, yet the joy, the adoration of holy angels.

STATION TWELVE

Jesus dies upon the cross

REFLECTION

Jesus hung for three hours. During this time he prayed for his murderers, promised paradise to the penitent robber, and committed his blessed mother to the guardianship of Saint John. Then all was finished, and he bowed his head and gave up the Spirit.

The worse is over. The holiest is dead and departed. The most tender, the most affectionate, the holiest of the sons of men is gone. Jesus is dead and with his death my sin shall die. I protest once and for all, before men and angels, that sin shall no more have dominion over me. This Lent I make myself God's own for ever. The salvation of my soul shall be my first concern. With the aid of his grace I will create in me a deep hatred and sorrow for my past sin. I will try hard to detest sins, as much as I have ever loved it. Into God's hands I put myself, not by halves, but unreservedly.

RESPONSE

I promise, thee, O Lord with the help of thy grace, to keep out of the way of temptation, to avoid all occasions of sin, to turn at once from the voice of the evil one, to be regular in my prayers, so to die to sin that thou may not have died for me on the cross in vain.

STATION THIRTEEN

Jesus is taken from the cross and laid on Mary's bosom

REFLECTION

The multitude have gone home. Calvary is left solitary and still, except that Saint John and the holy women are there. Then come Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, and take down from the cross the body of Jesus and place it in the arms of Mary.

O Mary, at last you have possession of thy son. Now, when his enemies can do no more, they leave him in contempt of thee. As his unexpected friends perform their difficult work, you look on with unspeakable thoughts. Your heart is pierced with the sword of which Simeon spoke. O Mother most sorrowful; yet in your sorrow there is still a greater joy. The joy in prospect nerved you to stand by him as he hung upon the cross; much more now, without swooning, without trembling, you receive him to your arms and your lap.

RESPONSE

Now you are supremely happy at having him, though he comes to you not as he went from you. He went from your home, O Mother of God, in the strength and beauty of his manhood and he comes back to you mangled,

dead. Yet, O blessed Mary, you are happier in this hour of woe than on the day of the marriage feast, for then he was leaving you and now in the future, as a risen Saviour, he will be separated from you no more.

STATION FOURTEEN

Jesus is laid in the tomb

REFLECTION

But for a short three days, for a day and a half –Mary then must give him up. He is not yet risen. His friends and servants take him from thee and place him in an honourable tomb. They close it safely, till the hour comes for his resurrection.

Lie down and sleep in peace in the calm grave for a little while, dear Lord, and then wake up for an everlasting reign. We, like the faithful women, will watch around thee, for all our treasure, all our life, is lodged with thee. And when our turn comes to die, grant, sweet Lord, that we may sleep calmly too, the sleep of the just. Let us sleep peacefully for the brief interval between death and the general resurrection. Guard us from the enemy; save us from the pit.

RESPONSE

Let our friends remember us and pray for us, O dear Lord. Let Masses be said for us, so that the pains of purgatory, so much deserved by us, and therefore so truly welcomed by us, may be over without delay. Give us seasons of refreshment there; wrap us round with holy dreams and soothing contemplations, while we gather strength to ascend let our

faithful guardian angels help us up the glorious ladder, reaching from earth to heaven, which Jacob saw in vision. And when we reach the everlasting gates, let them open upon us with the music of angels, and let Saint Peter receive us, and our Lady, the glorious queen of saints, embrace us and bring us to thee and to thy eternal Father, and to thy co-equal Spirit, Three Persons, one God, to reign with them for ever and ever. Amen.

Let us pray God for our relations, friends, well-wishers, and enemies, living and dead.

O Jesus, Son of Mary, whom Mary followed to the cross when thy disciples fled, and who did bear her tenderly in mind in the midst of thy sufferings, even in thy last words, who did commit her to thy best beloved disciple, saying to her, "Woman, behold thy son," and to him, "Behold thy mother". We, after thy pattern, would pray for all who are near and dear to us, and we beg thy grace to do so continually. We beg thee to bring them all into the light of thy truth or to keep them in a state of grace, and to give them the gift of perseverance.

We thus pray for our parents, for our fathers, and our mothers, for our children, for every one of them, for every one of our brothers, for all our old friends, for our dear and intimate friends, for teachers, for our pupils, for our employers, for our associates and fellow-workers, for our neighbours, for our superiors, and rulers; for those who wish us well, for those who wish us ill; for our enemies, for our rivals; for our injurers and for our slanderers.

And not only for the living, but for the dead, who have died in the grace of God, that he may shorten the time of their expiation, and admit them into his presence above. Amen.

To conclude

We say the *Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be* for the Pope's intentions and to gain the Indulgence.

Presider: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Presider: May almighty God bless you the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Presider: Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

PLEASE LEAVE IN THE CHURCH BY RETURNING TO THE TABLE