



The Parish of St. Wulfram, Grantham

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

a self-guided walk with Christ

Welcome to Stations of the Cross

a self-guided walk with Christ

Lent is a time for reflections, renewal, and revival of spirit. This year, throughout Lent, we have the opportunity to publicly profess our faith by walking and praying the Stations of the Cross here in the tranquil surroundings of the Walled Garden at Grantham House.

You are most welcome to take this walk and, with the help of this booklet, guide yourself around the stations – stopping at each to read the story, to offer prayer, and to meditate on the themes.

This can be a personal and moving experience for individuals or families. Please approach this walk prayerfully as you participate in this very personal walk with our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Then Jesus said to them all, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.’”

Luke 9:23

*Cover Image: ‘Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem’, by Ted DeGrazia DeGrazia Gallery, Tucson, Arizona (CNS Photo/Nancy Wiechec) Online.
Station Images: ‘Stations of the Cross’, by Zachary Rollins. Online.*

What are Stations of the Cross

an explanation

From the earliest of days, followers of Jesus told the story of his passion, death and resurrection. Pilgrims to Jerusalem were anxious to see the sites where Jesus was. These sites become important personal connections with Jesus. After many years and people moving around, it was no longer easy or even possible to visit the holy sites. By the 1500's, people all over the world started creating "replicas" of the places along the route in Jerusalem. Eventually, these shrines became the 14 stations we now know and celebrate.

You may be wondering why the sites are called Stations of the Cross. The word *station* comes from the Latin word that means to stand. We are walking from Christ's trial to His crucifixion at Calvary and we stop and stand at certain sites (stations) that commemorate various events that took place along the way.

As you come to each station, you stop, pray, read the scriptures, pray the prayers, and contemplate the situation before moving on. As you walk from one station to the next, your walking becomes a devotional act, because you are walking with Jesus as He walks to Calvary.

On the pages that follow you will find the 14 Stations of the Cross with pictures, the story associated with each station, prayers and meditations.

**Lord Jesus Christ,
fill our hearts with the light of your Spirit,
so that by following you on your final journey
we may come to know the price of our Redemption
and become worthy of a share
in the fruits of your Passion, Death and Resurrection.
You who live and reign for ever and ever.
Amen.**



First Station - Jesus is condemned to death

Story

Jesus stands in the most human of places. He has already experienced profound solidarity with so many on this earth, by being beaten and tortured. Now he is wrongfully condemned to punishment by death. His commitment to entering our lives completely begins its final steps. He has said

“yes”

to God and placed his life in God’s hands. We follow him in this final surrender, and contemplate with reverence each place along the way, as he is broken and given for us.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you accepted an unjust judgment.
Grant to us and to all the men and women of our time
the grace to remain faithful to the truth.
Do not allow the weight of responsibility
for the sufferings of the innocent
fall upon us and upon those who come after us.
To you, O Jesus, just Judge,
be honour and glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

Meditation

As I view the scene, I become moved by both outrage and gratitude. I look at Jesus. His face, the crown of thorns, the blood, His clothes stuck to the wounds on his back. Pilate washes his hands of the whole affair. Jesus’ hands are tied behind his back. This is for me that I might be free that I might have eternal life.

Moving on

As the journey begins, I ask to be with Jesus, to follow his journey. I express my love and thanks.

II



Second Station - Jesus carries His cross

Story

Jesus is made to carry the cross on which he will die. It represents the weight of all our crosses. What he must have felt as he first took it upon his shoulders! With each step he enters more deeply into our human experience. He walks in the path of human misery and suffering, and experiences its crushing weight.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, who accept the Cross at the hands of men
to make of it the sign
of God's saving love for humanity,
grant us and all the men and women of our time
the grace of faith in this infinite love.
By passing on to the new millennium
the sign of the Cross,
may we be authentic witnesses to the Redemption.
To you, O Jesus, Priest and Victim,
be praise and glory for ever.
Amen.

Meditation

I contemplate the wood of that cross. I imagine how heavy it is. I reflect upon all it means that Jesus is carrying it. I look into his eyes. It's all there. This is for me. So I place myself with him in this journey, in its anguish, in his freedom and surrender, in the love that must fill his heart.

Moving on

With sorrow and gratitude, I continue the journey. Moved by the power of his love, I am drawn to him and express my love in the words that come to me.

III



Third Station - Jesus falls the first time

Story

The weight is unbearable. Jesus falls under it. How could he enter our lives completely without surrendering to the crushing weight of the life of so many on this earth! He lays on the ground and knows the experience of weakness beneath unfair burdens. He feels the powerlessness of wondering if he will ever be able to continue. He is pulled up and made to continue.

Prayer

O Christ, as you fall under the weight of our faults
and rise again for our justification,
we pray, help us
and all who are weighed down by sin
to stand up again
and continue the journey.
Give us the strength of the Spirit
to carry with you the cross of our weakness.
To you, O Jesus, crushed under the weight of our faults
be our praise and love for ever.
Amen.

Meditation

I stare at the weakness in his eyes. I can look at his whole body and see the exhaustion. As I behold him there on the ground, being roughly pulled up, I know forever how profoundly he understands my fatigue and my defeats.

Moving on

This is for me. In grief and gratitude I want to let him remain there. As I watch him stand again and gain an inner strength, I accept his love and express my thanks.

IV



Fourth Station - Jesus meets his mother

Story

Jesus' path takes him to a powerful source of his strength to continue. All his life, his mother had taught him the meaning of the words,

“Behold, the handmaid of the Lord.”

Now they look into each other's eyes. How pierced through her heart must be! How pained he must be to see her tears! Now, her grace-filled smile blesses his mission and stirs his heart to its depth. Love and trust in God bind them together.

Prayer

O Mary, who walked the way of the Cross with your Son, your mother's heart torn by grief, yet confident that He to whom nothing is impossible would be able to fulfil his promises, implore for us and for the generations yet to come the grace of surrender to God's love.

Help us, in the face of suffering, rejection, and trial, however prolonged and severe, never to doubt his love.

To Jesus, your Son, honour and glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

Meditation

As I watch them in this place along the way, I contemplate the mystery of love's power to give strength. She knows the sorrow in every mother's heart who has lost a child to tragedy or violence. I look at the two of them very carefully and long for such love and such peace.

Moving on

This is for me, such incredible freedom, the availability of a servant. I find the words to express what is in my heart.

V



Fifth Station - Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross

Story

Jesus even experiences our struggle to receive help. He is made to experience the poverty of not being able to carry his burden alone. He enters into the experience of all who must depend upon others to survive. He is deprived of the satisfaction of carrying this burden on his own.

Prayer

O Christ, you gave to Simon of Cyrene
the dignity of carrying your Cross.
Welcome us too under its weight,
welcome all men and women
and grant to everyone the gift of readiness to serve.
Do not permit that we should turn away from those
who are crushed by the cross of illness
loneliness, hunger or injustice.
As we carry each other's burdens,
help us to become witnesses to the gospel of the Cross
and witnesses to you,
who live and reign for ever and ever.
Amen.

Meditation

I look into his face and contemplate his struggle, His weariness and fragility, His incapability. I see how he looks at Simon, with utmost humility and gratitude.

Moving on

This is for me. So I feel anguish and gratitude. I express my thanks that he can continue this journey. That he has help. That he knows my inability to carry my burden alone. I say what is in my heart, with deep feeling.

VI



Sixth Station - Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Story

Jesus' journey is at times brutal. He has entered into the terrible experiences of rejection and injustice. He has been whipped and beaten. His face shows the signs of his solidarity with all who have ever suffered injustice and vile, abusive treatment. He encounters a compassionate, loving disciple who wipes the vulgar spit and mocking blood from his face. On her veil, she discovers the image of his face – his gift to her, and, for us to contemplate forever.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you accepted a woman's
selfless gesture of love,
and in exchange ordained
that future generations should remember her
by the name of your face.
Grant that our works
and the works of all who will come after us
will make us like unto you
and will leave in the world the reflection
of your infinite love.
To you, O Jesus, splendour of the Father's glory,
be praise and glory for ever.
Amen.

Meditation

What does the face of Jesus hold for me? What do I see, as I look deeply into his face? Can I try to comfort the agony and pain? Can I embrace him, with his face so covered with his passion?

Moving on

The veil I behold is a true icon of his gift of himself. This is for me. In wonder and awe, I behold his face now wiped clean, and see the depth of his suffering in solidarity with all flesh.

VII



Seventh Station - Jesus falls the second time

Story

Even with help, Jesus stumbles and falls to the ground. In deep exhaustion he stares at the earth beneath him.

“Remember, you are dust and to dust you will return.”

He has seen death before. Now he can feel the profound weakness of disability and disease and aging itself, there on his knees, under the weight of his cross.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you fall under the weight of human sin
and you get up again in order to take it upon yourself and cancel it.
Give to us, weak men and women,
the strength to carry the cross of daily life
and to get up again from our falls,
so that we may bring to future generations
the Gospel of your saving power.
To you, O Jesus, our support when we are weak,
be praise and glory for ever.
Amen.

Meditation

I contemplate Jesus brought very low. As I behold him there on the ground, with all the agony taking its toll on him, I let my heart go out to him. I store up this image in my heart, knowing that I will never feel alone in my suffering or in any diminishment, with this image of Jesus on the ground before me.

Moving on

This is for me, so I express the feelings in my heart.

VIII



Eighth Station - Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

Story

The women of Jerusalem, and their children, come out to comfort and thank him. They had seen his compassion and welcomed his words of healing and freedom. He had broken all kinds of social and religious conventions to connect with them. Now they are here to support him. He feels their grief. He suffers, knowing he can't remain to help them more in this life. He knows the mystery of facing the separation of death.

Prayer

O Christ, you came into this world
to visit all those who await salvation.
Grant that our generation
will recognize the time of its visitation
and share in the fruits of your redemption.
Do not permit that there should be weeping for us
and for the men and women of the new century
because we have rejected our merciful Father's outstretched hand.
To you, O Jesus, born of the Virgin Daughter of Zion,
be honour and praise for ever and ever.
Amen.

Meditation

I look at their faces so full of love and gratitude, loss and fear. I contemplate what words might have passed between them. I remember all his tender, compassionate, merciful love for me. I place myself with these women and children to support him.

Moving on

This is for me. So, I let this scene stir up deep gratitude.

IV



Ninth Station - Jesus falls a third time

Story

This last fall is devastating. Jesus can barely proceed to the end. Summoning all this remaining strength supported by his inner trust in God, Jesus collapses under the weight of the cross. His executioners look at him as a broken man, pathetic yet paying a price he deserves. They help him up so he can make it up the hill of crucifixion.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
through your humiliation beneath the Cross
you revealed to the world the price of its redemption.
Grant to the men and women of the third millennium
the light of faith,
so that, as they recognize in you
the Suffering Servant of God and man,
they may have the courage to follow the same path
which, by way of the Cross and self-emptying,
leads to life without end.
To you, O Jesus, our support when we are weak,
be honour and glory for ever.
Amen.

Meditation

I pause to contemplate him there on the ground: The brokenness that makes me whole; the surrender that gives me life. I pause to experience and receive how completely he loves me. He is indeed completely poured out for me.

Moving on

As I treasure this gifted experience, I express what is in my heart.

X



Tenth Station - Jesus' clothes are taken away

Story

Part of the indignity is to be crucified naked. Jesus is completely stripped of any pride. The wounds on his back are torn open again. He experiences the ultimate vulnerability of the defenceless. No shield or security protects him. As they stare at him, his eyes turn to heaven.

Prayer

Lord Jesus,
who, with supreme dedication,
accepted death on the Cross for our salvation,
grant to us and to all the world's people
a share in your sacrifice on the Cross,
so that what we are and what we do
may always be a free and conscious sharing
in your work of salvation.
To you, O Jesus, Priest and Victim,
be honour and glory for ever.
Amen.

Meditation

I pause to watch the stripping. I contemplate all that is taken from him and how he faces his death with such nakedness. I reflect upon how much of himself he has revealed to me holding nothing back.

Moving on

As I look at him in his humility, I know that this is for me, and I share my feelings of gratitude.

XVI



Eleventh Station - Jesus is nailed to the cross

Story

Huge nails are hammered through his hands and feet to fix him on the cross. He is bleeding much more seriously now. As the cross is lifted up, the weight of his life hangs on those nails. Every time he struggles to pull himself up to breathe, his ability to cling to life slips away.

Prayer

O Christ lifted high,
O Love crucified,
fill our hearts with your love,
that we may see in your Cross
the sign of our redemption
and, drawn by your wounds,
we may live and die with you,
who live and reign with the Father and the Spirit,
now and for ever.
Amen.

Meditation

I make myself watch the nails being driven through his flesh. And I watch his face. I contemplate the completeness of his entry into our lives. Can there be any pain or agony he would not understand?

Moving on

This is for me, nailed to a cross to forever proclaim liberty to captives.
What sorrow and gratitude fill my heart!

XII



Twelfth Station - Jesus dies on the cross

Story

Between two criminals, a mocking title above his head, with only Mary and John and Mary Magdalene to support him, Jesus surrenders his last breath:

“Into your hands I commend my spirit.”

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
in the moment of your agony
you were not indifferent to humanity’s fate,
and with your last breath
you entrusted to the Father’s mercy
the men and women of every age,
with all their weaknesses and sins.
Fill us and the generations yet to come
with your Spirit of love,
so that our indifference
will not render vain in us
the fruits of your death.
To you, crucified Jesus, the wisdom and the power of God,
be honour and glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

Meditation

I stand there, at the foot of the cross, side by side with all of humanity, and behold our salvation. I carefully watch and listen to all that is said. And then, I experience the one who gives life pass from life to death, for me. I console Mary and John and Mary. And let them console me.

Moving on

This is the hour to express the deepest feelings within me.

XIII



Thirteenth Station - The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross and given to his mother

Story

What tender mourning! Jesus' lifeless body lies in his mother's arms. He has truly died...A profound sacrifice, complete.

Prayer

Implore for us the grace of faith, hope and charity,
so that we, like you,
may stand without flinching beneath the Cross
until our last breath.

To your Son, Jesus, our Saviour,
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory for ever and ever.

Amen.

Meditation

I behold this scene at the foot of the cross. I contemplate touching, caressing his body. I remember all his hands have touched, all who have been blessed by his warm embrace. I pause to let it soak in. He knows the mystery of death. He has fallen into God's hands.

Moving On

That I might love as I have been loved. I pour out my heart to the God of all mercies.

XIV



Fourteenth Station - Jesus is laid in the tomb

Story

They take the body of Jesus to its resting place. The huge stone over the tomb is the final sign of the permanence of death. In this final act of surrender, who would have imagined this tomb would soon be empty or that Jesus would show himself alive to his disciples, or that they would recognize him in the breaking of bread? Oh, that our hearts might burn within us, as we realize how he had to suffer and die so as to enter into his glory, for us.

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
by the power of the Holy Spirit, you were drawn by the Father from the darkness of death to the light of a new life in glory.

Grant that the sign of the empty tomb may speak to us and to future generations, and become a wellspring of living faith, generous love, and unshakeable hope.

To you, O Jesus, whose presence, hidden and victorious,
fills the history of the world,
be honour and glory for ever and ever.

Amen.

Meditation

I pause to contemplate this act of closure on his life. In solidarity with all humanity, his body is taken to its grave. I stand for a moment outside this tomb. This final journey of his life has shown me the meaning of his gift of himself for me. This tomb represents every tomb I stand before with fear, in defeat, struggling to believe it could ever be empty.

Moving on

In the fullness of faith in the Risen One I express my gratitude for this way of the cross. I ask Jesus, whose hands, feet and side still bear the signs of this journey, to grant me the graces I need to take up my cross to be a servant of his own mission.

**We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.
Amen.**

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

John 20:1-10

NRSVA



The Parish Church of
St. Wulfram, Grantham