The Stations of the Cross

Adore for 24 2020

Saint James Academy
The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death

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

Reflection: Jesus’s journey towards Calvary begins as He stands in front of Pontius Pilate. Pilate knows Jesus is guiltless in every way, but as the crowd’s shouting of “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” grows louder and louder, Pilate washes his hands and seals Jesus to his fate on the cross. Jesus remains quiet beside Pilate and does not fight back in any way. Jesus suffers through being wrongly accused for the sole purpose of bearing the blame for our own sins. He fully trusts in God’s plan for Him, even to the point of death on a cross. His love is so unexplainably deep for us that He freely takes on our guilt and shame, and offers no resistance in return.

Lord Jesus Christ, grant me your steadfast trust in God you had when you were condemned to die. Whenever God’s plan seems difficult and uncomfortable, help me to have the strength to believe in Your Word, and remind me that you are always by my side no matter what. Amen.

Danny Schermerhorn

The Second Station: Jesus Carries His Cross

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

Reflection: As Jesus starts his long and treacherous trek to Calvary, He carries the sins of the world on his back. The brittle wood of the cross presses into his shoulders and pain shoots up his legs with every step. People are spitting, jeering, and kicking at him; treating him like an animal. Imagine the feeling of sadness Jesus feels for the people he so desperately loves. The people who just days earlier, welcomed Jesus into the city, laying down their garments and waving palms for him. Jesus went through unexplainable pain to free us from our sins. He knew, in the agony in the garden, the plan for his death, but he proceeded anyway. We need to realize this great sacrifice Jesus made for us, and it should give us the courage to evangelize and work towards the goal of heaven, no matter the challenges.

Lord Jesus Christ, grant me courage to stand up for my faith and get through the tough challenges in life. Even when the world seems like everything is against me, give me strength to press on like You did. Thank you for your great sacrifice for us, a sacrifice of pure love. Amen.

Will Sydzyik
The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

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

Reflection: As Jesus continues His gruesome journey towards Calvary He is continually tormented with buffets and spitting. The splintering weight of the cross digs into His torn-apart flesh. With every single step Jesus becomes weaker and less conscious. There is only so much a human can take. After an unnerving amount of blood loss, countless steps on the blistering gravel road, and innumerable blows from bystanders, Jesus folds under the weight of the cross. As He regains consciousness, all he hears are the shouts of the soldiers. He could choose to lay there and die on the road, but thinking of you, He picks up the weight of the world’s sin on His shoulders and pushes on His agonizing journey towards our salvation. Jesus’ love for us is so great that He continues on even though His body physically cannot endure much more.

My tortured Redeemer, grant me the strength and perseverance to get back up when I fall. Whether my failure is great or small, remind me of how You persisted on your way to die for me. Help me to unite all of my short-comings to Your first fall, and guide me while I try to get back on my feet. Thank You for Your unbearable sacrifice and for Your love that endured this first fall for me.

Amen.

Zach Wurtenberger

The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother

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

Reflection: As she watched her son’s face, her heart was stabbed and torn. Her son, her baby boy, was beaten and punished for crimes he never committed. Each whip, each push, each slap was felt by her tired heart. Her heart suffered the same pain as the man she gave her life to. Despite all this torment, she was there for her son. When he came to her shaking arms and tear-stained face, he found reassurance in her motherly embrace. Jesus, even though he is truly perfect, still ran to his mother for support when he was in trouble. The love Mother Mary has for each of us is unconditional; she knows and can feel the pain we feel, and she is always there with a caring embrace when we need her.

Dear Heavenly Father, help us to come to your mother in our times of need. Guide us to her loving embrace when we simply need a companion or when we truly need her life-saving prayers. Let us
follow your lead in giving all that we are to Mother Mary, so that she can bring us to be the best versions of ourselves that we can be. Amen.

Laura Aykroyd

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

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

Reflection: Jesus is continuing to grow tired and weary. The pain is settling in, and he feels helpless. The soldiers are becoming impatient and as he grows weaker, they grab a man out of the crowd of surrounding people. He’s on his way home from work, and is saddened by the sight of Jesus. Doing as the soldiers told him, the man starts to pick up the cross with Jesus and walks with him for some time. He shares in Christ’s pain and takes on his burden. Not knowing much about Jesus’ suffering, it still touched the man’s heart.

Lord Jesus Christ, grant us the grace to pick up our own crosses and bear them daily. We ask that you humble us each and every day, especially during this Lenten season. Just as Simon helped Jesus carry His cross, help us to bear ours. Keep our hearts focused on you. Help us to aid those who may need help carrying their heavy load, and become servants to Your people. Amen.

Ali Yunger

The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

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

Reflection: As Jesus struggles past the crowd, he passes by many faces which taunt and jeer at Him, but others stand frozen in silent shame and horror. They remain motionless, petrified that if they reach out to help Him, the soldiers will retaliate. Suddenly a woman named Veronica sees Him, her Lord, trudging towards his death, degraded and in pain, and her heart immediately goes out to Him. She bravely steps out of the crowd, and though she can’t save Him, Veronica’s immense empathy encourages her to offer what little she can to comfort Jesus. She reaches out with her veil, and gently wipes the blood and sweat from His face. What solace this must have given Him, as he was surrounded by a jeering crowd, to be the recipient of such a simple act of selfless love. Their moment of intimate compassion is a brief interruption to His intense passion and suffering, reminding us of the powerful love which is self-sacrifice. Thankful for her kindness, Jesus leaves his image on her veil.
Lord Jesus Christ, grant us the compassion and selflessness to reach out with Christian charity towards those who are suffering and forsaken. Help us realize that Your great love is offered to everyone in this world. May we be brave enough to mirror Veronica and step out of the crowd to offer the best of ourselves for others. Amen.

Bridget Schippers

The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

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

Reflection: For the second time as he makes his way along the narrow path to Calvary, Jesus falls. We can sense his physical weakness after the long night and the torture he had endured. Perhaps it was not just that ordeal, his own exhaustion and the heavy cross on his shoulders that made him fall. An unfathomable burden weighs on Jesus, something personal and profound which makes itself felt more clearly with each step.

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taken on all our burdens and you continue to carry us. Our weight has made you fall. Lift us up, for by ourselves we cannot rise from the dust. In place of a heart of stone, give us a heart of flesh, a heart capable of seeing. Make us aware of your presence and capable of resisting the forces of evil. Help us to recognise the spiritual and material needs of others, and to give them the help they need. Lift us up, so that we may lift others up. Give us hope at every moment of darkness, so that we may bring your hope to the world. Amen.

Kerry Devine

The Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

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

Reflection: As Jesus is bearing the heavy cross on his way to Calvary, he sees a group of women on the side of the road. In pain, bruised, and bleeding, Jesus stops to encourage the women to not weep for him but for themselves and their children. He tries to comfort these women and let them know that things will get better. Knowing what is about to happen to him, he is more worried about others that he is about himself. The love that Jesus shows here is unlike any other and we should be thankful everyday for the sacrifice that he made.

Lord, to the weeping women you spoke of repentance and the Day of Judgement, when all of us will stand before your face: before you, the Judge of the world. You call us to leave behind the trivialization of evil, which salves our consciences and allows us to carry on as before. You show us the seriousness of our responsibility, the danger of our being found guilty and without excuse on the
Day of Judgement. Grant that we may not simply walk at your side, with nothing to offer other than compassionate words. Convert us and give us new life. Grant that in the end we will not be dry wood, but living branches in you, the true vine, bearing fruit for eternal life

Jack Holton

The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

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

In his third fall, Jesus expresses his enduring love and, for our sake, he embraced the burden of suffering. He renews his call to follow God faithfully to the end. But he also gives us a glimpse of what lies beyond the veil of the promise: If we endure, we shall also reign with him. Jesus’ falls are part of the mystery of his Incarnation. He sought us out in our weakness, descending into its very depths in order to raise us up to himself. In himself, he showed us the path of humility, to open up for us the path of return. He taught us patience as the weapon that conquers the world. Falling to the ground for the third time, even as he sympathizes with our weaknesses, he shows us how to overcome temptation: we are instead to persevere, to remain steadfast, and to remain in him.

Lord Jesus Christ, amid the trials that try our faith, we feel alone: we do not yet believe that our trials were once yours and that you ask us simply to endure them with you. Come, Spirit of Truth, whenever we fall along the way! Teach us to cling to Jesus’ fidelity and to trust in his prayer for us, that we may receive that stream of power which he alone, God-with-us, is able to give! Amen.

Katie Free

The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

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

Jesus is stripped of his garments. Clothing gives a man his social position; it gives him his place in society, it makes him someone. His public stripping means that Jesus, the king of kings, is no longer anything at all in the eyes of his people, he is simply an outcast, despised by all alike. The moment of the stripping reminds us of the expulsion from Paradise: God’s splendour has fallen away from man, who now stands naked and exposed, unclad and ashamed. And so Jesus once more takes on the condition of fallen man. Stripped of his garments, he reminds us that we have all lost the “first garment” that is God’s splendour.
Lord Jesus, you were stripped of your garments, exposed to shame, cast out of society. You took upon yourself the shame of Adam, and you healed it. You also take upon yourself the sufferings and the needs of the poor, the outcasts of our world. And in this very way you fulfill the words of the prophets. This is how you bring meaning into apparent meaninglessness. This is how you make us realize that your Father holds you, us, and the whole world in his hands. Give us a profound respect for man at every stage of his existence, and in all the situations in which we encounter him. Clothe us in the light of your grace.

JD Reece

The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

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

As Jesus completes his exhausting, humiliating journey, he is faced with even more excruciating pain. As He lies on the cross, the cross He carried to redeem our sins, nails are pounded through his hands and feet and He is binded to the cross. As the cross is lifted, the weight of His life and the weight of our sins rests in His hands and feet. Each breath becomes an even greater struggle as His life slips away. He bore the pain and agony to reveal His overwhelming love for us, to prove there is no suffering he cannot understand and no battle he cannot conquer. He endured the worst to sympathize in our suffering, and as his blood drips from his aching body, He thirsts for you.

Sweet Jesus, you let yourself be nailed to the Cross for the sake of my selfishness, my abandonment to you, my pride and my sins. You accepted the cruelty of your suffering, the destruction of your body and dignity, to reveal to me there is no trial or suffering you don’t understand. You embrace the worst of pains pain for me to cling to you in the times when I can’t stand on my own, when one more step seems like a hundred, when one more challenge seems like the breaking point. Lord Jesus, help me to unite to your suffering, to remain faithful to you, and to accept your binding freedom and hold tight to you, to discover your true freedom and selfless love.

Jaida Collins

The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

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

Reflection: Jesus hung on the cross with blood and sweat slipping down His temple. The eyes of the people gathered around took in the sign above His head reading “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews” and the exhaustion evident in the creasing of His brow. For three dark hours His heart remained filled with forgiveness of his condemners and prayers for His family and friends. Sunk into the greatest depths of effort and love, He reigns above the world on Calvary’s Hill. Jesus cried, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?...Into your hands I commend my spirit,”
and those who witnessed were changed in heart. He gave his life and love to each one of us with all he had, and in doing so He exemplifies the goal of our lives in the most perfect way.

_Lord, help us internalize the effort you put into our salvation and help us live with the same nature. We pray for perseverance throughout tough times. Help us live in love and change the lives of others._

_Amen._

*Julia Mitchell*

**The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down From the Cross**

_We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world._

Reflection: There is darkness, now. Jesus’s final words “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” radiates through the still air. The guards come and gently take him down from the sturdy wooden cross. The suffering and pain has finally ended, and His profound sacrifice is complete. His mother is patiently waiting to have her son in her arms again. As he is put into the lap of his mother, Mary slowly wipes the dirt and blood of his face to see her son’s face. A mother never abandons her child just like Mary did not abandon Jesus. Jesus was never alone.

_Jesus, Help us to give all men the grace to see that doing your will is more important than success like Mary. As your mother receives you in her arms with love and reverence. We receive your sacred Body in the Eucharist. Help us to always receive you with love and reference, for you are my God!_  

_Amen._

*Brett Ward*

**The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Tomb**

_We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world._

Reflection: Death without burial was the intended end for the crucified criminal, displaying his worthlessness as a human being. Joseph of Arimathea, then, shows courage in approaching Pilot for permission to bury Jesus. He shows tenderness in preparing Jesus’ body with aloe, myrrh, and linens. And he shows respect in laying Jesus to rest quickly, as was the Jewish custom. This man about whom we know so little teaches us so much about being devoted to Jesus.
Jesus, by your Spirit may we, like Joseph, show our devotion to you through courage, respect and tenderness. And may we, like Joseph, teach our peers to do the same. Kindle in our hearts fervent devotion to you.

Megan Kuckelman