



HANDOUT STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The First Glorious Mystery: The Resurrection

Pray the following before each station:

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

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

FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Corporal Works of Mercy – Visit the Prisoners

Reflection: Pilate condemns Christ of a crime for which He is not guilty. And with this condemnation, many of Jesus' followers flee — afraid to be seen or connected with Christ. Some in our prison system today have, like Christ, been sentenced unfairly — completely innocent of their alleged crimes or serving a longer sentence than necessary. But all prisoners are Christ's children, regardless of innocence or guilt. Christ knows their pain and is in the prisons alongside them. Will we do the same or will we run like the apostles, scared to face the condemned?

Prayer: Jesus, make us instruments of your justice. You faced Pilate with courage, though you knew it would lead to death. Give us the courage to reach out to those in prison.

SECOND STATION: JESUS IS GIVEN HIS CROSS

Catholic Social Teaching – The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Reflection: In taking up the cross, Jesus begins the most difficult work ever accomplished in the world — the work of our salvation, the work of reconciling God and humanity. The work of our daily lives — schoolwork, chores, clubs, teams — can seem meaningless and boring. But all work, no matter how mundane, is an opportunity to draw closer to God. Many in our world are unable to work or have no option but to work in poor conditions for unfair pay. Let us not take our work for granted, but instead, unite our daily tasks to Christ's saving work and offer them up for workers in need.

Prayer: Christ, make us instruments of your justice. We thank you for taking up your cross for us. Help us do our work well and care for those in need of just, ethical work.

THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

Corporal Works of Mercy – Feed the Hungry

Reflection: Falling to the ground, Jesus' body, already broken from being scourged and carrying the heavy cross, breaks a little more — the same body that is broken and shared with us in the Eucharist. We often take the sacraments for granted. We forget that many people throughout history and some today lack easy access to the sacraments. Many also lack easy access to the food they so desperately need to survive — not just people in distant lands, but within our own country, too. We have easy access to stores, money, gifts cards, and the internet. Have we used those resources to help bring physical and spiritual nourishment to others? Or have we taken them for granted, too?

Prayer: Lord, make us instruments of your justice. In your death and in the Eucharist, you have given your body for us. Open our eyes to what we can give to help those hungering for food and your presence.

FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

Corporal Works of Mercy – Shelter the Homeless

Reflection: In Mary's arms, Jesus finds a home along the walk to Calvary. Mary has always cared for Jesus' every need. Caring for Jesus in this dark moment reminds us of other difficult times for the Holy Family — like leaving their home to travel to Bethlehem and fleeing Herod's persecution to escape to Egypt. Just like the Holy Family did, many in our world face homelessness. Some lack a physical house and family and friends who will take them in. Some have been displaced by war, poverty, and natural disasters and now make their way in an unfamiliar town or country. We are a human family; let us find ways to welcome our brothers and sisters into our country, towns, and homes.

Prayer: Savior, make us instruments of your justice. You told us that the Son of Man had no place to rest His head. May we treat sheltering others who are experiencing homelessness the way we would treat you.

FIFTH STATION: SIMON HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS

Catholic Social Teaching – Call to Family, Community, and Participation

Reflection: We all know how it feels for a teacher to call on us when we did not raise our hand. How much worse must Simon have felt when he was called to participate in carrying the cross. But Jesus could not carry the cross alone and we cannot carry our crosses alone, either. Despite our differences, we are one human family, one community. Christ calls us to be Simon, participating in and caring for society and one another's lives. How beautiful to remember that whether we are able to help or in a position where we need help, we are never alone.

Prayer: Redeemer, make us instruments of your justice. You called Simon to participate, in a small way, in our salvation. Remind us of Simon's example as we participate in our communities.

SIXTH STATION: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

Corporal Works of Mercy – Visit the Sick

Reflection: Veronica sees that Jesus is in need of help. She goes to Him and wipes the blood, spit, and dirt from His face. She does not care that He is considered a criminal or that tending to His wounds would probably make her ritually unclean. We have all been sick and around others who are sick. Some of us may have even encountered people who were dying. Being around illness and death can be uncomfortable. But that does not stop Veronica from caring for Christ and it should not stop us from caring for the sick either.

Prayer: Messiah, make us instruments of your justice. Veronica did not let herself — her fears, her discomfort — prevent her from helping you. May we follow her example and put the sick and dying ahead of ourselves.

SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME

Corporal Works of Mercy – Give Drink to the Thirsty

Reflection: Jesus has encountered so many difficulties along the way to His Crucifixion. His body is exhausted. Walking has become excruciatingly painful. And He falls again. In some parts of the world, people — often women — spend hours every day walking to get water. Often that water is not actually clean, but simply seems safe enough to use. Christ, the living water, takes up His cross again and walks alongside these women as they carry their water. What can we do to walk alongside Christ and these women, too?

Prayer: Jesus, make us instruments of your justice. You have given yourself as living water to all who thirst for you. Open our eyes to the ways we can help those experiencing physical thirst and lacking access to clean water.

EIGHTH STATION: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Catholic Social Teaching – Solidarity

Reflection: The Gospel of Luke shares that throughout His walk, Jesus is followed by a crowd. In the midst of these angry faces, Jesus sees a group of women crying for Him. And in a twist, Jesus comforts them in their grief, even though He is the one heading toward His death. This interaction speaks to solidarity — truly loving others as we love ourselves. Luke does not say if the women knew Jesus. They may have been complete strangers, but they saw Christ as a brother and wept at the injustices He faced. Christ puts aside His own needs to care for them, reminding us that no pain is too great to stop us from helping others.

Prayer: Christ, make us instruments of your justice. In all things, you have put the needs of humankind above your own. Inspire us to show this same selfless love to others in our human family.

NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS A THIRD TIME

Catholic Social Teaching – Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

Reflection: Christ, incredibly weakened by His long journey to Calvary, falls a third time. It seems that at this point, He is at His most vulnerable — barely holding on, knowing the hardest part is yet to come. Our world is so quick to discard people. We quickly forget celebrities from old musical groups, TV shows, and movies. How much easier is it to forget about the poor and vulnerable in our communities? The Church declares that we, as individuals and as a society, should have a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, putting their needs first in our considerations. As we look at the fallen Jesus in His vulnerable state, can we really turn our back on the poor and vulnerable in our world today?

Prayer: Lord, make us instruments of your justice. You told us that your power is made perfect in our weaknesses. Let us see the weakest among us — the poor and vulnerable — with your eyes, knowing they are held close to your heart.

TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Corporal Works of Mercy – Clothe the Naked

Reflection: The guards take away Jesus' clothes, leaving Him completely vulnerable and exposed. Likewise, many today lack clean clothes that could help them land a job, clothes that could help them keep warm, and many other basic material goods that help us live well. But even more important than losing His clothes, Jesus is treated without dignity. So many in our world encounter this same treatment. Sexual sins in particular strip away our ability to see one another as humans, as sisters and brothers. Our world needs serious help in many ways, but it starts within our own hearts.

Prayer: Savior, make us instruments of your justice. You, who should be treated with highest respect, humbled yourself to become man and die for us. Change our hearts so we are not too proud to provide for others nor too proud to address our own spiritual poverties.

ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Catholic Social Teaching – Rights and Responsibilities

Reflection: The Church teaches that social justice requires a balance. Society must protect everyone's God-given rights and, in turn, everyone has responsibilities to help society.

And here we see Jesus, our king, our God, having His basic right to life taken away. Why? Because He freely took on the responsibility of saving us from our sins. Yet, we complain so readily when our perceived rights are violated and often choose to throw off our responsibilities. What a beautiful, selfless example Christ has given to us.

Prayer: Redeemer, make us instruments of your justice. You took on a responsibility that was not yours only to be violated by those you came to help. Teach us to take on our responsibilities selflessly and to stand up for the God-given rights of all.

TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Catholic Social Teaching – Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Reflection: Here, Christ gives us the ultimate sacrifice. He calls us His friends and willingly lays down His life for us. In His death, Christ atones for all of our sins — even the most unthinkable evils. Since the Fall, our world has been filled with sins against human life and dignity — violence, murder, torture, and other unbearable wrongs. Jesus could have looked at our broken, sinful world and said, “No, thanks. They are not worth saving.” But He took on our worst sins without thinking twice. Let us rejoice in the immense, unfathomable love our God has for us.

Prayer: Messiah, make us instruments of your justice. You lay down your life and your dignity to atone for our sins and reconcile us to you. Give us your eyes to clearly see the beauty and dignity of every human life.

THIRTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

Catholic Social Teaching – Care for Creation

Reflection: As God created the world, He saved man and woman for last. All of creation is beautiful, but we often forget that creation includes humans, too. Jesus’ body, the pinnacle of creation, comes down from the cross. The friends who remained with Him treat His body with the utmost respect as they prepare Him for burial. Do we treat creation with the utmost respect? Do we take care of our bodies, knowing God created them in love? Do we look at the Earth as our home that deserves to be cleaned and preserved? Or do we treat it as a home we can trash and hope someone else cares for?

Prayer: Jesus, make us instruments of your justice. You became man and entered into your creation, lived among your creation, and died for us — part of your creation. As we walk through the created world, remind us to treat it with respect and care.

FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

Corporal Works of Mercy – Bury the Dead

Reflection: We know that this story has a happy ending. We know that Jesus rises on Easter Sunday. But imagine how His friends must have felt; they did not know what we know. Not only have they lost Jesus, but now the amazing things He preached seem too good to be true. We feel these same things when loved ones pass away. We lose that person but are afraid of losing memories of them and fear we may never encounter them again. We must trust in the God who rose from the dead, trust that there is communion with Him and all of the saints in heaven.

Prayer: Christ, make us instruments of your justice. We cannot imagine how dark the world would be without your presence. We look forward to the joy of heaven, basking in the glory of your presence, and pray that all who have gone before us are already there with you.