Stations of the Cross

Reflections & Prayers of St. Alphonsus Liguori

with notes on the artwork of Leonard Porter
Sign of the Cross

Preparatory Prayer

(all kneel)

All: My Lord Jesus Christ,
    with unfailing love you made this journey to die for me,
    and yet so many times I have turned my back to you.
    But now I love you with all my heart,
    and because I love you,
    I deeply repent having offended you.
    Lord, please forgive me
    and allow me to accompany you on this journey.
    My beloved Savior,
    you went to die because of your love for me;
    now I desire to come and die for the love of you.
    Oh my Jesus, I desire to live and die forever with you.

(all stand)
Jesus is Condemned to Death
**Station Artwork - Points for Reflection**

- Pilate appears frozen, white toga emphasizing his statue-like appearance, indicating that his power is merely worldly. Pilate points at Christ, ordering his suffering and death, yet he also directs the one praying to go and walk the Stations.

- Two Roman guards: a bearded soldier, unmoved by Christ’s passion; and Longinus, who grows in his love and appreciation of Christ as the Stations progress.

- As we progress through the Stations, the figures will grow in number; the scenes will get more frenzied; the weather will grow darker; and figures representing all of humanity will enter and depart from the scenes, indicating that all sinned and all were redeemed. Those praying the Stations see themselves in the images, simultaneously sinners and potential saints.

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The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death

**Leader:** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

*(all genuflect)*

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

*(all stand)*

**Leader:** Reflect on how Jesus Christ, after having been scourged and crowned with thorns, is unjustly condemned by Pontius Pilate to die on the cross.

**All:** Oh Jesus adored, my sins, not Pilate, condemned you to death. For merits earned through this sorrowful journey, I beg you to tend to my soul in this journey towards eternity. I love you, my beloved Jesus, more than myself, and I deeply repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to be separated from you ever again. Grant that I may love you forever, and make me your servant. Do with me what you will.

*At the cross her station keeping,*

*Stood the mournful Mother weeping,*

*Close to Jesus to the last.*
Jesus Takes His Cross
The Second Station: Jesus Takes His Cross

**Leader:** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

*(all genuflect)*

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

*(all stand)*

**Leader:** Reflect on Jesus Christ with the cross on his shoulders. Along his path to crucifixion he was thinking of you and was offering his sufferings and death for you to our Eternal Father.

**All:** My most lovable Jesus, I embrace all the troubles you have reserved for me till the time of my death. I ask you to help me carry my crosses with perfect patience and resignation, by virtue of the sufferings you bore carrying the cross. I love you, oh Jesus, my love, and I deeply repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to be separated from you ever again. Grant that I may love you forever, and make me your servant. Do with me what you will.

*Through her heart, his sorrow sharing,*

*All his bitter anguish bearing,*

*Now at length the sword has passed.*
Jesus Falls the First Time
The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

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

(all genuflect)

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

(all stand)

Leader: Reflect on the first time Jesus falls under the weight of the cross. His body and skin were torn by the scourging and whipping. His head with the crown of thorns was bleeding profusely. He was so weak that he could hardly walk, and still more because he was carrying such a heavy cross. The soldiers assaulted him repeatedly, and so he fell multiple times in his journey.

All: My beloved Jesus, my sins, and not the weight of the cross, make you suffer and undergo so much pain. By the merits earned through this first fall, prevent me from falling into mortal sin. I love you, my Jesus, with all my heart. I deeply repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you anymore. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

O how sad and sore distressed,
Was that Mother highly blest
Of the sole begotten One!
The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother

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

(all genuflect)

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

(all stand)

Leader: Reflect on the encounter of the Son and Mother on this journey. They looked at each other, and their looks became like many darts that wounded their hearts full of tender love for each other.

All: My most beloved Jesus, for the sorrow you felt at this encounter, grant me the grace of being truly devoted to your most holy Mother. And you, my sorrowful Queen, grant me through your intercession, to continuously and lovingly remember the suffering of your son. I love you, my Jesus, with all my heart. I deeply repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you anymore. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

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Christ above in torment hangs,
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying, glorious Son.
Simon Helps Carry the Cross
The Fifth Station: Simon Helps Carry the Cross

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

(all genuflect)

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

(all stand)

Leader: Reflect on how the soldiers, seeing Jesus so weak, and fearing he would die along the way instead of dying a shameful death on the cross as they wished, compelled Simon of Cyrene to carry the cross behind our Lord.

All: My sweetest Jesus, I don’t want to refuse the cross like Simon; I embrace and accept it. I especially accept the death that is destined for me, with all the suffering that comes with it. I unite my death to your sacrifice, and I offer it to you. You died for the love of me; I want to die for love of you and to please you. Come aid me through your grace. I love you, my Jesus, with all my heart. I deeply repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you anymore. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

Is there one who would not weep,
Whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ’s dear Mother to behold?
Veronica Offers Her Veil to Jesus
**The Sixth Station: Veronica Offers Her Veil to Jesus**

**Leader:** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

*(all genuflect)*

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

*(all stand)*

**Leader:** Reflect on how Veronica, a holy woman, seeing Jesus breathless and with his face wet with sweat and blood, offered him her linen veil. Our Lord wiped his face with this veil, and left his holy image imprinted on it.

**All:** My beloved Jesus, before this journey your face was beautiful, but now it does not appear so; it is all deformed by wounds and blood. Woe to me, for my soul was beautiful too when I received your grace at baptism, but I deformed it through my sins. You alone, my Redeemer, can return to me such former beauty through the merits of your Passion. I love you, Jesus my love. I deeply repent having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you anymore. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

*Can the human heart refrain*

*From partaking in her pain,*

*In that Mother’s pain untold?*
Jesus Falls the Second Time
The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

**Leader:** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

=all genuflect=

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

=all stand=

**Leader:** Reflect on the second fall of Jesus under the weight of the cross, through which the pains and wounds all over his body are renewed and worsened.

**All:** My most gentle Jesus, how many times you have forgiven me, and yet I keep falling and offending you. By the merits of this new fall, help me to persevere in your grace till the time of my death. Grant that every time a temptation assails me I may always come to you. I love you, my Jesus, with all my heart. I deeply repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you anymore. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

*Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,*

*She beheld her tender Child,*

*All with bloody scourges rent.*
Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem
The Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

**Leader:** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

*(all genuflect)*

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

*(all stand)*

**Leader:** Reflect on how the women of Jerusalem, seeing Jesus so fatigued and flowing with blood along the way, were weeping with compassion. Yet Jesus told them: "Do not weep for me, but for your children."

**All:** My sorrowful Jesus, I bitterly weep for my offenses against you. I weep for the pains I deserve, but even more so for grieving you, who loved me so deeply. It is not the fear of hell, but rather your love that makes me weep for my sins. Oh, my Jesus, I love you more than myself, and I deeply repent of having offended you. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

*For the sins of his own nation*
*Saw him hang in desolation*
*Till his spirit forth he sent.*
Jesus Falls the Third Time
The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

**Leader:** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

*(all genuflect)*

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

*(all stand)*

**Leader:** Reflect on Jesus Christ’s third fall. His weakness was extreme, and the cruelty of the executioners was absolute. They wanted him to move faster, and yet he could barely walk.

**All:** Oh, my mistreated Jesus, by the merits of the weakness you suffered on the way to Calvary, give me the strength necessary to overcome both the desire for human respect and my wicked appetites, which in the past led me to disregard your friendship. I love you, my Jesus, with all my heart. I deeply repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you again. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

*O thou Mother, font of love!*

*Touch my spirit from above,*

*Make my heart with thine accord.*
Jesus is Stripped of His Garments
The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

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

(all genuflect)

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

(all stand)

Leader: Reflect on how the executioners violently stripped Jesus of his clothes. Because his inner clothes had clung to his torn flesh, they ripped open his skin once again. Have compassion for our Lord and say to him:

All: My innocent Jesus, by the merits of the pain you felt, help me to turn away from any attachment to earthly things, so that I may devote all my love to you, who deserve to be loved above all things. I love you with all my heart. Do not allow me to offend you again. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

Make me feel as thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ, my Lord.
Jesus is Nailed to the Cross
The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

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

(all genuflect)

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

(all stand)

Leader: Reflect on how Jesus, being thrown on the cross, extends his hands and offers to our Eternal Father the sacrifice of his own life to save us. The executioners nail him and then raise the cross to let him die of pain on that shameful beam.

All: Oh my scorned Jesus, nail my heart to your feet, so it can stay there forever to love you and never leave you. I love you more than myself. I repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you again. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

Holy Mother, pierce me through,
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Savior crucified.
Jesus Dies on the Cross
The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

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

(all genuflect)

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

(all stand)

Leader: Reflect on how your Jesus, after three hours of agony on the cross, finally consumed by pain, his body collapsing, inclines his head and dies.

All: Oh my dying Jesus, moved by a profound sense of devotion, I kiss this cross where you died for me. Because of my sins, I deserve a shameful death; but your death is my hope. For the merits of your death, give me the grace to die embracing your feet and burning with love for you. I entrust my soul to you. I love you with all my heart. I repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you again. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

Let me share with thee his pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torment died.
Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross
The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

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

(all genuflect)

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

(all stand)

Leader: Reflect on how Jesus, having already died, was taken down from the cross by two of his disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus. They placed him on his mother’s lap, who with tenderness embraced him and held him tight to her bosom.

All: O most grieving mother, for the love of your child, accept me as your servant and pray to him for me. And you, my Redeemer, as you died for me, accept my love for you. I want only you and nothing more. I love you, my Jesus, and I repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you again. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live.

Station Artwork - Points for Reflection

- At Mary Magdalene’s feet is seen a jar of ointment, her traditional attribute, and the crown of thorns now radiant with divine significance. The nails that pierced Christ’s flesh also glow in the background.

- Joseph of Arimethea stands partially hidden in the rear. Joseph here wears especially regal dress, not just because he was a wealthy man, but to give the viewer an image of what the Father sees without actually representing the Father. In this way, the viewer gets to imagine the grief of God the Father without fear of idolatry.

- The cross has now spread out a significant root system, living again as the Tree of Life, as it will in Paradise.
Jesus is Laid in the Tomb
The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

**Leader:** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

*(all genuflect)*

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

*(all stand)*

**Leader:** Reflect on how the disciples brought Jesus, already dead, to be buried, accompanied by his Holy Mother, who laid him to rest in the sepulcher with her own hands. Afterwards they closed the sepulcher and retreated.

**All:** Oh my buried Jesus, I kiss this stone that kept you. Yet from there, after three days you rose again. I pray that, by your own resurrection, I might be raised on the last day with you in glory, always united with you in heaven to praise and love you forever. I love you, my Jesus, and I repent of having offended you. Do not allow me to offend you again. Grant that I may love you forever. Do with me what you will.

*By the cross with thee to stay;*
*There with thee to weep and pray,*
*All I ask of thee to give.*
Optional Ending

Leader: We pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.*

All: Apostle’s Creed...
    Our Father...
    Hail Mary...
    Glory Be...

Sign of the Cross
Apostle’s Creed
I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
He descended into hell;
on the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from there He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Holy Catholic Church,
the communion of Saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.

Our Father (the Lord’s Prayer)
Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen

Glory Be to the Father (Doxology)
Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
is now,
and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen
A plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful, who make the pious exercise of the Way of the Cross. To acquire a plenary indulgence, it is necessary to perform the work to which the indulgence is attached and to fulfill the following three conditions: sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion, and prayer for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff. It is further required that all attachment to sin, even venial sin, be absent.

The gaining of the plenary indulgence is regulated by the following norms:

1) The pious exercise must be made before stations of the Way of the Cross legitimately erected.

2) For the erection of the Way of the Cross fourteen crosses are required, to which it is customary to add fourteen pictures or images, which represent the stations of Jerusalem.

3) According to the more common practice, the pious exercise consists of fourteen pious readings, to which some vocal prayers are added. However, nothing more is required than a pious meditation on the Passion and Death of the Lord, which need not be a particular consideration of the individual mysteries of the stations.

4) A movement from one station to the next is required. But if the pious exercise is made publicly and if it is not possible for all taking part to go in an orderly way from station to station, it suffices if at least the one conducting the exercise goes from station to station, the others remaining in their place.

5) Those who are "impeded" can gain the same indulgence, if they spend at least one half an hour in pious reading and meditation on the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

6) For those belonging to Oriental rites, amongst whom this pious exercise is not practiced, the respective Patriarchs can determine some other pious exercise in memory of the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ for the gaining of this indulgence.

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