



THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

THE PATH OF HOPE





THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Introduction

What thoughts were in Jesus' mind as he made his way to Calvary? While it may appear impossible to know, we can be sure of this:

Jesus prayed constantly; his whole life was a prayer. He undoubtedly prayed as he carried the Cross;

Jesus knew the psalms off by heart, and he would have prayed them every day. Their influence on his life is obvious from the Gospels, and his references to them were frequent.

These Stations of the Cross use extracts from the psalms as reflections. No one claims that these are Jesus' actual thoughts, or prayers, at that time - only the Father knew those – yet, in a simple, but moving way, they make real for us how this man of prayer endured his sufferings and saw them as part of God's loving plan of salvation. In the words of the psalms, we hear the voice of Jesus, as he prayed to the Father, and discover in them a message of hope, which leads to glory, and, grounded in love, does not disappoint.

Praying the Stations of the Cross.

- ❖ Picture each Station in your mind - reflect on what is happening.
- ❖ Read the lines of the psalm slowly, and hear the voice of Jesus praying these words, which he addresses to his Father.
- ❖ Notice how the words of the psalm connects with each particular station – recognize both the anguish of the prayer, and the hope within it.
- ❖ Share in Jesus' deeply felt emotions. Recognise his struggle to do the Father's will. With him, surrender in faith to the Father: "*Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.*" (Luke 23:46).

❖ May we, in our own lives, have the courage to walk with Jesus, particularly in times of suffering and confusion. May we, like Jesus, trust in the Father's love.

*“He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and staff;
with these you give me comfort.”
(Psalm 23)*

As we contemplate the Stations of the Cross, we realise that we do so, not as innocent bystanders; *“he was bearing our faults in his own body on the Cross” (1Peter 2:24)*. However, if guilt and sorrow are all we feel before the Cross, we have not yet grasped the full wonder of its message. Our Lord does not seek to inflict an enslaving sense of guilt on us; he desires to set us free! We who gaze, with faith and trust, on the crucified Jesus, see something astounding: we see what God's love looks like! *“God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost” (John 3:16)*.

Let us pray.

O Lord,
grant that we,
who meditate on the passion and death of Jesus Christ, Your Son,
may imitate in our lives
his loving self-offering to you,
and his love for all humanity.
May his faith in You awaken faith in us,
that we may come to share the eternal joys
of Your Kingdom, where He lives and reigns with You,
and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

1.

Jesus is condemned to death.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you,
because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, standing before Pilate, prays:

Psalm 42: 1-3

Defend me, O God, and plead my cause
against a godless nation.
From deceitful and cunning men rescue me, O God.

Since you, O God, are my stronghold,
why have you rejected me?
Why do I go mourning
oppressed by the foe?

O send forth your light and your truth;
let these be my guide.
Let them bring me to your holy mountain
to the place where you dwell.

Our Father...

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus takes up his cross.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, taking up the Cross, prays:

Psalm 30: 14-16

Have mercy on me, O Lord,
for I am in distress.....
I have heard the slander of the crowd.
Fear is all around me,
as they plot together against me,
as they plan to take my life.

But as for me, I trust in you, Lord,
I say: 'You are my God.'
My life is in your hands, deliver me
from the hands of those who hate me.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus falls for the first time.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, stumbles under the Cross, but he prays: *Psalm 26:1-2*

The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink?

When evil-doers draw near
to devour my flesh,
it is they, my enemies and foes,
who stumble and fall.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus meets his Mother

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, seeing his distraught Mother, prays: *Psalm 85:1-2, 16-17*

Turn your ear, O Lord, and give answer
for I am poor and needy.

Preserve my life, for I am faithful:
save the servant who trusts in you.

O give your strength to your servant
and save your handmaid's son.
Show me a sign of your favour
that my foes may see to their shame
that you console me and give me your help.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus is helped by Simon of Cyrene.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus is exhausted, nevertheless, he prays: *Psalm 27:1-2;6-7*

To you, O Lord, I call,
my rock, hear me.
If you do not heed I shall become
like those in the grave.

Hear the voice of my pleading
As I call for help,
as I lift up my hands in prayer
to your holy place.

Blessed be the Lord for he has heard
My cry, my appeal.....
I was helped, my heart rejoices.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus meets Veronica.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, his face bruised and disfigured, prays: Psalm 26:7-9;13-14

O Lord, hear my voice when I call;
have mercy and answer.
Of you my heart has spoken:
“Seek his face.”
It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face...

I am sure that I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land of the living.
Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.
Hope in the Lord.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus falls the second time.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, exhausted falls again; he prays:

Psalm 118:81-84;86

I yearn for your saving help;
I hope in your word.
My eyes yearn to see your promise.
When will you console me?

Though parched and exhausted with waiting
I have not forgotten your commands.
How long must your servant suffer?
When will you judge my foes?

Your commands are all true; then help me
when lies oppress me.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus consoles the Women of Jerusalem.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, seeing the distress of the women, prays: Psalm 30:9;23-24

Have mercy on me, O Lord,
for I am in distress.
Tears have wasted my eyes,
my throat and my heart

In the face of all my foes
I am a reproach,
an object of scorn to my neighbours
and fear to my friends.

Love the Lord, all you saints.
Be strong, let your heart take courage,
All who hope in the Lord.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus falls the third time.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, falling once more, prays:

Psalm 142: 3-4, 7

The enemy pursues my soul;
he has crushed my life to the ground;
he has made me dwell in darkness
like the dead, long forgotten.
Therefore my spirit fails;
my heart is numb within me.

Lord, make haste and answer
for my spirit fails within me.
Do not hide your face
lest I become like those in the grave.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus is stripped of his clothes.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, stripped of his human dignity, prays :*Psalm 68:23-24;29*

Lord, answer, for your love is kind;
in your compassion, turn towards me.
Do not hide your face from your servant;
answer quickly for I am in distress.
Come close to my soul and redeem me.

Taunts have broken my heart;
I have reached the end of my strength.
I looked in vain for compassion,
for consolers; not one could I find.
For food they gave me poison;
in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

As for me in my poverty and pain
let your help, O God, lift me up.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, as he is nailed to the Cross, prays:

Psalm 21: 17, 18-20

Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet
and lay me in the dust of the death.

I can count every one of my bones.
These people stare at me and gloat;
they divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.

O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus dies on the Cross.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus, as he dies, cries aloud:

Psalm 21 2-3; 8-9; 12

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
You are far from my plea and the cry of my distress.
O my God, I call by day and you give no reply;
I call by night and I find no peace.

All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
“He trusted in the Lord, let Him save him;
let Him release him if this is His friend.”

Do not leave me alone in my distress;
come close, there is none else to help.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus is taken down from the Cross.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Mary, on behalf of her Son prays:

Psalm 12: 1-4

How long, O Lord, will you forget me?
How long will you hide your face?
How long must I bear grief in my soul,
this sorrow in my heart day and night?
How long shall my enemy prevail?

Look at me, answer me, Lord my God!
Give light to my eyes lest I fall asleep in death,
lest my enemy say: "I have overcome him",
lest my foes rejoice to see my fall.

As for me, I trust in your merciful love....

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus is placed in the tomb.

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Even from the silence of the grave, prayer rises up: Psalm 17: 1-6

I love you, Lord, my strength,
my rock, my fortress, my saviour.
My God is the rock where I take refuge;
my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.
The Lord is worthy of all praise:
when I call I am saved from my foes.

The waves of death rose about me;
the torrents of destruction assailed me;
the snares of the grave entangled me;
the traps of death confronted me.

In my anguish I called to the Lord;
I cried to my God for help.
From his temple he heard my voice;
my cry came to his ears.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.
Show us the way to the Kingdom.
Mother of hope, pray for us.

Jesus is Risen!

We adore you O Christ and we bless you
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

The Risen Lord sings a Psalm of gladness:

Psalm 29:2-5

I will praise you, Lord, you have rescued me
and not let my enemies rejoice over me.

O Lord, I cried to you for help
and you, my God, have healed me.

O Lord, you have raised my soul from the dead,
restored me to life from those who sink into the grave.

Sing psalms to the Lord, you who love him,
give thanks to his Holy Name.

Our Father....

Holy Mary, Mother of God, and our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you.

Show us the way to the Kingdom.

Mother of hope, pray for us.

Conclusion

The Easter proclamation, made first by the angels, then by the women at the tomb, and finally by the apostles, has been carried by the Church down through the generations: “Jesus, who was crucified, is risen from the dead!”

Let us pray.

Eternal Father,
may the way we bear our cross
proclaim to all the world
our hope and trust in you.
May that hope fill our days,
as we await with confidence
the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ,
to whom be praise and glory,
now and forever. Amen.

*The Stations may end with the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Glory
be to the Father, for the intentions of the Pope.*

**Prepared by Jubilee 2025 Committee
Diocese of Down and Connor**

**Psalm texts from “The Psalms”, a New Translation
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