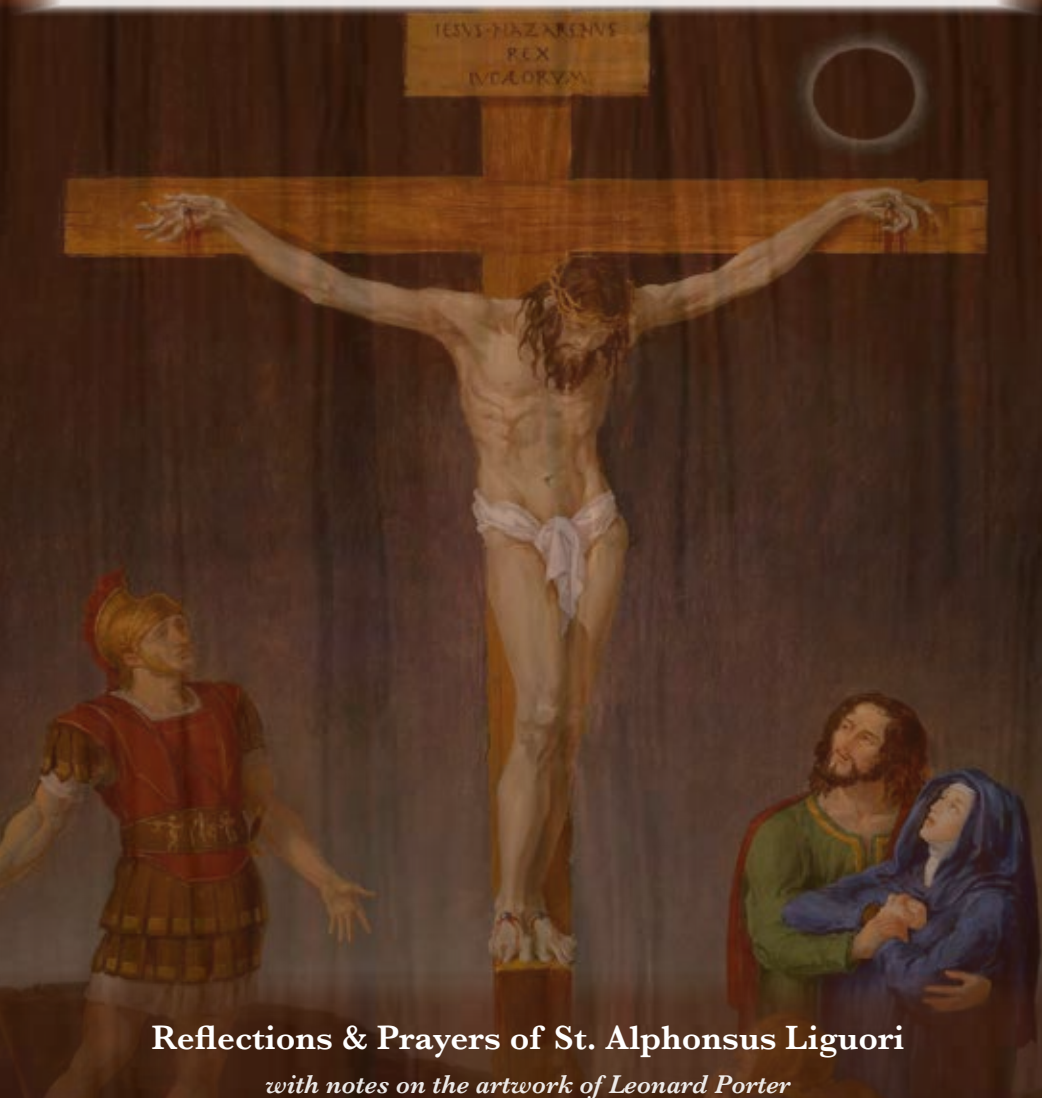




OUR LADY of MOUNT CARMEL
CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Grateful no matter what

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



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- Christ reaches for the cross, a pose that suggests the *orans* position of prayer found commonly in the Mass. Thus Christ embraces the cross in prayer.
 - Christ's vibrant clothing: red for his humanity, blue for his divinity. Other figures are less vibrant and covered with a smoky, semi-opaque glaze.
 - The woman holding the child in the back right represents Virgin and Child. Infant John the Baptist, holding the column, points the way to Jesus.
 - Palm tree in back left indicates Jerusalem, yet architecture looks Roman. Intentionally departs from particular place and time.
 - Men that lead Christ throughout stations change (*here, shirtless man in a green tunic and another in blue*). Indicates that the sins of all humanity led Christ to his death.
-

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



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- Longinus' first move toward Christ, raising his hand to stop the henchman's attack on Jesus. A small curb and indication of a road appears in the lower right corner, giving a sense of progress. Also serves as a symbolic indication of choosing the correct path, noted in the hoof of Longinus' horse stepping off the curb.
- Important to note is the cross' change over time. Appearing here as freshly cut lumber, it will become as battered as Christ's body, and also more like a tree.
- Christ's face remaining clear, resolute, and peaceful, presenting beauty within violence. Though Christ's suffering was indeed violent and beautiful, it is a story of love, charity, and forgiveness.

.....

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!*

Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- Christ meets his Blessed Mother (*in blue*), Mary Magdalene (*in yellow*), and another woman of Jerusalem. St. John is shown as well (*in green*). Though he looks at his Mother with compassion, his face remains focused on his mission of salvation.
- The soldier's gesture points at Mary and also to the pyramidal tomb in the background, evoking the famous Tomb of Cestius in Rome, and indicates Christ's path: after his long road, he will be placed in the tomb.
- Behind Mary's outstretched hand, an old man and youth stand. Symbolizes that Christ's sacrificial action bridges the time between the old law and the new era of grace. The youth's staff symbolizes Christ the Good Shepherd.
- Marian Images: small red anemone (*at Mary's feet*); Temple of Vesta (*round temple in back*), where the sacred fires of Rome were tended by the famous vestal virgins, echoing the virginal nature of the Mother of God.

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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.

*Christ above in torment hangs,
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying, glorious Son.*

Simon Helps Carry the Cross



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- The Temple Mount, the place of God's presence and sacrifices, and the only archaeologically accurate building in the entire set of Stations, looms in the background.
 - In the background on the right is a small arch with a column supporting it at its keystone. An arch normally carries the weight of the wall above it, but in this small detail, a central column helps support the arch, just as Simon helps support the cross. Through the arch is a small well surrounded by three women, a tiny tableau of drinking from the well of salvation.
-

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



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- Signifies connections in salvation history: Christ reaches across the epochs from the time of shadow (Old Testament) into the time of the image (current time).
- Allusion to baptism, where we give ourselves and in turn are made more like Christ. The small fountain in the bottom right helps support this idea. Two wooden sticks supporting the pipe refer to the cross often held by John the Baptist in traditional paintings.
- Woman in deep shadow at the left coincides with the Passion's biblical descriptions of witnesses and indicates the nature of Christian community, in which we are inspired by other members of the Mystical Body.
- Orange wall in background supports a finial in the shape of an acorn, a reference to both the tree that caused the fall of Adam and Eve and the Tree of Life – the cross.

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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



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- Note the curve in the road and the pointed finger of the man holding on to the column. Along with pointing Christ's path, the painting gives cues to the one praying in church: after this seventh Station, we cross over to the other side of the church to complete the journey.
 - Figures here represent many nationalities, indicating that all sinners require redemption and are implicated in the death of Christ.
 - On the left, an elderly man representing the old system of belief reaches up to remove the laurel wreath from a Roman statue. There is no victory in the pagan religions. Rather, the true victory over sin and death is in the crown of thorns worn by Christ.
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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



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- An overturned brazier at Christ's feet signifies the Temple's destruction, the end of Old Testament sacrifice and the advent of Christ's new Sacrifice.

- Shows the increased chaos of sin; Christ remains serene amid the frenzy. Roman soldiers file out of the city with their earthly power, carrying the Roman military standard. Longinus ponders Christ's death and travels with him. The other bares his arm in a display of earthly power, turning his horse away from Christ.

- The daughters of Jerusalem come from many races and social classes. In biblical symbolism, women represent the Church, and here they are clustered like an edifice of great strength.

- At lower left, a woman in deep shadow weeps at Jerusalem's destruction at the foot of a statue known as a caryatid. The statue wears a castle on her head, a traditional image of a city. The Church is represented as a person yet also as a city, pouring out a libation bowl in her right hand, just as the Church will dispense divine life in the sacraments.

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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



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- Four henchmen torment Christ after only two appeared in the previous Stations. Dressed to represent the “Four Races of Humanity,” indicating that all of humanity brought Christ to the crucifixion, and conversely that Christ died for all.
 - The unrepentant centurion looms over the scene, scowling at Christ while his horse looks fearfully away. By contrast, Longinus has dismounted, becoming almost lost in the crowd on the left side of the painting.
 - At the far right, a shadowy woman in purple runs away with her baby, an allusion to the Massacre of the Innocents at the beginning of Christ’s life. The innocent Christ is indeed accepting the violence of men.
-

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



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- As if to add insult to injury, Roman soldiers on the left propose a game of chance to decide who gets to keep Jesus' robes. The Roman commander smirks at the idea. A henchman jokingly offers Christ's red robe up for the game.

- On the right, a soldier offers Christ a drink of gall and vinegar under the direction of Longinus. Although commonly thought to be poison, the gall and vinegar were actually used as painkiller. Longinus is offering Christ a path to lessen his suffering, and it is an act of mercy and compassion on his part. Christ, of course, declines, knowing that it is through his suffering that man may be saved.

- In the background, ruins imply the devastation wrought on this man, and a bare tree echoes the image of Christ stripped bare.

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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



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- In the foreground, a pathway leads to this point and comes to an end, signaling that Christ's procession has finished. He now faces the final trial and the culmination of his suffering. The hammer-wielder's foot rests on a stump, almost making Christ and the cross appear to be a tree that has been cut down.

- The mood is somber and dark; the only sounds are the wind billowing the soldier's cloak and the slow clanging of the hammer. The storm clouds are clearing, and the three women cower just over the horizon, helpless to offer any comfort.

.....

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



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- An eclipse is seen in the sky, signaling that an event of momentous import for heaven and earth has occurred.
 - Blood from Christ's feet runs down the cross to the ground, as if to water this "tree" that has been planted. Close inspection reveals that what was once clean cut lumber not only bears the scars of the journey to this place, but it also has gained knots and is seemingly embedding itself into the ground with roots, like a tree.
 - At the foot of the cross is a skull, indicating that this is Golgotha (the Place of the Skull). The skull is said to be that of Adam, and the cross hewn from the Tree of Knowledge in Eden.
-

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



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 Arimathea 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.

.....

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.*

Jesus is Laid in the Tomb



STATION ARTWORK - POINTS FOR REFLECTION

- Though lifeless, Christ's body is brightly illuminated, eerily white amid the muted colors of the background and other figures. His body, stiff with rigor mortis, still displays the shape of the cross, his arms outstretched. Mary Magdalene has fallen to the ground in her grief, with a jar of ointment once again, this time to anoint Christ's lifeless body. Joseph of Arimathea has reverted to mortal form.

- After all the gathering darkness in the sky throughout the Way of the Cross, light is now seen on the horizon. A palm tree grows anew in the distance, prefiguring the resurrection. It is an ancient symbol of victory, triumph, peace, and eternal life.

.....

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

OPTIONAL ENDING PRAYERS - TEXT

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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