

Lord, Make Me a Means of Your Peace:
Stations of the Cross

Start with the Sign of the Cross

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Opening Prayer

Leader: Lord, we offer these Stations for peace within the world, peace within our country, and peace within our hearts.

All: Amen

Station 1 - Jesus Is Sentenced To Death

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus said, "I am; and 'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'" Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?" All of them condemned him as deserving death. (Mark 14:61-64)

Meditation

Jesus, you stood in front of the powerful and proclaimed yourself the "I Am," the great God who created all things. You did this even though you knew it put you at risk of death. Help me to risk speaking out for peace, even when it is difficult.

All: (Sing or Speak) Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 2 - Jesus Is Given the Cross

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

Then Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. (John 19:16-17)

Meditation

Pilate knew that he was wrong to hand Jesus over to the Jews to be crucified. But he did so anyway, listening to their shouts and cries and doing what was popular rather than what was right.

Lord, help me to turn from doing what is popular to you. You alone are my Lord of Lords, you alone are my King of Kings. You grant me peace.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 3 - Jesus Falls For the First Time

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

"If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'Servants are not greater than their master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you." (John 15:18-20)

Meditation

Lord, you stumble and fall, made weak by the persecution you have already suffered. There is a human world that always rejects God and the one whom God sent. This is the world that will always persecute the good.

I accept you, God. I accept you, Jesus. Thank you for choosing me in Baptism. Empower me to carry the cross even under persecution. Let me bring peace by meeting hatred with love.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 4 - Jesus Meets His Mother

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

Standing by the cross of Jesus was his mother. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household. (John 19:25-27)

Meditation

As Jesus was on the cross, he entrusted his mother to the disciple he loved and she became like the disciple's own mother. I am like that disciple. In this Station, it is my own sorrowing mother Mary who meets Jesus as he carries the cross. It is my mother Mary who waits with Jesus as he dies, holds his dead body, and helps to put him in the tomb. And Mary, my mother, says to me, "This happens in our family. The victims of injustice, those who are persecuted, those who suffer, those who die, are all your very own brothers and sisters. Know their pain, know their anguish."

Jesus, I extend my arms to our human family in peace.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 5 - Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry the Cross

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

As they led Jesus away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. (Luke 23:26)

Meditation

Simon of Cyrene reminds me of two things. First, I need to answer a call to follow Jesus, carrying the cross behind him. And second, I must face and conquer my own reluctance to feel and cope with pain, the pain of those who are staggering beneath the weight of their cross.

Lord, give me the will to take on others' pain and the strength to take whatever action I can to lighten their burden. Jesus, I want to be there, carrying that cross behind you, that burden for peace.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 6 - Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face With Her Veil

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."
(Matthew 25:37-40)

Meditation

Veronica has a problem. How can she, given what she has with her, help the suffering Jesus? She uses what she has, a veil, to wipe his face. What can I, just as I am, do to help the suffering and bring the peace of Christ? Like Veronica, I can use whatever I have, whatever knowledge, whatever ability. And I can take whatever action I can, however small.

Jesus, free me from despair and procrastination. Help me to do what I can do. Now. Give me hope.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 7 - Jesus Falls For the Second Time

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-5)

Meditation

Jesus falls again. Such suffering, such pain he endures. And it is for me. God gave up God's only son to bear my sin, to carry that cross, for me. Such love. Such compassion for me, a poor sinful human.

Lord, I have sinned through my own callousness, my failure to love as you do. I am sorry. Change my heart and make it your own. Help me to love myself and others as you do. Let my heartfelt compassion for those who suffer, my sincere love, bring lasting peace.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 8 - Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

(Luke 23:27-28)

Meditation

Sins against peace do not only hurt this generation. Here Jesus says, "Weep for the future." The future of these daughters of Jerusalem would be full of oppression, ending in the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem. My own future, the future of my country, and the future of the world without peace is even more grim. In fact, today's weapons of war are so great they could end not only all civilization but life on earth.

Lord, give me an urgent desire to work for peace.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 9 - Jesus Falls For the Third Time

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

My soul clings to the dust; revive me according to your word.
When I told of my ways, you answered me; teach me your statutes.
Make me understand the way of your precepts, and I will
meditate on your wondrous works. My soul melts away for sorrow;
strengthen me according to your word. (Psalm 119:25-28)

Meditation

Jesus falls the third time, again crushed by the weight of the cross. What hope is there for those people of peace who are continually persecuted, who are so filled with pain and sorrow, who are crushed to the dust over and over? I see Jesus who prays to God, who praises God, who does as God wants even to Jesus' death.

Lord, I pray not just for myself but for all peoples of peace.
Jesus, strengthen us. Help us to endure, to be true to you, to understand and follow your way, no matter what.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 10 - Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take. (Mark 15:23-24)

Meditation

Jesus could have taken the wine mixed with myrrh to become numb to pain. But he does not. Instead he endures the complete agony of crucifixion. This includes both physical pain and mental pain, for those crucified serve as amusement for the crowds. People mock and jeer at these hanging naked men and feel justified, for crucifixion is a punishment for terrorism. Yet Jesus is not a terrorist but one innocent of any crime, one condemned to death because of others' egotism, falsehood, and violence.

Lord, I don't want to be numb and uncaring. Strip me of my own pride, dishonesty, and brutality. Let me put on you, your peace, your holiness, your compassion. And show me what I can do to keep the innocent from pain.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 11 - Jesus Is Nailed To the Cross

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."

Meditation

One of my greatest weapons against war cannot be seen or touched. It is forgiveness. Jesus prays here for forgiveness for those who, in their ignorance, put him to death. Jesus is not only forgiving them but praying that they may be forgiven. Peace can come through forgiveness of injury.

Lord, help me to go from injury to forgiveness in my own life. Help others to forgive me if I have injured them. And Jesus, bring forgiveness of each other to all the peoples of the world.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 12 - Jesus Dies On the Cross

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. (Luke 23:44-46)

Meditation

The Just Man doesn't die unnoticed. The light of the sun itself fails as life leaves Jesus. A time of judgment against the darkness of evil has come. Yet also with his death, the curtain of the most holy area of the temple is ripped open. Through Jesus' death, all now have access to God. A person's last words are always important, sometimes a life summary. As he has throughout his life, with his last words Jesus has given himself totally to his Father.

Jesus, I follow you to your death on the cross. I abandon myself. I give myself completely to you. Use me to bring your light, your justice, your peace. Use me to tear open anything that separates the world from you.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 13 - Jesus' Body Is Taken Down From the Cross

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. (John 19:38)

Meditation

Joseph of Arimathea, who had been fearful and afraid of the Jews, steps out into the light. Joseph bravely asks Pilate for Jesus' body to bury, becoming no longer a secret disciple but one who publicly acts with justice to bury the dead.

Holy Spirit, fill me with confidence. Let me now stand up and be counted. Let me publicly proclaim the peace of Christ.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 14 - Jesus Is Laid In the Tomb

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. (Mark 15:46)

Meditation

Jesus lies in a tomb, as do so many of the people of peace and goodness. Some have tortured bodies, like the body of Jesus. Some have died in wars, some through assassination, some have been murdered, some die quiet deaths after lives spent in service. Some are old, some are young. But they all have in common their unity with this broken Savior. And they have in common with Jesus an eventual resurrection into glory.

All of you Saints for Peace, I ask your intercession. Help me to take effective action to heal hurts, to bring reconciliation, to act as you did to bind up wounds instead of making them. Help me to journey, as you did, to new life in the kingdom.

All: Lord, make me a means of your peace.

Station 15 - The Resurrection

(Optional, when used, said in front of the altar)

Leader: I adore you O Christ and I bless you

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

Scripture

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them, they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." (Revelation 21:1-5)

Meditation

Jesus, the tomb could not contain you. You rose from the dead in ultimate triumph over death and pain. Let me join in your new life by comforting those who sorrow, drying the tears of those who weep. By the actions I take, by the life I lead, by the people I support, let me unite with you in the making of a new creation. Lord, I pray for your coming. I pray for the day when you will say to us all, "See, I am making all things new."

Closing Prayer

All: 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

