



The Stations of the Cross

FOR PRAYING AT HOME



Our church is lined up with stained glass windows depicting The Stations of the Cross. Each station marks an event in the Passion of Christ, from being condemned to death, through the crucifixion and ending with His body being placed in the tomb.

Prayerful meditation using the Stations of the Cross during Lent is traditional in many Christian churches.

I hope that these few photos of the stained glass windows will evoke memories of the Church that you have come to love so much at a time that we are limited in our worship together. This guide is designed to help you experience our Stations of the Cross from home

Today we take the **Way of Sorrow** with Jesus, symbolically following his last steps on earth before his crucifixion, finding a way to share in his suffering and sacrifice, and to give and receive his compassion.

Wherever you are, you may wish to mark a path for yourself to follow physically as you move between stations, or **find a comfortable place**, preferably outside, where you won't be disturbed. **Light a candle** to be your companion on this inward journey.

The entire experience is a prayer. Some words are suggested for you to repeat in your mind between stations, or you may pray your own responses.

You may divide this meditation over several days.

Much of the focus of Easter is on the resurrection on Easter Sunday, but it makes no sense if we don't also focus on Good Friday and the events leading up to Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. We pray that we will be open to everything that Jesus wants us to see, hear and understand.



Begin by standing.



Jesus is Condemned to Die

FIRST STATION



The elders and the scribes took Jesus to Pontius Pilate, saying “He deserves to die.” Jesus was condemned unjustly by those who did not understand him and by those who were frightened of what he did and said.

Perhaps they sensed that this man could make a difference, that he could turn their world upside down. Pilate allowed the prejudice of others to skew his judgement and he sentenced an innocent man to death.

Prayer

We judge others who are different from us.
We disregard people based on assumptions, without bothering to find the truth.
Change our hearts that we may see with new eyes those we might condemn.

Amen

Repeat

‘Let the one who is without sin, cast the first stone.’



Jesus Takes up his Cross

SECOND STATION



Collect a stone. Hold it tightly and take time to think about blame, shame and forgiveness.

Prayer

May we be more aware of the crosses that others bear and make time to lift their burden.

Amen

Release the stone. As you watch it fall, let go of blame.



Listen

The Servant King

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBd3ThCResI>

From heav'n You came, helpless Babe,
Entered our world, Your glory veiled;
Not to be served but to serve,
And give Your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,
He calls us now to follow Him,
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to the Servant King*

There in the garden of tears,
My heavy load He chose to bear;
His heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but Yours,' He said

This is our God, the Servant King,

Come see His hands and His feet,
The scars that speak of sacrifice;
Hands that flung stars into space
To cruel nails surrendered.

This is our God, the Servant King,

So let us learn how to serve,
And in our lives enthrone Him;
Each other's needs to prefer,
or it is Christ we're serving.



Jesus falls the first time

THIRD STATION

Lie back and look up at the clouds. The God who made the universe and holds it in existence by His will alone becomes a man too weak to bear a piece of timber's weight.

Carrying his own cross, he went out to the Place of the Skull, which is called Golgotha. He courageously faced his own disciples' lack of understanding.

When he falls, we see his humanity. When we stumble under the weight of our own burdens, or our failures, we know that we can get up and try again.



Prayer

Lord Jesus, I cannot rise to the heights until I have felt the ground.
Just as we see You fall in front of the crowd, help me to see that my darkness
and my weakness are part of the story too.

Amen

Repeat

"Help me to face my weakness with honesty and compassion."



Jesus meets His Mother

FOURTH STATION



Be seated.

Now we think about family. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman here is your son.'

Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Prayer

Jesus, give us the courage to bring your love into the deepest places of our belonging: to our homes, to our family and to our most important relationships.

Amen

Reflection

Is there a relationship that needs repair?



Simon helps Jesus Carry the Cross

FIFTH STATION

As Jesus walks towards Golgotha, Simon, a stranger, carries his cross for him. He offers his strength to one who has nothing left.



Prayer

Pray for all people in need and for our country. Pray for our continent. Pray for justice and peace.

Amen

Reflection

What role is God calling you to play?

Listen

Thula Sizwe

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKn2yHTyObo>

Thula Sizwe, ungabokhala
uJahova wakho uzokunqobela
(Hush Nation, do not cry
Your God will triumph.)



Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

SIXTH STATION



Veronica was so moved by the sight of Jesus' suffering that she courageously moved out from the crowd to wipe the blood and sweat from his face with a towel.

Look at Jesus who lies hidden and unknown within every person in need.

Across our world we see human suffering in the faces of strangers, in the faces of war and turmoil, in the faces of those dealing with illness and loss.

Prayer

Lord remind me that each time I reach out, I am like Veronica.
The kindness I extend to others, I really give to You. Lord, live in me, and act in me,
and love through me so that we may reveal Your glorious face on earth.

Amen

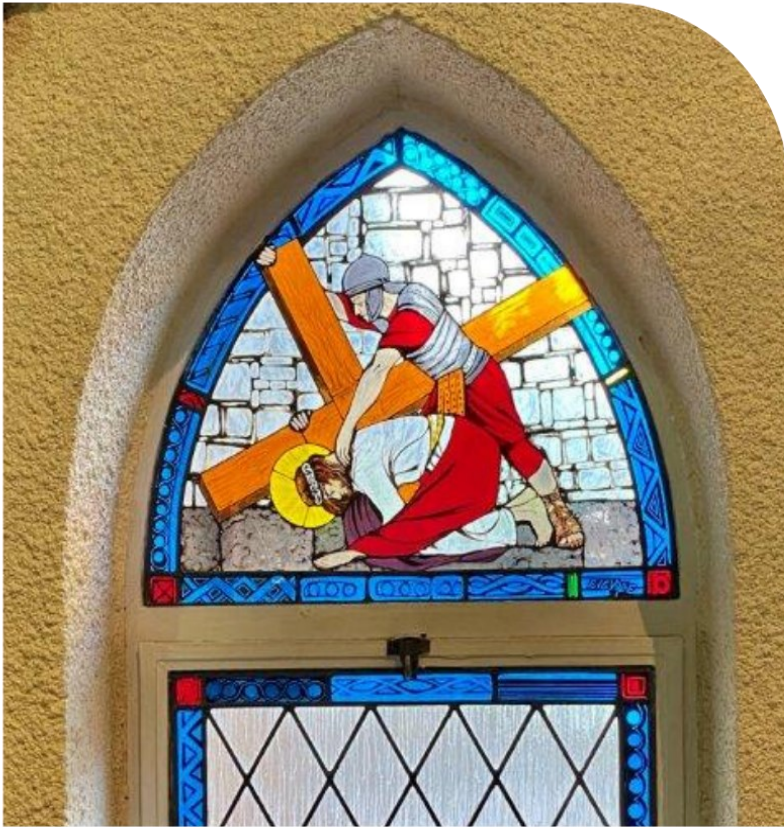
Repeat

Live in me, and act in me, and love through me.



Jesus Falls for a Second Time

SEVENTH STATION



Kneel down, face to the ground.

The people stood by watching; but the leaders scoffed at him saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one.'

All around us people are overburdened by the crosses they carry; they struggle and sometimes fall. There are those who have lost their jobs, those who live with the prospect of unemployment, and those who struggle to keep others in work.

Some are suffering because of failures in our financial, health, education and political systems. We pray that in our need, Jesus will find us and lift us up.

Prayer

Jesus, from deep within yourself, you found the courage and strength to get up once again and continue the journey. Give us your strength to keep going even when hope is dim.

Amen



Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem.

EIGHTH STATION

A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, ***'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children.'***



Meditation

Sing Phind' ukhulume or listen for 1-2 minutes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yMLC4uTXfw&t=36s>

Phindukhulume moya oyingcwele

Phindukhulume Nkosi yam

Phindukhulume Nkosi yam

(Speak again, Holy Spirit; Speak again my Lord)

Ngoba zonk'izono ebengizenza

Namhla zisobala ebusweni bakho

(For all the sins I have committed Are removed from your sight today)



Jesus falls a third time and stripped of his garments

NINTH and TENTH STATIONS



Be seated.

When the soldiers crucified Jesus they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining.

This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

'Let's not tear it', they said to one another. 'Let's decide by lot who gets it.' As the clothes are ripped from Jesus, he is stripped of his dignity in front of an irreverent mob. Jesus sacrifices everything. He holds nothing of himself back.

Prayer

Forgive us Lord for our greed for gossip.
May we respect the dignity of others and leave judgement to God.
Let us see the good in those around us.

Amen

Repeat

'Within our darkest night, you kindle a fire that never dies away.'



Jesus is nailed to the cross

ELEVENTH STATION



He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Prayer

Jesus, we pray on behalf of those who cannot reach out to you at this moment.
We pray for all victims of violence; those who suffer it and those who inflict it.

We pray especially for children, for the elderly and those too vulnerable
to defend themselves.

Amen

Repeat

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



Jesus dies on the cross

TWELFTH STATION



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

Meditation

Sing the Taizé chant:

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

or

listen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGB2E0NzO2A>

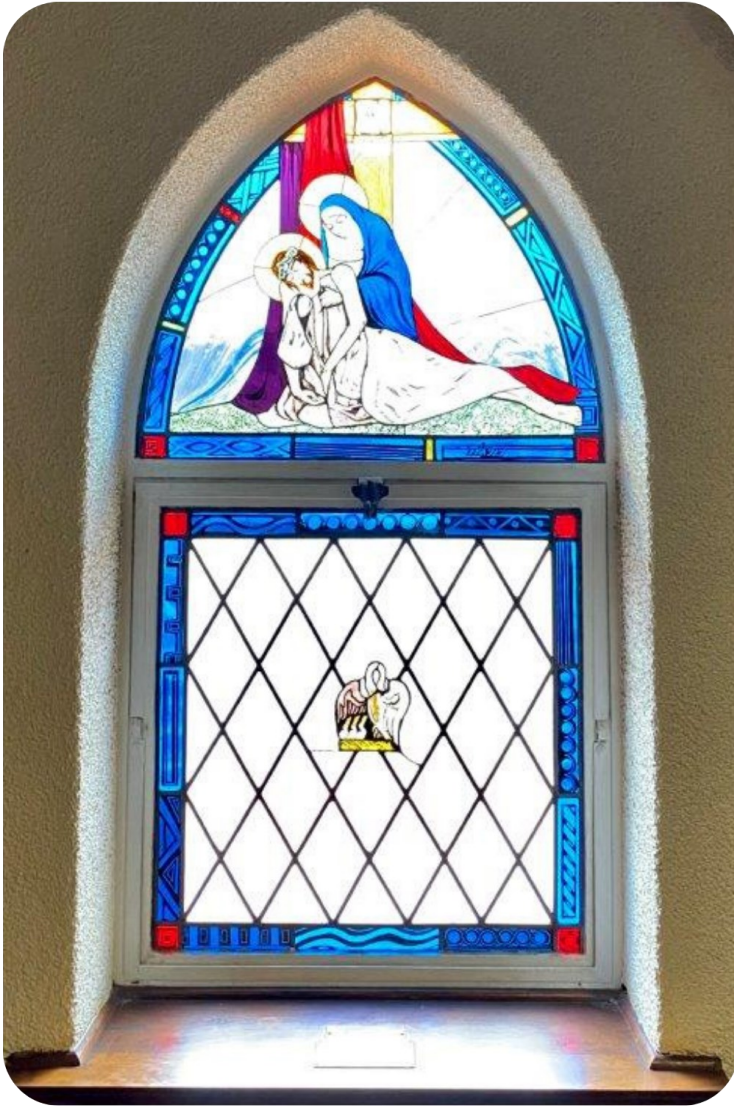
Repeat

'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do '



Jesus is taken down from the cross

THIRTEENTH STATION



Now Mary takes the broken body of her Son in her arms. In her grief, she remembers the words of her son, over the bread, 'This is my body, broken, for you,' and over the wine, 'This is my blood poured out for you.'

As Mary cradles the lifeless body of her son and offers him back to the Father, she stands with all who mourn the death of a beloved. Mary grieves with you.

Light a memorial candle in memory of those whose light shines on although they are gone.



Prayer

Faced with the silence of death, let us not despair but find hope.
Help us to trust in you, the Lord of the living and the dead.

Amen

Repeat

'By His wounds we are healed'



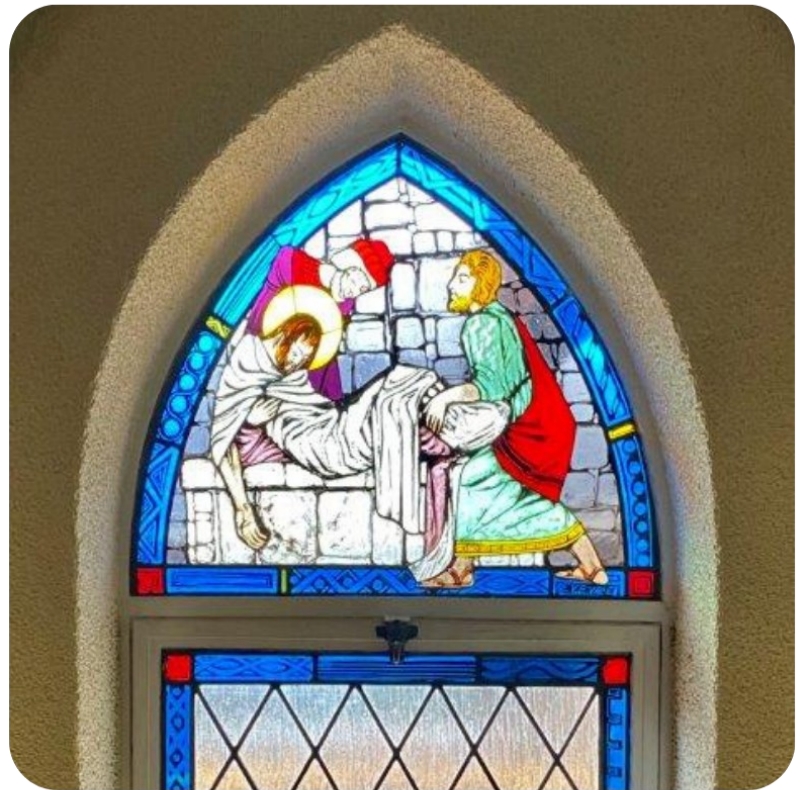
Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

FOURTEENTH STATION

That night his body lay in the dark earth of the world, a seed dying.

All those who had loved him felt emptied and exhausted. There are times when we are overcome by the darkness of the tomb, by the suffering that we experience each day.

The answer to all our grieving and despair lies in this place. The grain of wheat sown in darkness and in death will yield a rich harvest.



Prayer

Thank you that by your grace, you have taken our sins
and upon yourself and reconciled us to you.

Faced with the silence of death,
let us not despair but find hope.

Help us to trust you, Lord of the living and the dead.

Amen



The suffering You could not bear, the works of love You could not do in Your short time on earth, let me bear, and do through You. In your mercy Lord, turn our grief to joy, turn our despair to hope and turn our fear to love. Amen

Meditation

Sing or listen to the Taizé chant:

Within our Darkest Night, you Kindle a Fire that Never Dies Away

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqQsZK57OX8>

Conclusion

Make a sacred gesture e.g. bow/ the sign of the cross.

Thank God for this inward journey.

May you leave this space changed, prepared to encounter in a new way

Jesus of the Resurrection who is your companion and friend.