



Way OF THE Cross

SCRIPTURE WAY OF THE CROSS ✕ BASED ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

INTRODUCTION

A prayerful experience of the Stations of the Cross provides us with the opportunity to enter into a meditation upon Jesus' final journey to the Cross. Many Catholics associate praying the Stations of the Cross with Lent and while not a re-enactment, the Stations do enable us to reflect on how in our own lives we follow in Jesus' path. Jesus' journey to the cross reminds us of the depth of his love for humanity, his capacity for self-sacrifice and his absolute commitment to the service of others. This booklet contains a scriptural approach to the Stations, based upon Matthew's gospel. After reading the scripture passage, we are invited to reflect, think and pray. If used as part of a group the singing of the simple Taizé chant *Stay with me* may be appropriate.



OPENING PRAYER

God of life and living, be with us as we recall the story of Jesus' life, retell the story of his suffering and remember the sacred story of his death on the cross. Jesus lived, died and rose from the dead to reveal you to us. In your graciousness, bless us as we pray this solemn journey.

Leader: We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.
Response: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.

THE FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

*We remember and recall that Jesus was missioned by God
to work in the world*

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." — Mt 3:13-17

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think and pray for those who have deepened our call in baptism.

Leader: We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.
Response: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE SECOND STATION: JESUS ACCEPTS HIS CROSS

*We remember and recall that there were times when
Jesus was tested.*

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him. — Mt 4:1-11

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think and pray for all for whom life is a struggle.

Leader: We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.
Response: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

*We remember and recall that Jesus challenged his community
when he worked for peace and justice.*

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth." "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. — Mt 5:1-12

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think and pray for those who find it hard to see the blessings in their lives.

Leader: We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.
Response: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

We remember and recall that Jesus was loved by his family.

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ... the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they

shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

...an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

...Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

— Mt 1:18-21; 22-25; 2: 13-15; 21-23

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think about and pray for families.

Leader: We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.
Response: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE FIFTH STATION: SIMON HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS

*We remember and recall that Jesus chose people he loved
to work for peace and justice.*

Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him. — Mt 10:1-4

(Pause in Silence) We think about and pray for all who work for justice and peace.

Leader: We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.
Response: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE SIXTH STATION:
VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

We remember and recall that Jesus inspired faith.

Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, "Why this waste? For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor." But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her." — Mt 26:6-13

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think about and pray for all the faithful.

Leader: We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.
Response: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE SEVENTH STATION:
JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

*We remember and recall that Jesus was betrayed
by someone close to him.*

Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What will you give me if I betray him to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him. — Mt 26:14-16

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think about and pray for all who are displaced or rejected.

Leader: We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.
Response: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE EIGHTH STATION:
**JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN
OF JERUSALEM**

*We remember and recall that Jesus treated women
with dignity.*

Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, for she said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well." Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well. — Mt 9:20-22

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think about and pray for those who accompany others in their life journeys: counselors, doctors, nurses, teachers, religious people, school staffs, parish ministers.

Leader: We adore you, O Christ,
and we praise you.
Response: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE NINTH STATION:
JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

*We remember and recall that Jesus faced betrayal
and death with courage.*

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain

here, and stay awake with me.” And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.” Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Again he went away for the second time and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.” Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.” — Mt 26:36-46

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think and pray for those close to us who have died, those we know who are suffering, those facing death.

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

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

Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED

We remember and recall the story of Jesus' suffering.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. — Mt 27:27-31

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think and pray for prisoners of conscience, the tortured, all who are imprisoned, those facing the death penalty.

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

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

Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

We remember and recall the story of Jesus' suffering.

And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, ‘I am God's Son.’” The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way. — Mt 27:33-44

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think about and pray for all who suffer.

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

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

Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

We remember and recall the story of Jesus' death.

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, “This man is calling for Elijah.” At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it

with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

(lengthy silence)

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!" — Mt 27:45-54

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think and pray for those who have died.

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

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

Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE THIRTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

We remember and recall that Jesus died.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. — Mt 27:57-58

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think and pray for the persecuted and oppressed, especially those in our local faith and educational communities.

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

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

Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

THE FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

*We remember and recall that Jesus' laid in a tomb
and that we await his resurrection....*

So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb. — Mt 27:59-61

(Pause in Silence) We reflect quietly. We think and pray for those dear and dearest in our hearts. We ask you, Jesus, to help them know deeply the power of your resurrection.

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

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

Sing: *(chant or recite)*
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.
Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

OUR FATHER

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving God,
we believe that in Jesus' life, death and resurrection
we have the great sign of hope for the world.
In this world, people love with compassion,
forgive without regret,
work for justice without counting the cost.
May we be blessed by your great love,
live our lives inspired by the self-less love of Jesus,
and with our hearts burning with the hope
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

