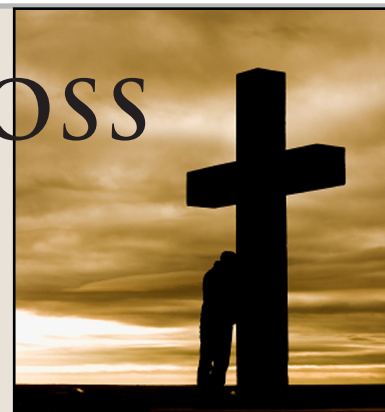


STATIONS OF THE CROSS

for those suffering through divorce or separation



Begin with the Sign of the Cross: *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

OPENING SCRIPTURE READING

The Son of Man is destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected, and to be raised up on the third day. If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, that man will save it (*Luke 9:22-24*).

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help me to be open to your closeness and presence as I begin this journey to Calvary with you. Help me to find in your Passion and Death the strength to take up my cross and follow you.



1 THE FIRST STATION: PILATE CONDEMNS JESUS TO DIE

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: Lord Jesus, often I feel unjustly judged by the court system, just as you were. At times even my friends and family voice their judgmental interpretation of my situation and fail to be understanding or loving. Help me to react as you did; with the quiet confidence of knowing that God our Father knows the truth. Help me to seek you as my most ardent Defender.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory Be . . .

2 THE SECOND STATION: JESUS ACCEPTS HIS CROSS

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: Lord Jesus, the cross that you willingly accepted was weighted down by our sins, for you are blameless and without sin. My cross is heavy too, Lord. My sins make it difficult to carry, but the weight placed on it by the person who hurt me most makes it seem unbearable to hold. When the weight of the cross of divorce overwhelms me Lord, prompt me to unite my sufferings to yours. Help me to remember the burden that you bore for my sake.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory Be . . .

3 THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: Lord Jesus, over the years I have developed sinful patterns of behavior. These sinful choices coupled with my lack of focus and attention on you helped to create an environment void of peace. Through your mercy and grace, I've come to recognize the part I played in the breakup of my marriage. But patterns are hard to change, Lord. Please give me the grace not to fall back into those sinful patterns. And if I do, help me to remember your first fall. And fill me with the courage to get back up and begin again.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory Be . . .

4 FORTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: Lord Jesus, when you mother Mary's eyes met yours she was overcome by your suffering. Do I take the time to notice the suffering of others? Sometimes I fear that I am so consumed with my own suffering that I pay little or no attention to what others may be feeling. Open my eyes, Jesus to each opportunity that you provide for me to empathize with those around me. Teach me the true meaning of Humility, one of the greatest virtues of your Blessed Mother. Help me to understand that humility does not mean to think less of myself, but to think of myself *less*.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory Be . . .

5

FIFTH STATION: SIMON HELPS CARRY THE CROSS

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: Lord, Jesus in your humility you allowed Simon to help you with the burden of your cross. Many people have reached out to me also in an effort to relieve my suffering. Sometimes I find it so difficult to accept their help, Lord. I'd like to think that I can do it all by myself. I can't. Release me from my prideful tendencies. Help me to accept their help as you accepted the help of Simon.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail May . . . Glory Be . . .

6

SIXTH STATION: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: As I meditate on this station it is easy to see Veronica's compassion for you in your time of sorrow. But what is important here is something more subtle and more powerful: even in the midst of your most painful suffering, you left your imprint on Veronica's cloth as well as her heart. Am I so consumed with being politically correct that I'm afraid to share my faith with others? Teach me, dear Lord, to find ways to leave your imprint on the people I meet today in spite of my hardships.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail May . . . Glory Be . . .

7

SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: Placing myself at the scene of your second fall I can see the soldiers and the crowd laughing at your physical weakness. They make jokes at your expense and they enjoy seeing you fail. They call you names and proclaim you a fraud. I'm ashamed, Lord. How many times have I gotten satisfaction over the falls and failings of the one who has hurt me the most? Sometimes I just wait for some hardship to befall that person so I can publicly humiliate them. Heal my heart Lord. Help me not to repay evil for evil but instead teach me to forgive and forget.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail May . . . Glory Be . . .

8

EIGHTH STATION: JESUS SPEAKS TO THE WOMEN

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: This station used to puzzle me, Lord. I could not understand why you would tell these sorrowful women not to weep for you, but to weep for themselves and for their children. Now I see why. You could see, even then, all of the painful suffering that parents and children would go through when families fall apart. You especially had tremendous compassion and sorrow for the children. I'm so sorry Jesus for all of the pain this is causing my children. Surround them with their Guardian Angels and ask your Blessed Mother to wrap them within her loving mantle. Heal their hearts, Lord.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail May . . . Glory Be . . .

9

NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: Lord, when I contemplate you falling for the third time it's hard to understand how you were able to go on. So many times I feel as though I can't go on. Just when I think that I've hit a stride another obstacle trips me up and I fall . . . again. Help me to see that when I am most vulnerable, when my heart is broken wide open and I think that my situation is hopeless that you desire my SURRENDER. I want to give it all to you, Jesus. Please teach me how. I cannot do this without you, Lord. Piece together my broken heart and spirit with the healing power of your love.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail May . . . Glory Be . . .

10

TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: Lord Jesus, seeing you so cruelly humiliated as they intentionally stripped you of your garments grieves my heart. I offer up to you the many humiliations that I have suffered as a result of my divorce. Please strip me of all of my past embarrassments that this divorce has caused me. And clothe me with the virtues of your Blessed Mother: faithfulness, obedience, prudence, patience, mercy and purity.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail May . . . Glory Be . . .

11 ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: Christ, you lived in the truth and were nailed to a cross because of it. The crowd preferred to live in darkness surrounded by lies and fueled by hatred. I am so tired of living in darkness. I'm tired of all of the lies and hatred that swirl around me as I see my marriage fall apart. I am going to nail every lie to your cross and plead for the grace to live in the truth. I will no longer accept lies and deception in my life. You are the Way, the Truth and the Life, Jesus. Give me the courage that it takes to live an authentic life as you did.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory Be . . .

12 TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: I give this moment to you, Jesus. Help me to think of nothing other than the fact that you died for ME. How can I turn my back on you now, Lord? So often I have taken the gift of my faith for granted; going to mass out of obligation and begrudgingly participating in the sacraments. I'm sorry, Jesus. I am reminded of the Roman soldier whose servant you so mercifully healed. From my heart I utter his prayer, "I believe. Help my unbelief." Help me to realize the richness and fullness of my Catholic Faith. Especially inspire me to desire you, who are fully present in the Eucharist.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory Be . . .

13 THIRTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN FROM THE CROSS

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: My heart breaks when I think of your mother's overwhelming loss. Your lifeless body was taken down from the cross and she lovingly held you in her arms. Jesus, I see the failure of my marriage as an overwhelming loss too. Please encourage me to rely on Mary's motherly love. Help me to place my loss into her loving arms. Open my heart to her consolation. Help me rely on her infinite desire to draw me closer to you, her son.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory Be . . .

14 FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

I adore you, O Christ, and I praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Meditation: The tomb was such an empty and cold place for the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords to dwell, even in death. I reflect on my soul, where you also desire to dwell. Is it empty and cold too, Lord? In Your great mercy and love for us, Jesus, you have provided an opportunity to soften our hearts and make our souls warm and inviting to your presence: the sacrament of Reconciliation. I need your help to overcome my fear and weakness. Fill me with true contrition for my sins and a deep desire to begin again with the grace you pour down on me in this sacrament of love.

Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory Be . . .

CLOSING SCRIPTURE READING

But at daybreak on the first day of the week they took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb; but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were puzzling over this, behold, two men in dazzling garments appeared to them. They were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground. They said to them, "Why do you seek the living one among the dead? He is not here, but he has been raised. Remember what he said to you while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and rise on the third day." And they remembered his words (*Luke 24:1-8*).

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help me to walk with you each day of my life, even to Calvary. The sorrow and joy, the pain and healings, the failures and triumphs of my life are truly small deaths and resurrections that lead me to closeness with you. Give me the faith and trust I need to walk with you always. Amen.