

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Dear God! As I follow and study Your life from the time of Your condemnation until Your Crucifixion and death, it is also a time to review my own life and ask for help in those areas where I have not done well.

When I find areas where I need help, let me not become discouraged or give in to despair, but rather turn to You as a child to a parent, and humbly ask for Your divine help and guidance.

Help me live one day at a time, and never relive the past or worry about the future.

Help me accept each day as it comes, and to live it the way that You and I know best. Never let me say, "If I had the chance to live it over, I would do this or that." Knowing myself, if I had the chance, I would probably make the same mistakes again.

Help me to live each moment to its fullest, and in the newness of each moment give me comfort of soul and peace of mind.

Let this candle be a reminder to me of how my life should radiate your glory, and I re-dedicate it to you again this night.

**AMEN**

May God's peace which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

**AMEN**

Let us go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

## *Stations of the Cross*

### ***The First Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**



#### **Jesus is condemned to death**

Jesus had nothing but love for people, yet He was condemned to die a brutal death.

We have condemned ourselves so much that we see little or no good in ourselves...much less see the good in others. Today, Lord, help us to look at each and every person - man, woman, child - and see the beauty and goodness You have given us. Teach us to help build up each and every person we meet, rather than tearing them apart by our malicious criticism and condemnation.

#### **Meditation:**

Think how Jesus would have felt in that court of law, knowing that His life was on the line as He was being made out to be a traitor.

### ***The Second Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed  
the world.**

#### **Jesus carries His cross**

The weight of the Cross shows heavily on the brow and the face of Jesus. Yet He moves forward without a word of complaint.

Our crosses and trials in life never come close to those of Jesus, yet, we complain and gripe constantly, hoping that the pain and trials will escape our life. Our pride is so great that the thought of the smallest suffering frightens us. Teach us, Jesus, by Your example, how to carry our daily crosses. Yes, "my yoke is easy and my burden light."



#### **Meditation:**

Let us think of the anguish of Jesus with the weight of the cross biting into His flesh. Consider a concern we have that bites into our soul and ask Jesus for power and presence of mind to deal with it.

### ***The Third Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

#### **Jesus falls the first time**

Jesus is known for His strength and courage. Yet He falls under the weight of the wooden cross.

We fall many times daily, and the weight of our crosses is nothing compared to the cross of Jesus. Sometimes we fall because of weakness; other times we fall because we lack the incentive or the courage to keep trying. And again, there are times when we get so caught up in our poor self-image that we just don't care, and give up in discouragement. Lord, let us never become so discouraged that we give in to failure. Help us to know that to falter or to fall is not shameful. Help us to know our strengths through our weaknesses.



#### **Meditation:**

Think of the great strain Jesus was under. If this were you, would you feel it was worth the anguish? Consider Jesus' pain and suffering with the whips and scourging.

### ***The Fourth Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

#### **Jesus meets His holy Mother**

Mary's memory takes her back many years...to her tiny child taking His first steps...wobbling and falling...in Nazareth. She is there beside Him, holding her breath, longing to put out her hands to steady Him, to prevent a fall, but she lets Him go alone, the little child...who must learn to walk on His own feet. Now as then, she is silent; she holds back her hands as she did then. His will is her will. It was for this hour that she gave Him to the world. So her Son goes on to do His Father's will. The Father so loved the world, that He gave up His only Son to save it".



#### **Meditation:**

Mary's pain as a Mother would have been almost too much to bear. Think of the tearing of her heart as she saw her son being mistreated. Think of how you would feel in a similar position.

### ***The Thirteenth Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

#### **Jesus is taken down from the cross**

It was only after the death of Jesus that He was recognised as the Son of God. His peaceful resignation and acceptance of suffering and death were proof to the centurion. that He was God's Son.

Grant us acceptance and resignation. Help us to welcome each day as it comes. Teach us not to complain when each day and everything it holds is not perfect. After all, we were never promised that each day and every day would be a rose in the garden of life.

Let us never greet another day with these words: "Good God! it's morning," let us say instead, "Good morning God!"



#### **Meditation:**

Finally Jesus' pain is over and He is laid to rest. Would this pain and suffering be something you would be prepared to experience for something you believed in. If so, what?

### ***The Fourteenth Station.***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

#### **Jesus is laid in the tomb**



Jesus lived so humbly and simply that He had no place to be buried. They laid Him in the burial place of a stranger. As the soldier closed the door on the tomb of Jesus, a new chapter of the person and life of Jesus opened.

We know that if we turn our life and will over to the care of God, we can be transformed into a new person. Our hatred can be turned into love and kindness; our sadness turned into joy; and where there is despair, we can find hope. Our weakness can be turned into strength. Lord, teach us by Your tremendous courage to face everything in life, even death itself, and never to fear. Help us our God to never fear anything but fear itself.

#### **Meditation:**

It appears to be all over. At last there is peace for Jesus. Yet through His death, a new beginning emerged for all Christians. How can you lay to rest a hurt you continue to harbour so you, too, can experience peace.?

### ***The Eleventh Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

#### **Jesus is nailed to the cross**

Jesus, too weak to carry the cross any further, is nailed to the cross. Arms and hands that were always extended in love are now extended and fastened to the wood of the cross. It almost frightens us when we think of the many times we have stretched out our hands and arms to take anything we could get. Seldom did we extend ourselves to those in need of a little love and concern. The words, "I want this," or "give me that" become the broken record of our lives. Oh God! we beg You for the gift of generosity. Never permit us to put limits on what we do for others. Teach us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us.



#### **Meditation:**

Let us think of ways we can share with Jesus in His pain. What can we do to show Him that His pain was worthwhile?

### ***The Twelfth Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**



#### **Jesus dies on the cross**

Jesus utters a loud cry, "My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?" Then He bows His head and dies. Jesus gave His whole life and died that we might live. He endured pain and suffering without complaint. He left beneath the cross His mother mourning the death of a Son.

Lord, help us to die to our old ways of living. Help us to die to a life filled with selfishness, pride, anger and self-hatred. Replace these with charity, faith,

love and courage. Grant us the courage not to give up on what we know is right, even though we may feel it to be hopeless.

#### **Meditation:**

Death brings with it a sense of finality. If you were to die tonight, what difference would it make to the world and those who love you?

### ***The Fifth Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

#### **Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry His cross**

Jesus accepts the help of a bystander to carry His cross. He can no longer carry the weight of the Roman cross alone.

How many times have we said, "no" to the care, love and concern of our friends? How many times have we brusquely turned away from those who wanted to help us? Out of puffed-up pride, we always wanted to do everything by ourselves and never accepted a helping hand. We remember so well those who wanted to help us and we said, "no." Lord teach us that we always need help: the help of God, and the help of our fellow men and women.



#### **Meditation:**

Fortunately in this world of ours there are still people prepared to share the cross with Jesus. Let us ask God to give us the courage to live out our faith.

### ***The Sixth Station.***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

#### **Jesus meets Veronica**

Veronica wipes the blood and sweat from the face of Jesus. A single gesture of love and concern and it meant so much to Jesus, and to Veronica!

Being a self-centred people, we fail many times to offer a helping hand, to say a word of comfort or just give a simple word of encouragement to someone on the brink of despair. We let those precious moments slip away from our lives because, of our selfishness. O God, we know You can remove all these shortcomings and defects from our lives. Just as Veronica wiped away the sweat blood from Your brow, wipe away our selfishness and lack of love for others.



#### **Meditation:**

Friends are wonderful assets. Like Veronica, often they take risks for the sake of their special relationship with us. Let us pause to give thanks for our friends as we name them in our hearts.

***The Seventh Station.***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

**Jesus falls a second time**

Once again, Jesus stumbles and falls under the weight of the heavy wooden cross. His body is covered with bruises and He is bloodstained from head to foot.

We fall daily. We lament and complain, and ask "why?" Somehow we want to rest contentedly and confidently on honours already won and suddenly...down we go! That's the story of our life. We say in our moments of complacency that we are going to do this or that, and instead we do nothing. Teach us by these repeated falls to act and to do, rather than to dream and want.



**Meditation:**

In our life we, too, fall down, but our failures are often our own failures. Jesus did nothing wrong and yet paid an enormous price for His innocence. In what way have we been wronged in our innocence?

***The Eighth Station.***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

**Jesus comforts the weeping women of Jerusalem**

Jesus forgets for the moment the weight of the cross and His own pain and anguish, and comforts the women who followed Him.

We are people quick to criticise and slow to compliment, seldom giving of our time to comfort and console anyone in need. Help us to love our neighbour as ourselves. Let us never think of

ourselves as being better than, or more noble than, those around us. Teach us by Your example to help and comfort people we meet in our life's journey. It is only when we love others freely that we can receive love in return.

**Meditation:**

We use tears to cope with life. Think of the many injustices in the world that we should be weeping over.



***The Ninth Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

**Jesus falls the third time**

Jesus, completely overcome by physical weakness, slumps under the cross for the final time.

We have slipped, we have stumbled, we have fallen many times in life. Each time, we looked at ourselves as being no-good, worthless wretches. Our self-image was getting worse with each slip in life. It is only when we learn to live one day at a time and not to look at our past or to worry about all the tomorrows, that we can live in the here and now. Just as God made all creatures and things in the world for a purpose, we began to see a purpose, and meaning in our life. Teach us not to condemn ourselves so much that we give up in despair.



**Meditation:**

Jesus could have given up but He just continued to follow His destiny. We, too, need to follow His example. Think of a time when you have fallen a number of times, and with the support of others, come through.

***The Tenth Station***

**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.**

**Jesus is stripped of His clothing**

Jesus, too weak to walk and nearing His final moment, is stripped of His clothing. This is a savage effort by the soldiers to humiliate Jesus.

Somehow, we have yearned to be something great in this life, always seeking

goals that were beyond us or not good for us. We were never content with being the simple, ordinary, run-of-the-mill people God made us. We searched for happiness and treasures at the end of the rainbow, and instead our life has been a broken dream. We ask You, Lord, for the gift of humility. Teach us never to yearn for the great and noble things of life, but to make the little acts of kindness and love in our lives many.



**Meditation:**

The embarrassment of being stripped naked in public must have been unbelievably difficult for Jesus. Let us think of a time when we were exposed to the naked truth about our life.