

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

A moment of silence before the start of the meditation.

MEDITATION GUIDE

ON THE

PASSION

OF THE

CROSS

IMPORTANT PRAYERS

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who are in heaven. Holy be Your name. Your kingdom come Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Do not bring us to the test but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary full of grace the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus...

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be

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.

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

All: Amen.

Leader: In going this way of the cross with You, O Jesus, we wish to reflect on what You endured to redeem us. We wish to realize more fully that You are the One Mediator between God and men, giving Yourself as ransom for all (1 Tm 2:5), the Mediator of the new covenant through whom we receive an eternal inheritance (Hb 9:15). Through Your blood, we have our redemption, the remission of sins, according to the riches of Your grace (Ep 1: 7,8).

All: Power went out from You, and You healed all when the crowd endeavored to come in touch with You (Lk 6:19). Let Your power go out to us now as we endeavor to come in touch with You in this holy devotion...

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: At the cross her station keeping, stood the mournful mother weeping, close to Jesus to the last.

The 1st Station: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world!

Leader: Pilate spoke to them again, wishing to release Him. But they kept shouting: "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Yet a third time he spoke to them. "Why? what evil has this man done? I find no crime deserving of death in Him." But they persisted with loud cries, demanding that He should be crucified. And their cries prevailed (Lk 23: 20-23).

All: My voice, too, was in that cry. It must now be a voice of repentance and reparation. "Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice." For with You is forgiveness and plenteous redemption (Ps 129). With the greatness of Your compassion wipe out all my offenses. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt, and of my sin cleanse me (Ps 50: 3,4).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: At the cross her station keeping, stood the mournful mother weeping, close to Jesus to the last.

The 2nd Station: JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world!

Leader: And so they took Jesus and led Him away" (Jn 19:16). The hard, dead wood of the cross was laid on Him. He accepted it willingly, even eagerly. For on this dead wood of the cross He would bring forth life, the supernatural life for countless souls. His death on the cross would be the ransom for the life of the world.

All: One with the wood of the cross is the Son of God who has been given to us. Now "He who has the Son has life" says St John (1 Jn 5:12); for He came into this world that we may have life and have it in abundance (Jn 10:10). Hence, we should be able to say with St Paul, "It is now no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: At the cross her station keeping, stood the mournful mother weeping, close to Jesus to the last.

The 3rd Station: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world!

Leader: However, eager He was to carry the cross, He soon felt its persistent pressure. For the cross was a heavy burden and the rough road made every step unsteady. Overcome by the oppressive burden and the haste with which they lashed Him on, He fell to the ground.

All: We are burdened in body and mind. Illness and weariness, and the haste of our day, the obligations of our walks in life, are the burdens we have to carry. But they should not dishearten us. For Jesus calls to us. "Come to Me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. For My yoke is easy and My burden light (Mt 11:28,30)". And while "each one has his own load to carry," we should also "help bear one another's burdens" (Gal 6:2,5).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us..

Song: At the cross her station keeping, stood the mournful mother weeping, close to Jesus to the last.

The 4th Station: JESUS MEETS HIS AFFLICTED MOTHER

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Leader: She had accompanied Him on several of His apostolic journeys; now she wanted to accompany Him on His sacrificial journey to Calvary. She was associated with Him in His mysteries, in that of His sacred passion. She insisted on going with Him all the way.

All: Go also with us, Mother Mary, on our earthly journey to bring us ever closer to your Divine Son. Do not abandon us, banished children of Eve. You are full of grace, the Virgin most faithful and powerful, our Mother most amiable and admirable, the consolation of the afflicted, the help of Christians. He who finds you finds life and wins favor with the Lord (Pr 8.35).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: Through her heart His sorrow sharing, all His bitter anguish bearing, now at length the sword had passed.

The 5th Station: THE CROSS IS LAID ON SIMON OF CYRENE

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Leader: "And they forced a certain passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country to take up His Cross" (Mk 15:21). For Simon the cross was a detestable thing, and to carry it, an outrageous imposition. But as it was, he carried the cross of Christ, the precious instrument of our salvation.

All: "The doctrine of the cross is foolishness to those who perish, but to those who are saved, it is the power of God" (1 Cor 1:18). Hence, we must learn to say with St Paul: "God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal 6:140). In every tribulation that comes to us, we must recognize the cross of Christ.

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: Through her heart His sorrow sharing, all His bitter anguish bearing, now at length the sword had passed.

The 6th Station: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;
All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.
Leader: When she caught sight of Him, staggering under the cross, she hastened to bring Him relief. Mindful of the singular benefits He had showered upon her people and brooking no opposition, she rushed through the crowd and wiped His bloody and grimy face with her veil.
All: I can render a similar service to our Lord by performing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy for my fellowmen, for He said: "As long as you did it for one of these, the least of My brethren, you did it for Me" (Mt 25:40). In dealing with my neighbor I must resemble Jesus who said that He came into the world, not to be served but to serve (Mk 10:45).
Leader: Our Father...
All: Give us this day...
Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.
All: Have mercy on us.
Song: Through her heart His sorrow sharing, all His bitter anguish bearing, now at length the sword had passed.

The 7th Station: JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;
All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.
Leader: "We have gone astray like sheep, each following his own way; but the Lord laid upon Him the guilt of us all" (Is 53:6). "For our sake, God made Him who knew no sin, the bearer of sin so that in Him, we might become bearers of God's holiness" (2 Cor 5:21). So, laden with sin, Jesus fell again.
All: Sin is the enemy of God. It denies the holiness and supremacy of God and refuses Him the honor due to Him. Sin is also our Chief enemy. Lord, let us share in the lot of saints, and rescue us from the power of darkness and transfer us into Your kingdom, where our redemption, the remission of our sins (Col 1:12,13).
Leader: Our Father...
All: Give us this day...
Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.
All: Have mercy on us.
Song: Through her heart His sorrow sharing, all His bitter anguish bearing, now at length the sword had passed.

The 8th Station: THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM WEEP OVER JESUS

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;
All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Leader: In the large crowd of people to follow Jesus were devoted women who bewailed and lamented their beloved Master. Jesus turned to them and gave them salutary words of warning and instructions on what was to overtake the ungrateful city of Jerusalem (Lk 23:27, 30).

All: Let me ever hear and obey Your words, O Jesus, in the teachings of the Church and Sacred Scripture. "He who is of God," You declared, "hear the Word of God" (Jn 8:47). And Your heavenly Father told us to listen to You (Mt 17:5). Therefore, "Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening" (1 Kings 3:9). "I am a way-farer of earth, hide not Your commands from me" (Ps 118:29).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: Oh, how sad and sore distressed was that mother highly blessed of the sole begotten one!

The 9th Station: JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;
All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.
Leader: His strength failed Him. He had sweat blood in the Garden of Gethsemani; He had been dragged before Caiphas and Pilate; He had been scourged and crowned with thorns. And all the while, He was harassed and deprived of nourishment. Utterly exhausted, He now lay prostrate on the ground.
All: Keep me, O Lord, from becoming spiritually exhausted. To uphold me, You have provided me with the power and refreshment of the Sacraments; and You assured the Apostle that "strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). I must realize that "my strength and my courage is the Lord" (Ps 117:14), and that "They who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; they will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint" (Is 40:81).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: Oh, how sad and sore distressed was that mother highly blessed of the sole begotten one!

The 10th Station: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;
All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Leader: They tore the garments from His body and so renewed the thousand wounds inflicted on Him in the cruel scourging. Then "They divided His garments among them by drawing lots" (Lk 23:34). Jesus was stripped of His garments; He was stripped of all honor, condemned as He was to die on the cross. "He was classed with wrongdoers" (Mk 15:28).

All: I must strip myself of all that is unsightly in the eyes of God as well as of all doings and singularities which are offensive in the eyes of my fellowmen, I must heed the words of the Apostle "You are to put off your old self, with its former habits, and put on the new self which has been created according to God in justice and holiness of truth" (Eph 4:22,24).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: Oh, how sad and sore distressed was that mother highly blessed of the sole begotten one!

The 11th Station: JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Leader: And when they reach the place called Golgotha or "the Skull", they crucified Him there (Lk 23:33). Christ delivered Himself for us as an offering to God, a sacrifice that has an agreeable fragrance (Eph 5:2). He who had joy set before Him endured the cross (Heb 12:2). "Christ, our paschal victim, has been crucified!" (1 Cor 5:7).

All: The sacrifice of the cross is renewed on our altars. In every mass, Jesus offers Himself anew for us to His heavenly Father. To make the Mass meaningful, I have to lead a sacrificial life, ever willing to spend myself for Christ, His Church, and my fellowmen. The Apostle exhorts us to present our bodies as a sacrifice, living, holy, pleasing to God (Rom 12:1).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: Christ above in all torment hangs, she beneath behold the pangs, of her dying glorious son.

The 12th Station: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Leader: At last, Jesus cried out with a loud voice and said, "Father, into Your hands I commend my Spirit". Having said this, He expired (Lk

23:46) [*a moment of silence ... pray...*] "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends" (Jn 15:13).

All: "In this we have come to know His love, that He laid down His life for us" (1 Jn 3:16). Lord, You said that once You were lifted up from the earth, You would draw all men to Yourself (Jn 12:32). Draw me to Yourself and make me radiate your love to all I come in contact with. May Your love ever impel me, for we no longer live for ourselves, but for You who died for us all (2 Cor 5:14,15).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: Christ above in all torment hangs, she beneath behold the pangs, of her dying glorious son.

The 13th Station: THE BODY OF JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Leader: "Now there stood beside the cross His mother" (Jn 19:25). She wanted to be with Him to the end. When His body was taken from the cross, she received it into her arms. She was His Mother, and now she was also our Mother, given to us by her dying Son.

All: Show yourself our Mother, blessed Virgin Mary, and be with us to the end. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile show us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. You are full of grace, and the Lord is with you. Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: Christ above in all torment hangs, she beneath behold the pangs, of her dying glorious son.

The 14th Station: THE BODY OF JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Leader: Joseph of Arimathea "took Him down from the cross, wrapped Him in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb cut out of the rock" (Lk 23:53). "It is now completed," said Jesus on the cross (Jn 19:30). Completed was the sacrifice of our redemption; restored was the honor and glory of God.

All: I must always strive to do everything for the honor and glory of God. For "All things, humans are like grass, and all their glory like the bloom of grass" (1 Pt 1:24). Therefore, "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Your name give glory" (Ps 133:1). "Worthy are You, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they came into being" (Apoc 4:11).

Leader: Our Father...

All: Give us this day...

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Song: Who is Christ's dear Mother gazing, pierced by anguish so amazing, born of woman, would not weep?

Leader: We adore You O Christ and we praise You;

All: Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Closing Prayer
(all together)

Having gone with You on the Way of the Cross, O Jesus, we have come to realize that we are redeemed, not with perishable goods, but with Your precious blood (1 Pet 1:18). You became "a merciful and faithful high priest before God to expiate the sins of the people" (Heb 2:17). You laid down Your life for us, and You took up again (Jn 10:18), when You rose gloriously from the dead.

We will take up our cross daily and follow You, convinced that if we share in Your suffering, we shall also share in the glory of Your resurrection (Phil 3:10,11). For if we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be so in the likeness of His resurrection also" (Rm 6:5). AMEN.

Leader: Lord Jesus crucified.

All: Have mercy on us.

Leader: Our final blessing, all together:

All: May the Lord bless us and keep us; may the Lord let His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us; may the Lord lift up His countenance upon us and grant us peace.

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

All: AMEN.

ISAIAH 55

1-2 All you who are thirsty, come to the water!
You who have no money, come, receive grain and eat;
Come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk!
Why spend your money for what is not bread;
your wages for what fails to satisfy?
Heed me, and you shall eat well, you shall delight in rich fare.

6 Seek the LORD while he may be found, call him while he is near.

8- 9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts.

10-11 For just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down
And do not return there till they have watered the earth,
making it fertile and fruitful,
Giving seed to him who sows and bread to him who eats,
So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth;
It shall not return to me void, but shall do my will,
achieving the end for which I sent it.