

Journey of Faith



In Short:

- Following Jesus involves carrying the cross of self-denial and sacrifice.
- The Way of the Cross helps us reflect on the Jesus' cross and our own.
- Traditionally, fourteen stations mark the path of Jesus' passion and death.



I. Jesus Is Condemned to Death

"[The crowd] only shouted the louder, 'Crucify him.' So Pilate...released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified."

Mark 15:14–15

Jesus, you faced those who judged and condemned you and felt only love for them. You struggled with fear but continued your mission. You cherished your humanity and your divinity.

Loving Christ, sometimes I lash out to cover my own fears. Show me how to accept myself as a person in the process of growth, painfully struggling to become the person you want me to be. Amen.

II. Jesus Bears His Cross

"Carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull."

John 19:17

Jesus, you willingly accepted your cross. We value power, but you became powerless. We strive for status and control, but you gave yours away. You continued on despite your burden, while we often give up in our daily struggles.

Loving Christ, I often become discouraged with life. I avoid responsibility for my thoughts, feelings, and actions. Teach me to surrender myself, to be generous with my time, talents, and treasures. Amen.

The Way of the Cross

Following Jesus involves more than going to Mass every week and being kind to others. To follow Jesus, we must follow the way of the cross.

What does this mean? We learn from Jesus' example that carrying our crosses as his disciples means self-denial and sacrifice. A prayer that helps us enter into this experience is the Way of the Cross (also Stations of the Cross). Fourteen scenes or crosses remind us of the steps Jesus took on his way to his death. We prayerfully walk from station to station and reflect on Christ's passion and death.

"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."

Matthew 16:24

"Christian prayer loves to follow the way of the cross in the Savior's steps. The stations... trace the way of Jesus, who by his holy Cross has redeemed the world."

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III. Jesus Falls the First Time

Jesus, the burden of the cross was too great. You fell to the dust but pulled yourself up again. Exhausted and suffering, you shouldered your burden while we sometimes force our crosses on others. You continued to move to your destination while we invent excuses to give up our struggles, to abandon our call to follow you.

Loving Christ, I often fail in my struggle to follow you. Show me how to forgive myself. Sometimes I give up hope, lose faith, and refuse to persevere. Your example speaks to me, encouraging me to carry my own cross on my journey back to you. Amen.



IV. Jesus Meets His Mother

Though the Gospels don't record Jesus meeting his mother as he carried the cross, we know she was there at the crucifixion.

Jesus, you showed us we can't shield those we love from pain. You experienced your mother's anguish as she watched you. You gazed with compassion on her pain-filled face.

Loving Christ, teach me to be compassionate to others who are hurting. Teach me to be considerate and loving, as you were to your mother and she was to you. Give me strength to express my feelings of love. Amen.

V. Jesus Is Helped by Simon



"They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian... to carry his cross."
Mark 15:21

Jesus, you shared your burden with Simon, showing that we all need help at times.

Loving Christ, inspire me to come forward, step out of the crowd, and acknowledge you. I'm often asked to help, care, or serve, but I refuse. Sometimes I'm offered help, but I don't accept it. Help me say "yes" to helping others and to letting others help me, too. Amen.

VI. Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

According to tradition, a woman came forward from the crowd to wipe the sweat and blood from Jesus' face. The likeness of Jesus' face appeared on the veil she used.

Jesus, what courage it must have taken for Veronica to defy the soldiers and offer you comfort!

Loving Christ, at times my faith is weak, and I'm reluctant to be "Christ" for others and to share the message of your salvation. Help me to act and speak in spite of fear or embarrassment. Give me the grace to be more like you, for the sake of others. Amen.

VII. Jesus Falls a Second Time

Jesus, you showed us how to accept human limitations in ourselves and in others. Climbing with your heavy burden, your body gave out once more. You showed us that it's only natural to fail sometimes. You revealed empathy for our struggles to persevere.

Loving Christ, teach me to focus on what you want me to be instead of trying to control others. Help me to stretch out my hand to those who fall and help them up as we journey together in faith, hope, and love. Amen.

VIII. Jesus Speaks to the Women

"Jesus turned to [the women] and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children.'"

Luke 23:28

Jesus, you told the women to weep over their own oppression. You embraced the powerless and healed the brokenhearted.

Loving Christ, teach me to love mercy and act justly. Help me to appreciate all who touch my life and to bring healing to areas of brokenness wherever I encounter it. Amen.

IX. Jesus Falls a Third Time



Jesus, the burden you carried overpowered you once more, and your body crumpled. With your failing strength, you pulled yourself up again.

Loving Christ, in your weakness you showed me strength. Teach me that it doesn't matter how often I fall along my journey. What counts is that I get up and start again. Help me to trust you to help me become the person I was meant to be. Amen.

X. Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

"They took his clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier."

John 19:23

Jesus, you endured the humiliation of being stripped of your clothes. As you stood before the scorn-filled crowd, you gave yourself completely, without reservation.

Loving Christ, teach me to be open and honest in my relationships. Teach me humility. Show me how to become vulnerable because only then will I be able to love. Amen.

XI. Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

"There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle."

John 19:18

Jesus, you showed us that we will be pierced many times in this life. With each blow of the hammer, the burning metal penetrated deeper into your flesh. You endured the agony of crucifixion for love.

Loving Christ, help me to not crucify others by my words, acts, or omissions. Teach me to let go of negative behavior and transform my vices into virtues. Teach me to build up your body instead of tearing it apart. Amen.

XII. Jesus Dies on the Cross

"Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit'; and...he breathed his last."

Luke 23:46

Jesus, you showed us how to give life and love through your sacrifice. As the weight of your body forced air from your lungs, you thought of us. You asked God to forgive our ignorance and sin.

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