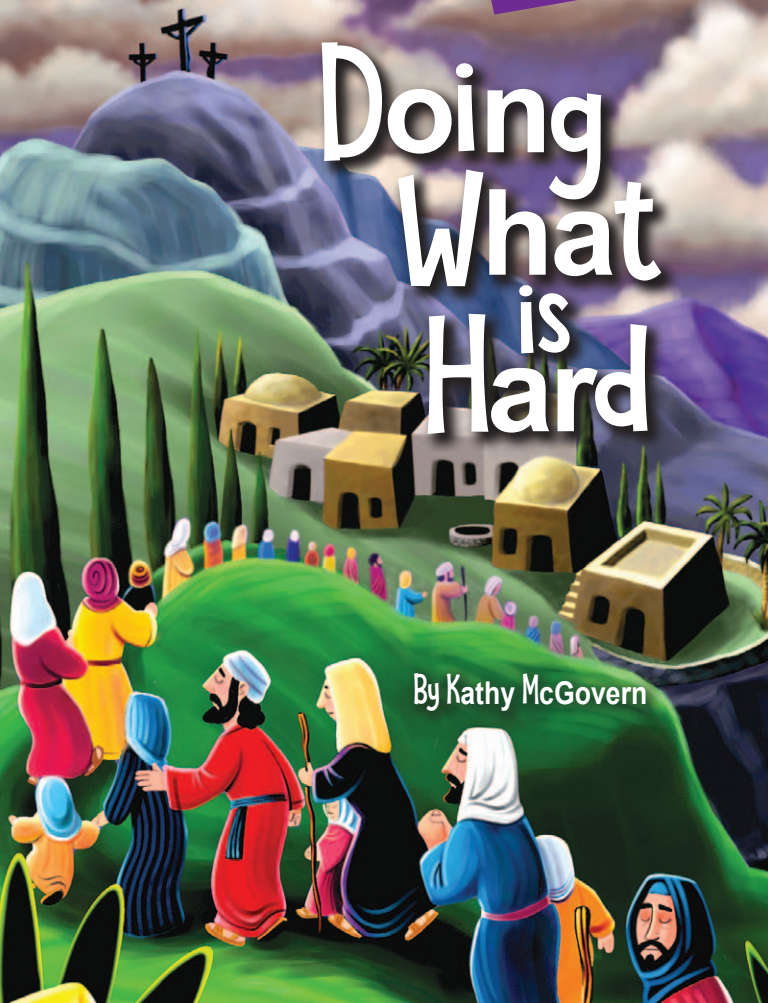


Stations of the Cross *for Children*

Doing What is Hard

By Kathy McGovern





INTRODUCTION:

Jesus Shows Us How to Do Hard Things

Sometimes it's really hard to do the right thing. Sometimes it's hard to leave our computers or our phones. When mom calls us and asks us to help her, sometimes we don't turn everything off and go right away to help. Sometimes, instead of paying attention to our teachers, we'd rather talk to our friends. And sometimes we even sin by making fun of the kids who don't look like us, or act like us. Jesus showed us how to be strong, and how to do the hard things. He lifted up his cross, and he died on that cross. Sometimes it's the hardest things—like being kind, even when our friends make fun of us—that bring us closest to Jesus.



Pilate Condemns Jesus to Death



O Jesus, it must have been so scary for you to be taken into the room where Pontius Pilate was waiting for you. Pilate didn't know why so many people were calling for your death. He was afraid too, because he didn't want to get in trouble with Rome for not crucifying you. He tried to make the angry mob happy by getting you to confess to something—anything—so he would feel better about killing you. Please help us never give into the pressure to do terrible things just so other people won't be angry with us.



***Jesus, give us the strength to
always do the right thing.***

Second Station



Jesus Takes Up His Cross



O Jesus, they treated you so cruelly. They tied you to a stake and beat you. They thrust long, painful thorns into your head. And after they tortured you, they gave you a heavy wooden

beam to carry up the hill to Calvary, where the rest of the cross was already pounded into the ground, waiting for you. Almost every day we wish we didn't have to do something. Help us remember, the next time we don't want to get out of bed, how much you didn't want to start that walk up to Calvary. But you did.



***Jesus, stay with us as
we do the things we don't like to do.***



Jesus Falls the First Time



O Jesus, it hurts so much to fall. When we feel ourselves falling we know we're going to smash our knee, or our head, and it always hurts. You fell because the wood was so heavy, and there was probably blood streaming into your eyes from the crown of thorns on your head. Sometimes we fall down in front of our friends by telling a lie, or only paying attention to the popular kids. Help us always be ready to catch people when they start falling behind in class, or losing friends because of things they say or do.



Jesus, we never want to say or do anything that hurts you.



Jesus Meets His Mother



O Jesus, how much your mother loved you! She remembered that joyful Christmas when you were born, and the shepherds came. She remembered all the wonderful times when you were a child in Nazareth. But she also remembered when the prophet Simeon told her that a sword would pierce her soul, and that day had finally come. As she met you on the way to Calvary she must have struggled to remember the angel Gabriel's words to her so long ago, "Be not afraid." Help us to always ask the Blessed Mother to console us when we are afraid.



Jesus, we want to comfort everyone who is afraid.

**Fifth
Station**



**Simon
of Cyrene
Helps Jesus
Carry the
Cross**



O Jesus, it must have felt so good to have Simon take the cross away from you, even for only a little while. The Romans wanted to make sure you didn't die before you made it to Calvary, and so they forced Simon to carry your cross. Did you allow Simon to carry it so we could see how much we need to help each other? Or did you allow it so Simon could feel especially close to you, and would be proud that he helped you? Please help us remember how holy it is to let others help us.



***Jesus, Jesus, we want to feel close to you,
and so we allow others to help us.***



Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus



O Jesus, you must have had so many tears running down your face. When we cry it can feel really good to let all our sadness come pouring

out. But you had to help Simon hold that heavy beam. You couldn't dry your eyes as you cried, so Veronica came up and wiped your face for you. And look! You left your image on her veil! How exactly like you, to love her back so quickly and so beautifully. Help us rush to dry the tears of those who weep. Their faces will stay on our hearts forever.



***Jesus, we want to help
your friends when they feel sad.***



Jesus Falls the Second Time



O Jesus, you are halfway up the hill. You are so tired, so thirsty, so sad and so afraid. Those thorns are making your head pound, and the blood is caking on to your face, and into your eyes. You slip, and come crashing down. It must have hurt so much. You must have wanted to just stay there on the ground, but the Romans kept screaming for you to get up. Help us to know when the people who love us really need to rest. Help us make their lives a little easier. Help us be a blessing.



Jesus, we want to always be there to help those who are weary.

Eighth Station



Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem



O Jesus, as you were walking, and bleeding, and crying, many of your friends who lived in Jerusalem began coming up to you, weeping. They

loved you! They had been touched, and healed, and loved by you, and now you were on the road to Calvary. You were their dearest friend, and it must have been so painful for them to watch you carry that cross. Help us to always be good friends, to be faithful friends, to never bully, or make people sad. When we see someone struggle, help us be right there to comfort them.



***Jesus, every day we walk
with friends who need our love.***



Jesus Falls the Third Time



O Jesus, you fell one last time. Your knees must have been bleeding from scraping against the rocky hill. You knew that you were almost at Calvary. Sometimes we know things too. We know when our friends are sick, or when our parents are overworked, or when our teachers are unhappy. Help us never to run away when we know unhappy things, but to stand with the people who need us. Help us try to fix the things we can fix, so that those who are feeling weak will feel strong again. Help us lift up those who keep falling.



***Jesus, you love us so much.
How can we show you our love?***



Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments



O Jesus, we know how much it can hurt to pull a Band-Aid from a wound. When they pulled off your cloak it must have torn open the scabs on your

back from the beating the night before. They took everything from you: your friends, your mother, your only garment. To the Romans you were just another penniless Jew. If they only knew that all the heavens and earth belong to you. Help us to never forget, when we feel utterly alone, that even at that terrible moment on Calvary you loved us more than life itself.



Jesus, nothing can ever take us from your love.

Eleventh Station



Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross



O Jesus, they put nails in your wrists and in your feet so that you would die on that cross. But there is no chaining the God of Love. You allowed yourself to be pinned down so that we would fly to you. As you were nailed to the wood of the cross you permanently attached our hearts to your heart. We are yours, dear Jesus, forever. Help us to never stray from your cross, for you pinned yourself to us forever, in your invisible cloak of love. When we need to be strong, help us remember how strong you were, for us.



**Jesus, we will never forget
how much you love us.**

Twelfth
Station



Jesus Dies on the Cross



O Jesus, it is finished. Your tortured body has taken its last, painful breath. It's over. The Prince of Darkness slouches away. The skies turn dark. And yet. And yet, even in this final hour, something stirs. The earth begins to shift and rumble. There is an eclipse of the sun. Curtains begin to tear. Our hearts begin to tremble. This death, we sense, is really the birth of the world. And at this birth, all mortal flesh keep silence.



Jesus, we stay silent now too.

Thirteenth Station



Jesus Is Taken Down From the Cross

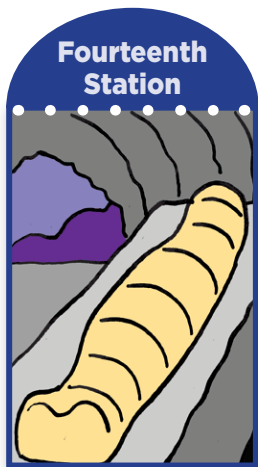


O Jesus, a holy man named Joseph of Arimathea came to take your body down from the cross. That must have taken a lot of courage.

People were still standing there, weeping. It was beginning to get dark. It must have been scary to take the nails out of your feet and wrists. He must have been strong. He must have loved you a lot. Help us never be afraid to do the hard things that must be done to make the lives of others easier. Help us always think of ways to bring your love to the world.



***Jesus, thank you for giving us
the grace to do the hard things.***



Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb



After Joseph of Arimathea took you down from the cross he wrapped you in a linen cloth and placed your body in a new tomb. Some of the women

who had followed you to Jerusalem watched where he placed you, so they could come back with spices and oil after the day of rest. Help us always watch to see where you are, Jesus, so that we too can do pleasing works of mercy for you. Help us visit the sick and do kindnesses for people every day. Help us heal the world, in memory of you.



**Jesus, we love you.
Please show us how to love
you more and more**