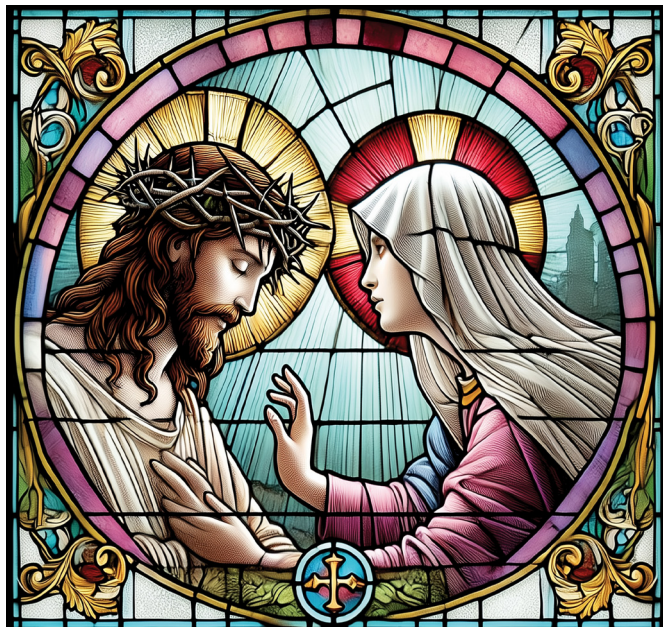


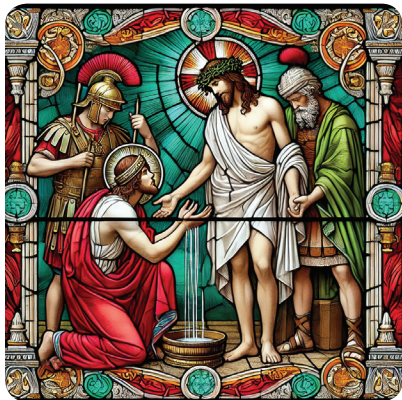
THE ROAD TO
CALVARY



MEDITATIONS ON
THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS
WITH THE SAINTS

INTRODUCTION

The Stations of the Cross draw us into the mystery of Christ's love—love that walks, stumbles, bleeds, forgives, and redeems. Through these fourteen moments, we remember not only what Jesus suffered but how he continues to walk with us in every trial. The saints, who followed Jesus most closely, left behind words that echo his journey: courage in suffering, mercy in failure, hope in darkness, and joy in surrender. Their voices guide us along the same road, teaching us that holiness is born from love in action. As you pray each station, pause to listen. Within these reflections, the saints whisper one timeless truth: the Cross is not the end, but the beginning of life.



The First Station

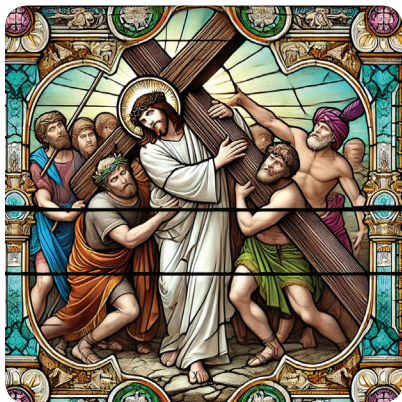
JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

"If you can't see where you are going very well, don't let go of the Cross of Christ — it will guide you by itself."

— St. Augustine of Hippo, *Sermon 218*

Jesus stands condemned though innocent. He does not protest but entrusts himself to the Father. St. Augustine reminds us that when the way ahead is dark, the Cross itself becomes our compass. In every misunderstanding or injustice, we hold to the wood of faith. God's plans unfold even in silence and apparent failure. To cling to the Cross is to cling to Christ, who transforms judgment into redemption.

Lord, when I cannot see the path, guide me by your Cross.



The Second Station

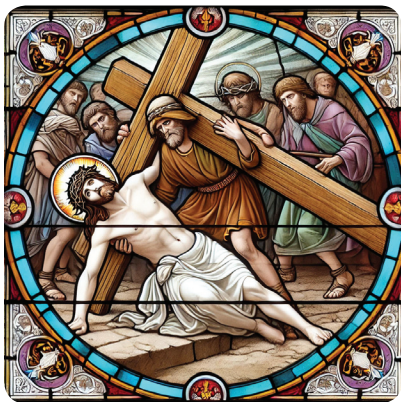
JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

“The Cross is the school of love.”

— St. Maximilian Kolbe, *Letters from Prison*

St. Maximilian Kolbe called the Cross a school because love is learned there through sacrifice. When Jesus lifts the heavy beam, he shows us that love never stays theoretical—it bears weight. Each trial, accepted in trust, becomes a lesson written in the heart. The Cross, once an instrument of shame, becomes a classroom of grace. If we let it, our own suffering can shape us into disciples who love as he loved—steadily, silently, completely.

Teach me, Lord, to learn love beneath the weight of my cross.



The Third Station

JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

"When we fall a thousand times, he lifts us if we hold fast to trust."

— St. Teresa of Ávila, *Poems and Counsels*

The first fall reveals our frailty, not our failure. St. Teresa of Ávila knew that progress in holiness comes less from strength than from persistence. Jesus' stumble teaches that even God-made-man accepted weakness for our sake. He rises to remind us that every fall can become a beginning. When we trip over our faults, grace reaches down first. In trusting mercy more than pride, we find courage to start again.

When I fall, Lord, lift me in your compassion and renew my trust.



The Fourth Station

JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

“Suffering, borne in union with Jesus Crucified,
is a treasure beyond all price.”

— St. Bernadette Soubirous, *Personal Notes*

On the crowded road, eyes meet—Mother and Son—no words, only love. St. Bernadette, who suffered silently, saw that suffering joined to Christ becomes treasure, not tragedy. Mary’s sorrow is not despair but participation; her tears mingle with his blood as an offering of trust. When we meet pain we cannot fix, we can still share it. In every act of presence, we echo Mary’s steadfast “yes.”

Mother of Sorrows, teach me to suffer with faith and quiet love.



The Fifth Station

SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS CARRY THE CROSS

“Charity cannot remain idle;
it presses us to run toward our neighbor’s needs.”

— St. Vincent de Paul, *Correspondence, Conferences, and Documents*

Simon’s reluctant service becomes salvation’s partnership. St. Vincent reminds us that love is never passive—it moves toward need. Helping Christ bear his cross changed Simon’s heart; so it is with us when we bear another’s pain. The Gospel grows wherever compassion interrupts our comfort. When love bends down to serve, it discovers Christ already waiting there.

Lord, make my love swift to serve and generous to give.



The Sixth Station

VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

"Do not think that love, in order to be genuine,
must be extraordinary. It has to be ordinary."

— St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, *A Simple Path*

One woman steps from the crowd, a simple cloth in hand. Love, St. Mother Teresa said, is found in ordinary gestures done with great care. Veronica's act could not stop the suffering, but it proclaimed compassion stronger than fear. Each small kindness offered to another wipes the face of Christ clean of neglect. Love leaves its image wherever courage meets tenderness.

Lord, let my simple acts of kindness reflect your merciful face.



The Seventh Station

JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

"Do not lose heart. What is not achieved today
will be achieved tomorrow if you persevere."

— St. Francis de Sales, *Letters of Spiritual Direction*

Again Jesus stumbles, and again He rises. St. Francis de Sales knew holiness grows through steady perseverance, not sudden perfection. The journey to Calvary—and to heaven—advances one determined step at a time. When failure or fatigue return, hope invites us to try again. The strength to continue comes not from our willpower but from the God who walks beside us.

Strengthen me, Lord, to persevere when I grow weary on the road.



The Eighth Station
**JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN
OF JERUSALEM**

"The measure of love is to love without measure."

— St. Francis of Assisi, *Admonitions 27*

Even in agony, Jesus turns outward. Love forgets itself to console others. St. Francis of Assisi lived this measureless charity, serving the leper and the poor as brothers. The Lord's words to the weeping women call us beyond sentiment to action—to a compassion that transforms both giver and receiver. To love without measure is to love like God, whose mercy knows no bounds.

Teach me, Lord, to love without measure or fear.



The Ninth Station

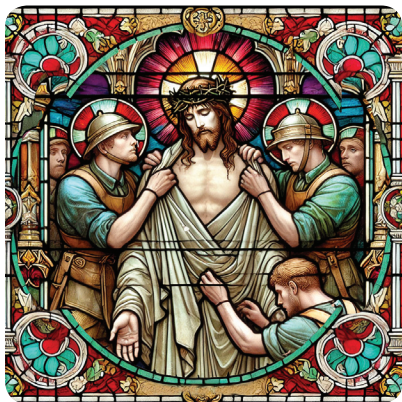
JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

"Love proves itself by deeds.
What more could Jesus do for us than die?"

— St. Thérèse of Lisieux, *Story of a Soul*

The third fall is exhaustion itself, yet love still moves. St. Thérèse of Lisieux teaches that love is not proved by feelings but by fidelity. Christ shows that true love perseveres until nothing remains to give. Each time we rise after defeat, we imitate that constancy. When our hearts feel emptied, we can still love by choosing to begin again. Love's final proof is endurance.

Lord, help me to love you in perseverance, not perfection.



The Tenth Station

JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

"To be taken away from all things,
the soul must be stripped of all things."

— St. John of the Cross, *Sayings of Light and Love* 99

The world strips Christ of dignity, yet glory shines through humiliation. St. John of the Cross knew that detachment frees the soul for God alone. Jesus stands bare before creation, His only possession love. We cling to control, but grace invites release. When all we depend on falls away, we find what cannot be taken—the peace of belonging wholly to God.

Lord, strip from me all that hides your light within me.



The Eleventh Station

JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

"The Cross is the road that leads to Heaven;
the gate through which we enter Paradise."

— St. Rose of Lima, *Letters*

The sound of nails marks the world's turning point. St. Rose of Lima found joy even in suffering because she saw the Cross as the doorway to heaven. Each hardship accepted in love becomes a step toward that gate. Pain is never sought, yet when united to Christ it is sanctified. Through his pierced hands, the road to life stands open.

Crucified Lord, make my sufferings a path that leads to you.



The Twelfth Station

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

"Look upon the Cross and you will know what love means."

— St. Catherine of Siena, *Letter T368*

At last, silence speaks. St. Catherine of Siena saw in the Crucified the dictionary of divine love—every wound a word of mercy. Jesus dies not because he must, but because he chooses to love to the end. The open arms of the Cross embrace the whole world. When we doubt God's love, we need only look up and remember: this is what love looks like.

Jesus, let your dying love teach me how to live.



The Thirteenth Station
**JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN
FROM THE CROSS**

“When you approach the Cross,
you will find not a corpse but a heart that beats with mercy.”
— St. Gertrude the Great, *Revelations Book II*

The body of Christ is lowered, but his mercy still lives. St. Gertrude saw that the Sacred Heart never ceases to beat with compassion, even in death. Mary receives her son in the arms of faith, not despair. Every act of reverence for the weary and the forgotten repeats that sacred gesture—holding love tenderly. Compassion that kneels before suffering discovers holiness there.

Lord, fill my heart with the mercy that never dies.



The Fourteenth Station

JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

"Hope means trusting that love is stronger than death."

— Pope St. John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*

The stone rolls shut, yet hope breathes still. Pope St. John Paul II taught that Christian hope is not optimism but trust—believing in the dawn while it is still dark. The tomb is quiet, but heaven stirs within it. Love has not finished speaking; resurrection is already on its way. When life feels sealed in shadow, faith whispers the same promise: love will rise again.

Lord, keep my hope alive in the darkness before your dawn.