



The Way of the Cross: Traditional and Modern Meditations

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The Way of the Cross: Traditional Meditations

adapted from Saint Alphonsus Ligouri's version

An Act of Contrition

℟. My Lord Jesus Christ, / Thou hast made this journey / to die for me with love unutterable, / and I have so many times unworthily abandoned Thee; / but now I love Thee with my whole heart, / and because I love Thee / I repent sincerely for having ever offended Thee. / Pardon me, my God, / and permit me to accompany Thee / on this journey. / Thou goest to die for love of me; / I wish also, my beloved Redeemer, / to die for love of Thee. / My Jesus, I will live and die / always united to Thee.

*Stabat Mater dolorosa
Juxta crucem lacrymosa
Dum pendebat Filius.*

At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful Mother weeping
Close to Jesus to the last.

THE FIRST STATION

Jesus is Condemned to Death

V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

V. Consider that Jesus, after having been scourged and crowned with thorns, was unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the cross.

(silence)

R. **My adorable Jesus, / it was not Pilate, / no, it was my sins, that condemned Thee to die. / I beseech Thee, / by the merits of this sorrowful journey, / to assist my soul in its journey toward eternity. / I love Thee, my beloved Jesus; / I love Thee more than myself; / I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Cujus animam gementem
Contristatam, et dolentem,
Pertransivit gladius.*

Through her heart, His sorrow sharing
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword had passed.

THE SECOND STATION

Jesus is Made to Bear His Cross

Y. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

Y. Consider that Jesus, in making this journey with the cross on His shoulders, thought of us, and offered for us, to His Father, the death that He was about to undergo.

(silence)

R. **My most beloved Jesus, / I embrace all the tribulations / that Thou hast destined for me until death. / I beseech Thee, / by the merits of the pain Thou didst suffer / in carrying Thy cross, / to give me the necessary help / to carry mine with perfect patience and resignation. / I love Thee, / Jesus, my love, / I repent of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always, / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater Unigeniti.*

Oh, how sad and sore distresséd,
Was that Mother highly blesséd
Of the sole-begotten One!

THE THIRD STATION

Jesus Falls the First Time

V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

V. Consider this first fall of Jesus under His cross. His flesh was torn by the scourges, His head crowned with thorns, and He had lost a great quantity of blood. He was so weakened that He could scarcely walk, and yet He had to carry this great load upon His shoulders. The soldiers struck Him rudely, and thus He fell several times in His journey.

(silence)

R. **My beloved Jesus, / it is not the weight of the cross, / but of my sins, which has made Thee suffer so much pain. / Ah, by the merits of this first fall, / deliver me from the misfortune of falling into mortal sin. / I love Thee, O my Jesus, / with my whole heart; / I repent of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Quae moerebat, et dolebat,
Pia Mater, dum videbat
Nati poenas inclyti.*

Christ above in torment hangs,
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying, glorious Son.

THE FOURTH STATION

Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother

V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

V. Consider the meeting of the Son and the Mother, which took place on this journey. Jesus and Mary looked at each other, and their looks became as so many arrows to wound those hearts which loved each other so tenderly.

(silence)

R. **My most loving Jesus, / by the sorrow Thou didst experience in this meeting, / grant me the grace / of a truly devoted love for Thy most holy Mother. / And thou, my Queen, / who wast overwhelmed with sorrow, / obtain for me by thy intercession / a continual and tender remembrance of the Passion of thy Son. / I love Thee, Jesus, my love; / I repent of ever having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always, / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Quis est homo qui non fleret,
Matrem Christi si videret
In tanto supplicio?*

Is there one who would not weep
Whelmed in miseries so deep
Christ's dear Mother to behold?

THE FIFTH STATION

Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus to Carry His Cross

Y. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

Y. Consider that His enemies, seeing that at each step Jesus, from weakness, was on the point of expiring, and fearing that He would die on the way when they wished Him to die the ignominious death of the cross, constrained Simon the Cyrenian to carry the cross behind Our Lord.

(silence)

R. **My most sweet Jesus, / I will not refuse the cross as the Cyrenian did; / I accept it, / I embrace it. / I accept in particular / the death that Thou hast destined for me / with all the pains which may accompany it; / I unite it to Thy death, / I offer it to Thee. / Thou has died for love of me, / I will die for love of Thee, / and to please Thee. / Help me by Thy grace. / I love Thee, Jesus, my love; / I repent of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always, / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Quis non posset contristari,
Christi Matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum Filio?*

Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?

THE SIXTH STATION

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

V. Consider that the holy woman Veronica, seeing Jesus so afflicted, and His face bathed in sweat and blood, presented Him with a towel with which He wiped His adorable face, leaving on it the impression of His holy countenance.

(silence)

R. **My most beloved Jesus, / Thy face was beautiful before, / but in this journey it has lost all its beauty, / and wounds and blood have disfigured it. / Alas! my soul also was once beautiful, / when it received Thy grace in Baptism; / but I have disfigured it since by my sins. / Thou alone, my Redeemer, / canst restore it to its former beauty. / Do this by Thy Passion, O Jesus. / I repent of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always, / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Pro peccatis suae gentis
Vidit Jesum in tormentis,
Et flagellis subditum.*

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with bloody scourges rent.

THE SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Falls the Second Time

Y. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

Y. Consider the second fall of Jesus under the cross—a fall which renews the pain of all the wounds of the head and members of our afflicted Lord.

(silence)

R. **My most gentle Jesus, / how many times Thou hast pardoned me, / and how many times have I fallen again, / and begun again to offend Thee! / Oh, by the merits of this new fall, / give me the necessary helps / to persevere in Thy grace until death. / Grant that in all temptations which assail me / I may always commend myself to Thee. / I love Thee, Jesus, my love, / with my whole heart; / I repent of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Vidit suum dulcem Natum</i> | For the sins of His own nation |
| <i>Moriendo desolatum</i> | Saw Him hang in desolation |
| <i>Dum emisit spiritum.</i> | Till His spirit forth He sent. |

THE EIGHTH STATION

Jesus Speaks to the Daughters of Jerusalem

Y. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

Y. Consider that those women wept with compassion at seeing Jesus in so pitiable a state, streaming with blood, as He walked along. But Jesus said to them, “Weep not for Me but for your children.”

(silence)

R. **My Jesus, laden with sorrows, / I weep for the offenses that I have committed against Thee, / because of the pains which they have deserved, / and still more because of the displeasure / which they have caused Thee, / Who hast loved me so much. / It is Thy love, / more than the fear of hell, / which causes me to weep for my sins. / My Jesus, I love Thee more than myself; / I repent of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Eia Mater, fons amoris,
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.*

O Thou Mother! fount of love,
Touch my spirit from above.
Make my heart with thine accord.

THE NINTH STATION

Jesus Falls the Third Time

Y. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

Y. Consider the third fall of Jesus Christ. His weakness was extreme, and the cruelty of His executioners excessive, who tried to hasten His steps when He had scarcely strength to move.

(silence)

R. **Ah, my outraged Jesus, / by the merits of the weakness Thou didst suffer / in going to Calvary, / give me strength / sufficient to conquer all human respect / and all my wicked passions, / which have led me to despise Thy friendship. / I love Thee, Jesus, my love, with my whole heart; / I repent of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

Fac ut ardeat cor meum

In amando Christum Deum

Ut sibi complaceam.

Make me feel as thou hast felt:

Make my soul to glow and melt

With the love of Christ, my Lord.

THE TENTH STATION

Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

Y. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

Y. Consider the violence with which the executioners stripped Jesus. His inner garments adhered to His torn flesh and they dragged them off so roughly that the skin came with them.

(silence)

R. **My innocent Jesus, / by the merits of the torment which Thou hast felt, / help me to strip myself of all affection to things of earth, / in order that I may place all my love in Thee, / Who art so worthy of my love. / I love Thee, O Jesus, with my whole heart: / I repent of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifigi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide.*

Holy Mother! pierce me through.
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified.

THE ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

V. Consider that Jesus, after being thrown on the cross, extended His hands, and offered to His eternal Father the sacrifice of His life for our salvation. These barbarians fastened Him with nails; and then, raising the cross, left Him to die with anguish on this infamous gibbet.

(silence)

R. **My Jesus, / nail my heart loaded with contempt / to Thy feet, / that it may ever remain there to love Thee, / and never quit Thee again. / I love Thee more than myself; / I repent of having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Tui nati vulnerati,
Tam dignati pro me pati,
Poenas mecum divide.*

Let me share with thee His pain,
Who for all our sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died.

THE TWELFTH STATION

Jesus Dies on the Cross

NOTE: Traditionally, penitents kneel throughout this Station.

Y. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

Y. Consider how Jesus, after three hours of agony on the cross, consumed at length with anguish, abandons Himself to the weight of His body, bows His head, and dies.

(silence)

R. **O my dying Jesus, / I kiss devoutly the cross / on which Thou didst die for love of me. / I have merited by my sins to die a miserable death, / but Thy death is my hope. / Ah, by the merits of Thy death, / give me grace to die, / embracing Thy feet / and burning with love of Thee. / I commit my soul into Thy hands. / I love Thee with my whole heart; / I repent of ever having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Fac me tecum pie flere,
Crucifixo condolere,
Donec ego vixero.*

Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him Who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live.

THE THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

Y. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

Y. Consider that, our Lord having expired, two of His disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, took Him down from the cross, and placed Him in the arms of His afflicted Mother, who received Him with unutterable tenderness, and pressed Him to her bosom.

(silence)

R. **O Mother of Sorrow, / for the love of this thy Son, / accept me for thy servant / and pray to Him for me. / And Thou, my Redeemer, / since Thou hast died for me, / permit me to love Thee; / for I wish but to love Thee, my Jesus, / and I repent of ever having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Juxta crucem tecum stare,
Et me tibi sociare
In planctu desidero.*

By the cross with thee to stay,
There with thee to weep and pray,
Is all I ask of thee to give.

THE FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Placed in the Sepulchre

Y. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. **Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.**

Y. Consider that the disciples carried the body of Jesus to bury it, accompanied by His holy Mother, who arranged it in the sepulchre with her own hands. They then closed the tomb and all withdrew.

(silence)

R. **Ah, my buried Jesus, / I kiss the stone that encloses Thee. / But Thou didst rise again on the third day. / I beseech Thee, by Thy resurrection, / make me rise glorious with Thee at the last day, / to be always united with Thee in heaven, / to praise Thee and love Thee forever. / I love Thee, and I repent of ever having offended Thee. / Never permit me to offend Thee again. / Grant that I may love Thee always; / and then do with me what Thou wilt.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

*Virgo virginum praeclara,
Mihi jam non sis amara;
Fac me tecum plangere.*

Virgin of all virgins best!
Listen to my fond request:
Let me share thy grief divine.



“Faith is a gift of God which enables us to know and love Him. Faith is a way of knowing, just as reason is. But living in faith is not possible unless there is action on our part. Through the help of the Holy Spirit, we are able to make a decision to respond to divine Revelation, and to follow through in living out our response.”

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, 38.

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