

# Stations of the Cross



good friday

**AT CROSSROADS**

**APRIL 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2026**

# WELCOME

The Stations of the Cross began as pilgrims retraced Jesus' final steps in Jerusalem up to the hill where he was crucified. Wanting to share that practice and experience with people who couldn't make the trip to Jerusalem, they created local stations of meditation that became in itself a tradition. You can find this tradition on the inside of many churches still today.

This journey to the cross is not only a meditation of Jesus accomplishing what he came to do - the redemption of humanity through his own willful sacrifice - but it's also a contemplation of Jesus silently participating in some of the worst aspects of being human. We see him being tempted to give up. Being betrayed by a friend. Being convicted in an unjust political system. Physical pain. Mockery. Public humiliation. Broken family relationships. And one of our greatest fears... having to die. These are all aspects of human life that he was not insulated from. In fact on the cross he quotes King David saying "My God My God, Why have you forsaken me?"... as if to say "Why is it like this?" he was one who was not separate from our own suffering.

Many of us feel the weight of anxiety and fear as we journey through the current world. We are told many narratives of how it is and what is to come. During this season of Lent, we as a community look to the life and teachings of Jesus. We think that the one who was in the midst of such political and empirical turmoil, who spoke the words “Be not afraid”... and “Come to me all you are weary and carrying a heavy load, for I will give you rest”... is someone who can illuminate our desperate viewpoint.

These stations are a cross-section of elements, ideas, and objects from Jesus’ journey to the cross. As you work through these stations, may you see that we are not troubled guests in this world... that we are not forsaken... and that the good news of this season was expressed best by Jesus when he said...

*“I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

**Reflections:**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their reflections on the text above.

*I*



JESUS IS TEMPTED

***Verse:***

*“Then He said to them, ‘My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me’.”*

**Matthew 26:38**

***Meditation:***

Jesus is compelled to desperate prayer.

Think of Jesus’ complete honesty in prayer.

Jesus calls together his friends in his most desperate time of prayer. What drives you to such a desperate time of prayer?

***Respond:***

Take a couple of minutes now, and express an authentic and vulnerable prayer to God... express your desperation, express your readiness, express your willingness, to be honest with yourself and with God, about the condition of your heart and soul.

***Reflection:***

## II



### **Verse:**

*“And Jesus said to him, ‘Friend, do what you have come for.’ Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him.”*

**Matthew 26:50**

### **Meditation:**

The son of God was betrayed by a friend. The son of God was betrayed by his creation.

### **Respond:**

Take a moment to pray a prayer of confession for the unfaithfulness and hypocrisy in our souls. “Lord, I confess the betrayal, the unfaithfulness, and the hypocrisy which lives in our hearts. Lord, I desire to walk in integrity and I long for your guidance, strength, and grace.”

### **Reflection:**

### *III*



*JESUS IS CONDEMNED*

#### ***Verse:***

*“While I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me; but this hour and the power of darkness are yours.”*

**Luke 22:53**

#### ***Meditation:***

Jesus submits quietly and peacefully.

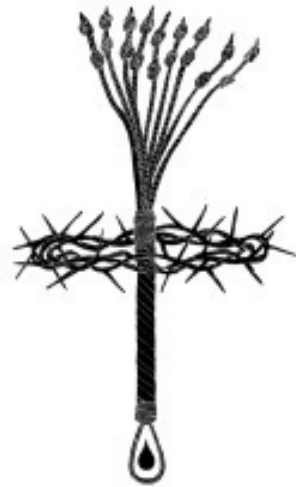
Jesus is condemned by religious leaders. What was their fear?

#### ***Respond:***

Take time now to pray: Lord, reveal to me my self-indulgent appetite that is at war within me, fighting against my submission to Your Will. Show me grace as I pursue your greater purposes.

#### ***Reflection:***

*IV*



*JESUS IS MOCKED*

***Verse:***

“Jesus answered him, ‘If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?’”

**John 18:23**

***Meditation:***

What brings on our mockery?

These soldiers brutalize Jesus. Possibly their common response to Jewish prisoners. Imagine the Son of God being brutalized by men.

***Respond:***

Let's together voice a prayer of confession:

Lord forgive me for the ways I have diluted your majesty. I turn my heart to You and worship all your greatness.

***Reflection:***

V



JESUS IS GIVEN HIS CROSS

**Verse:**

*“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.”*

**John 3:14-15**

***Meditation:***

The cross was a public murder device for criminals. This is how Jesus was killed. Imagine carrying the wood of the cross... up the hill to your eventual slow and public death.

***Respond:***

This is a time for you to confess our sins. Do you bear guilt? Do you carry shame? Take time to honestly confess your sins and lay them down before the cross.

***Reflection:***

**Verse:**

*"... unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit."*

**John 12:24**

**Meditation:**

Jesus' humanity and his ever-decreasing strength show as he moves towards his public death. Imagine Jesus experiencing weakness and distress in a public setting with nowhere to hide. While many desert him, the women who have supported Jesus follow him all the way to the cross.

**Respond:**

If you are able, place yourself in a posture of surrender as you pray a prayer of confession. Confess your struggles, idols, and your falls, as you pray and humble your heart before the Father. Ask for renewed endurance to follow Him.

**Reflection:**

VII



SIMON CARRIES JESUS' CROSS

**Verse:**

*"... If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."*

**Matthew 16:24**

**Meditation:**

Imagine being pulled from the crowd and carrying this man's device of death. What is it like to walk alongside Jesus in this?

**Respond:**

Take time now to contemplate your life, and the areas in which you can increase in your love for others. Father, remind me of the immense shame and suffering taken for me on the cross, and reveal to me the life of love, grace, compassion, and obedience the cross requires of sec.

**Reflection:**

## VIII



JESUS IS STRIPPED

### **Verse:**

*“For if men do these things when the tree is green,  
what will happen when it is dry?”*

**Luke 23:31**

### **Meditation:**

Romans crucified criminals naked.

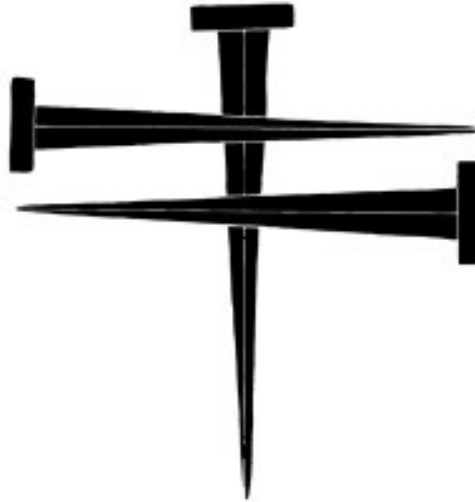
Reflect on the shame of nakedness in the Garden of Eden. And the shame of nakedness in this moment.

### **Respond:**

Visualize yourself in the crowd, seeing the sacrifice Jesus is making. Try to imagine that somehow, you're able to understand the Gospel at this very moment. That He's doing this for you. Remember this verse: "For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, scorning its shame..." Hebrews 12:2

### **Reflection:**

*IX*



*JESUS IS NAILED*

***Verse:***

“ . . . He cried out with a loud voice, saying, . . . “My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?”

**Matthew 27:46**

***Meditation***

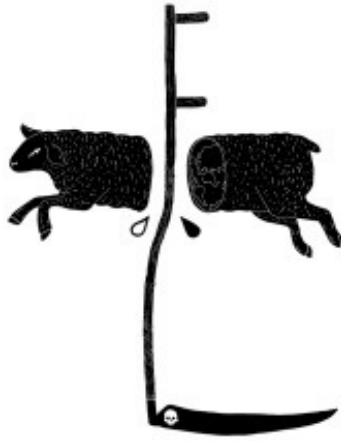
The long physical pain of crucifixion was excruciating. In fact, the word excruciating is derived from crucifixion.

***Respond:***

Sit in silence for a few moments and reflect on the magnitude of his sacrifice, and what that means for you. His atonement means your forgiveness.

***Reflection:***

X



JESUS DIES'

***Verse:***

*“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”*

**John 15:13**

***Meditation:***

Jesus died. He died. Our greatest fear is death. And he was not insulated from that fear. His physical body stopped working. His friends watched him die.

***Respond:***

As we pray, with grateful hearts for His sacrifice, let us pray this to Him, “Lord, forgive us of our prejudices and preferences that have divided us from loving one another. We choose unity over rivalry, Trust instead of suspicion, and Obedience over self-preoccupation. Thank you for your sacrificial love on the cross, and the example you’ve left for me to follow.

***Reflection:***