

1: Jesus is Condemned to Die

Jesus was captured at night, taken away by soldiers, stripped of his garments, tortured, crowned with sharp thorns and now faces death on a cross.

We pray: Jesus, what a terrible injustice to see you condemned to death. Give us the grace to see, respect and love you in all people. Change our hearts that we may see with new eyes those we might otherwise condemn.



2: Jesus Takes Up His Cross

Jesus was led away carrying the cross by himself. In the way he carries it, he transforms the cross from a symbol of condemnation into one of liberation.

We pray: May we see your presence Lord in all the burdens we carry today. May we be more aware of the crosses that others bear and make time to ease their burden.



3: Jesus Falls for the First Time

Jesus falls. Here Jesus shows us that being heroic does not mean staying on our feet at all costs. Being heroic means getting up again after falling.

We pray: Jesus, it's easy to see your image in saints. Help us to see you in the sinners too. Give us a compassionate heart.



4: Jesus Meets his Mother

When Jesus and his mother meet they just look at each other – words cannot express how they feel. His mother's pain must have hurt him more than the raw pain of his own wounds.

We pray: Jesus, give us the courage to bring the deep and enduring love you shared with your mother into the deepest recesses of our homes and hearts.



5: Simon Helps Jesus

In this moment of need Simon lent his shoulders to one whose own had given out. He took on himself the cross, which Jesus could no longer carry.

We pray: Lord, help us to grasp our opportunities to be a Simon in our world, to have the generosity to help. Lord, may we have the humility to accept all the Simons who reach out to help us in our moments of need.



6: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Veronica was so moved by the sight of Jesus suffering that she courageously moved out from the crowd to wipe the blood and sweat from his face with a towel.

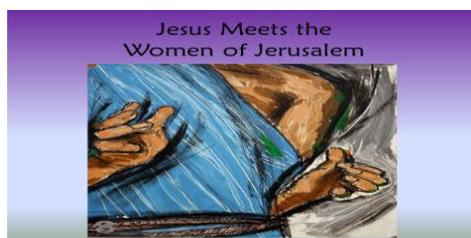
We pray: Jesus, give us the courage of Veronica so that we may have the faith to continue to build your Church as a visible sign of your love and compassion.



7: Jesus Falls for the Second Time

Stretched to breaking point by his awful scourging, bowed under the weight of the cross, worn out by the abandonment of his friends, Jesus stumbles again.

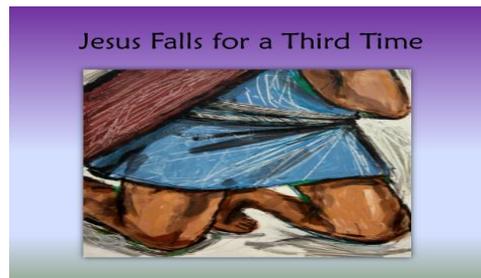
We pray: Jesus, from deep within yourself, you found the courage and strength to get up once again and continue the journey. Give us your strength to keep going even when hope is dim.



8: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

The women of Jerusalem wept when they saw how Jesus suffered. Jesus recognised their distress, he broke his silence for the first time, spoke to them and said, ‘Daughters of Jerusalem do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children’.

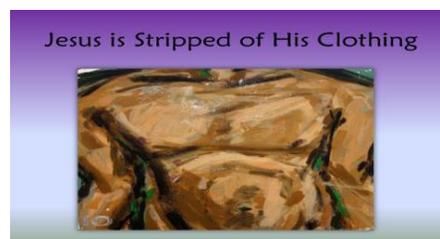
We pray; Lord, open our hearts to the suffering of all people in our world. Give us the courage to challenge the systems that place intolerable burdens on them and the compassion to support them.



9: Jesus Falls for a Third Time

Jesus falls for a third time. Lying on the ground, Jesus must decide – does he get up once more or does he just stop and give up? We see him rise again, continue on his journey.

We pray: Lord, we pray that when our strength fails, when our hope fades that we will put our trust in you. In turn may we bring your love and comfort to another, in their moment of depression or despair.



10: Jesus is Stripped of His Clothing

As the clothes were ripped from Jesus, he was stripped of his dignity in front of an irreverent mob. He surrenders everything in order to ransom all.

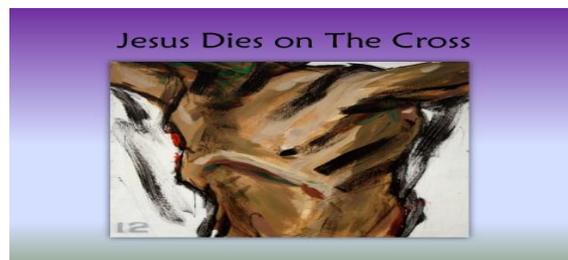
We pray: Forgive us Lord for being an irreverent mob prying into people's lives. May we respect the dignity of others and leave judgement to God. Let us see the good in those around us and so enable them to reach their full potential.



11: Jesus is Nailed to The Cross

Huge iron nails are hammered through his wrists and through his ankles. Through the hand that has wiped blindness from the eyes, and opened the seal of deafness, the hand that touched a heart and cured a leper; the carpenter's hand is joined to the wood again.

We pray: Jesus, we pray for all victims of violence; those who suffer it and those who inflict it. May victims of cruelty and oppression know that you are always with them.



12: Jesus Dies on The Cross

As the life of Jesus ebbs away his words are not of condemnation or of pity for himself, but of forgiveness; 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do'.

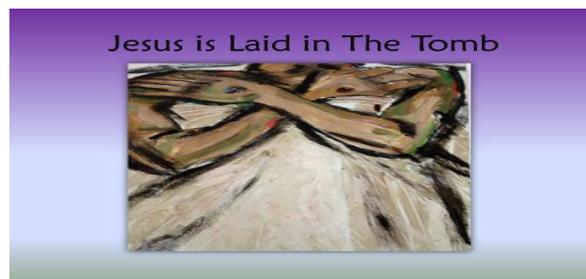
We pray: Let us stand with those who watched and prayed in silence while Jesus breathed his last. Lord! Let our love and forgiveness speak your praise.



13: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

Now Mary takes the broken body of her Son in her arms. In her grief, she remembers the words of her son, over the bread, ‘this is my body, broken, for you.’

We pray: Help us Lord to accept the partings that must come. Help us to offer our loved ones back to you as Mary offered her son. Help us to trust in you, the Lord of the living and the dead.



14: Jesus is Laid in The Tomb

That night his body lay in the dark earth of the world, a seed dying, in the winter of all spirits. All those who had loved him felt emptied and exhausted. There seemed no longer any sense or purpose in anything. But at least no more harm could come to him. They closed the tomb and left.

We pray: Jesus, each day you put before us life or death. Help us always to choose life. We pray for all those we have known who have died, and for those who have no one to pray for them. We ask for the gift of faith when we are faced with the darkness of the tomb and our own death approaches. May we have eyes to see the promise of new life that the darkness can hold.

(The prayers and images are adaptations of ‘Stations of the Cross for our Time’ by Maeve Mahon)