

THE WAY OF THE CROSS
by St. Alphonso Maria Liguori

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.
(John 3:16, Isaiah 53:7, John 18:33-John 19:1-16)

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

SECOND STATION

Jesus is Made to Bear His Cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...
(Isaiah 53:4-6, Matthew 27:31, Luke 9:23)

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. 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.

THIRD STATION

Jesus Falls for the First Time

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...
(Isaiah 53:6)

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.

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.

FOURTH STATION

Jesus Meets His Mother

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...
(John 19:25-27, John 16:22)

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.

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.

FIFTH STATION

Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...
(Matthew 27:30-32, Matthew 25:40, Galatians 6:2)

Consider that the Jews 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.

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,

SIXTH STATION

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...
(Isaiah 52:14, John 14:9)

Consider that the holy woman named 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.

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.

SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Falls a Second Time

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

(Hebrews 4:15)

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.

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.

EIGHTH STATION

Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

(Luke 23:27-31, John 15:6)

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."

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.

NINTH STATION

Jesus Falls the Third Time

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

(Philippians 2:5-7, Luke 14:11)

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.

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.

TENTH STATION

Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

(John 19:23-25, Luke 14:33)

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. Compassionate your Saviour thus cruelly treated, and say to Him:

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.

ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

(Psalm 22:17-18, Zechariah 12:10, Luke 23:33)

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.

My Jesus, loaded with contempt, nail my heart 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.

TWELFTH STATION

Jesus Dies on the Cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

(Luke 23:46, John 19:30, Philippians 2:8-9)

Consider how thy 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.

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.

THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

(Luke 23:50-53, John 19:31-37, Luke 24:26)

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.

O Mother of Sorrow, for the love of this 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 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

FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Laid in His Tomb

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

(Luke 23:50-56, John 19:38-42, John 12:24-25, Romans 6:10-11)

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.

Oh, my buried Jesus, I kiss the stone that encloses Thee. But Thou didst rise again 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; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

PRAYERS IN HONOR OF THE PASSION

O my Lord Jesus, in honor of Thy Passion and death, I offer the following prayers:

PRAYERS FOR THE INTENTIONS OF THE HOLY FATHER

O, my Lord Jesus, I offer the following prayers as my petition for this month's intentions of our Holy Father, the Pope:

CLOSING PRAYER TO JESUS CHRIST CRUCIFIED

Behold, O kind and most sweet Jesus, I cast myself on my knees in Thy sight, and with the most fervent desire of my soul, I pray and beg Thee to impress upon my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, with true repentance for my sins, and a firm desire of amendment, while with deep affection and grief of soul I contemplate Thy five most precious Wounds, having before my eyes that which David spoke in prophecy: "They pierced My hands and My feet; they have numbered all My bones." God has loved us from all eternity. So He says: "Remember I first loved you. You had not come to be, nor did the world yet exist, but I loved you already. From all eternity I have loved you."