

The Way of the Cross

St. Alphonsus Ligouri

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Preparatory Prayer

(to be said kneeling before the altar)

PRIEST AND PEOPLE – My Lord, Jesus Christ, / You have made this journey to die for me with unspeakable love; / and I have so many times ungratefully abandoned You. / But now I love you with all my heart; / and, because I love You, I am sincerely sorry for ever having offended You. / Pardon me, my God, and permit me to accompany You on this journey. / You go to die for love of me; / I want, my beloved Redeemer, to die for love of You. / My Jesus, I will live and die always united to You.

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

The First Station

Pilate condemns Jesus to die

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how Jesus Christ, after being scourged and crowned with thorns, was unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the cross. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My adorable Jesus, / it was not Pilate; / no, it was my sins that condemned You to die. / I beseech You,

by the merit of this sorrowful journey, /
to assist my soul on its journey to
eternity. / I love You, my beloved Jesus; /
I love You more than I love myself. / With
all my heart I repent of ever having
offended You. / Never let me be
separated from You again. / Grant that I
may love you always; and then do with
me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and
Glory be.)

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

The Second Station

Jesus accepts His cross

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we
praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross,
You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider Jesus as He walked
this road with the cross on His shoulders,
thinking of us, and offering to His Father,
in our behalf, the death He was about to
suffer. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My most beloved Jesus, / I
embrace all the sufferings You have
destined for me until death. / I beg You,
by all You suffered in carrying Your cross,
/ to help me carry mine with Your perfect
peace and resignation. / I love You, Jesus,
my love; / I repent of ever having
offended You. / Never let me separate
myself from You again. / Grant that I may
love You always; and then do with me as
You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and
Glory be.)

*O, how sad and sore distressed
Was that Mother highly blessed
Of the sole Begotten One.*

The Third Station

Jesus falls the first time

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we
praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross,
You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider the first fall of Jesus.
Loss of blood from the scourging and
crowning with thorns had so weakened
Him that he could hardly walk; and yet
He had to carry that great load upon His
shoulders. As the soldiers struck Him
cruelly, He fell several times under the
heavy cross. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My beloved Jesus, / it was not
the weight of the cross / but the weight
of my sins which made You suffer so
much. / By the merits of this first fall, /
save me from falling into mortal sin. / I
love You, O my Jesus, with all my heart; /
I am sorry that I have offended You. /
May I never offend You again. / Grant
that I may love You always; and then do
with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and
Glory be.)

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

The Fourth Station

Jesus meets His afflicted Mother

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how the Son met His Mother on His way to Calvary. Jesus and Mary gazed at each other and their looks became as so many arrows to wound those hearts which loved each other so tenderly. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My most loving Jesus, / by the pain You suffered in this meeting / grant me the grace of being truly devoted to Your most holy Mother. / And, you, my Queen, who was overwhelmed with sorrow, / obtain for me by your prayers / a tender and a lasting remembrance of the passion of your divine Son. / I love You, Jesus, my Love, above all things. / I repent of ever having offended You. / Never allow me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be.)

*Is there one who would not weep,
'whelmed in miseries so deep
Christ's dear Mother to behold.*

The Fifth Station

Simon helps carry the cross

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross,
You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how weak and weary
Jesus was. At each step He was at the
point of expiring. Fearing that He would
die on the way when they wished Him to
die the infamous death of the cross, they
forced Simon of Cyrene to help carry the
cross after Our Lord. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My beloved Jesus, / I will not
refuse the cross as Simon did: / I accept
and embrace it. / I accept in particular
the death that is destined for me / with
all the pains that may accompany it. / I
unite it to Your death / and I offer it to
You. / You have died for love of me; / I
will die for love of You and to please You.
/ Help me by Your grace. / I love You,
Jesus, my Love; / I repent of ever having
offended You. / Never let me offend You
again. / Grant that I may love You always;
and then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and
Glory be.)

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

The Sixth Station

Veronica offers her veil to Jesus

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we
praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross,
You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider the compassion of the
holy woman, Veronica. Seeing Jesus in
such distress, His face bathed in sweat

and blood, she presented Him with her veil. Jesus wiped His face, and left upon the cloth the image of His sacred countenance. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My beloved Jesus, / Your face was beautiful before You began this journey; / but, now, it no longer appears beautiful / and is disfigured with wounds and blood. / Alas, my soul also was once beautiful / when it received Your grace in Baptism; / but I have since then disfigured it with my sins. / You alone, my Redeemer, can restore it to its former beauty. / Do this by the merits of Your passion; and then do with me as You will. (Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be.)

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

The Seventh Station

Jesus falls the second time

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how the second fall of Jesus under His cross renews the pain in all the wounds of the head and members of our afflicted Lord. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My most gentle Jesus, / how many times You have forgiven me; / and how many times I have fallen again and begun again to offend You! / By the merits of this second fall, / give me the grace to persevere in Your love until

death. / Grant, that in all my temptations,
I may always have recourse to You. / I
love You, Jesus, my Love, with all my
heart; / I am sorry that I have offended
You. / Never let me offend You again. /
Grant that I may love You always; and
then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and
Glory be.)

*For the sins of His own nation
Saw Him hang in desolation
Till His spirit forth He sent.*

The Eighth Station

Jesus speaks to the women

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we
praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross,
You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how the women wept
with compassion seeing Jesus so
distressed and dripping with blood as He
walked along. Jesus said to them, “Weep
not so much for me, but rather for your
children.” (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My Jesus, laden with sorrows, /
I weep for the sins which I have
committed against You / because of the
punishment I deserve for them; / and,
still more, because of the displeasure
they have caused You / who have loved
me with an infinite love. / It is Your love,
more than the fear of hell, / which makes
me weep for my sins. / My Jesus, I love
You more than myself; / I am sorry that I
have offended You. / Never allow me to
offend You again. / Grant that I may love

You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be.)

*O sweet Mother! Fount of Love,
Touch my spirit from above
Make my heart with yours accord.*

The Ninth Station

Jesus falls the third time

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how Jesus fell for the third time. He was extremely weak and the cruelty of His executioners was excessive; they tried to hasten His steps though He hardly had strength to move. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My outraged Jesus, / by the weakness You suffered in going to Calvary, / give me enough strength to overcome all human respect / and all my evil passions which have led me to despise Your friendship. / I love You, Jesus, my Love, with all my heart; / I am sorry for ever having offended You. / Never permit me to offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be.)

*Make me feel as You have felt
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ, my Lord.*

The Tenth Station

Jesus is stripped of His garments

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how Jesus was violently stripped of His clothes by His executioners. The inner garments adhered to His lacerated flesh and soldiers tore them off so roughly that the skin came with them. Have pity for your Savior so cruelly treated and tell Him: (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My innocent Jesus, / by the torment You suffered in being stripped of Your garments, / help me to strip myself of all attachment for the things of earth / that I may place all my love in You who are so worthy of my love. / I love You, O Jesus, with all my heart; / I am sorry for ever having offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be.)

*Holy Mother, pierce me through
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Savior crucified.*

The Eleventh Station

Jesus is nailed to the cross

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross,
You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider Jesus, thrown down
upon the cross, He stretched out His
arms and offered to His eternal Father
the sacrifice of His life for our salvation.
He nailed His hands and feet, and then,
raising the cross, left Him to die in
anguish. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My despised Jesus, / nail my
heart to the cross / that it may always
remain there to love You and never leave
You again. / I love You more than myself;
/ I am sorry for ever having offended
You. / Never permit me to offend You
again. / Grant that I may love You always;
and then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and
Glory be.)

*Let me share with you His pain,
Who for all our sins was slain,
Who for me in torment died.*

The Twelfth Station

Jesus dies upon the cross

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we
praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross,
You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how your Jesus, after
three hours of agony on the cross, is
finally overwhelmed with suffering and,
abandoning Himself to the weight of His
body, bows His head and dies. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – My dying Jesus, / I devoutly
kiss the cross on which You would die for

love of me. / I deserve, because of my sins, to die a terrible death; / but Your death is my hope. / By the merits of Your death, / give me the grace to die embracing Your feet and burning with love for You. / I yield my soul into Your hands. / I love You with my whole heart. / I am sorry that I have offended You. / Never let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be.)

*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

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how, after our Lord had died, He was taken down from the cross by two of His disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, and placed in the arms of His afflicted Mother. She received Him with unutterable tenderness and pressed Him close to her bosom. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – O Mother of Sorrows, / for the love of your Son, / accept me as your servant and pray to Him for me. / And You, my Redeemer, since You have died for me, / allow me to love You, / for I desire only You and nothing more. / I love You, Jesus, my Love, / and I am sorry that I have offended You. / Never

let me offend You again. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be.)

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

The Fourteenth Station

Jesus is placed in the sepulcher

PRIEST – We adore You, O Christ, and we praise you. (Genuflect)

PEOPLE – Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world. (Rise)

PRIEST – Consider how the disciples carried the body of Jesus to its burial, while His holy Mother went with them and arranged it in the sepulcher with her own hands. They then closed the tomb and all departed. (Kneel)

PEOPLE – Oh, my buried Jesus, / I kiss the stone that closes You in. / But You gloriously did rise again on the third day. / I beg You by Your resurrection that I may be raised gloriously on the last day, / to be united with You in heaven, to praise You and love You forever. / I love You, Jesus, and I repent of ever having offended You. / Grant that I may love You always; and then do with me as You will.

(Optional Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be.)

*Virgin of all virgins blest!
Listen to my fond request:
Let me share your grief divine.*

Prayer to Jesus Christ Crucified

My good and dear Jesus, I kneel before you, asking you most earnestly to engrave upon my heart a deep and lively faith, hope, and charity, with true repentance for my sins, and a firm resolve to make amends.

As I reflect upon you five wounds, and dwell upon them with deep compassion and grief, I recall, good Jesus, the words the Prophet David spoke long ago concerning yourself:

“They pierced My hands and My feet; they have numbered all My bones.”