

Stations of the Cross for Children and Families

Adapted from the Book of Occasional Services 2018

Opening Devotions

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.** Lord, have mercy.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

We rejoice in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ: **In Christ is our salvation, our life and resurrection.**

Let us pray. Mercifully help us, O God of our salvation, that we may joyfully remember these mighty acts, through which you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The procession goes to the First Station.

First Station: Jesus is condemned to death

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests, with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation; and they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him to Pilate. And they all condemned him and said, "He deserves to die." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Pavement. Then he handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

God did not spare his own Son: **But delivered him up for us all.**

Let us pray. Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy before he first suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. **Amen.**

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, **Have mercy upon us.**

Second Station: Jesus takes up his Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus went out, carrying his own cross, to the place called Golgotha. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Like a lamb he was led to his death; and like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he did not open his mouth. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.

The Lord has laid on him the sins of us all: **For the transgression of my people he was stricken.**

Let us pray. Almighty God, whose beloved Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption: Give us courage to take up our cross and follow him; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, **Have mercy upon us.**

Third Station: The Cross is laid on Simon of Cyrene

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

As they led Jesus away, they came upon a man from Cyrene, named Simon, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus. "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me: **Cannot be my disciple.**

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; that with wisdom, patience, and courage, they may minister in his Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy; for the love of him who laid down his life for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, **Have mercy upon us.**

Fourth Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments and put on the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

When they came to the place called Golgotha, they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And they divided his garments among them by casting lots. This was to fulfill the scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing." And there they crucified him; and with him they crucified two criminals, one on the right, the other on the left, and Jesus between them. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, "He was numbered with the sinners."

They pierce my hands and my feet: **They stare and gloat over me.**

Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. **Amen.**

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, **Have mercy upon us.**

Fifth Station: Jesus dies on the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished!" And then, crying with a loud voice, he said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." And he bowed his head, and handed over his spirit.

Christ for us became obedient unto death: **Even death on a cross.**

Let us pray. O God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to death on the cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection; who lives and reigns now and for ever. **Amen.**

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, **Have mercy upon us.**

Sixth Station: Jesus is laid in the tomb

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb.

You will not abandon me to the grave: **Nor let your holy One see corruption.**

Let us pray. O God, your blessed Son was laid in a tomb in a garden, and rested on the Sabbath day: Grant that we who have been buried with him in the waters of baptism may find our perfect rest in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, **Have mercy upon us.**

Seventh Station: Jesus is Risen!

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, they went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, but on entering, they discovered the body of Jesus was not there. As they stood there, not knowing what to think, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. Terrified, the women lowered their eyes. But the two men said to them: "Why do you look among the dead for someone who is alive? He is not here; he is risen.

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down Death by Death. **And to those in the tombs bestowing life.**

Let us pray. O God, who by the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light: Grant that we, who have been raised with him, may abide in his presence and rejoice in the hope of eternal glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be dominion and praise for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, **Have mercy upon us.**

Concluding Prayers

Savior of the world, by your cross and precious blood you have redeemed us:

Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech you, O Lord.

Let us pray. We thank you, heavenly Father, that you have delivered us from the powers of sin and death and brought us into the kingdom of your Son; and we pray that, as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his love he may raise us to eternal joys; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

To Christ our Lord who loves us, and washed us in his own blood, and made us a kingdom of priests to serve his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Stations of the Cross for Children and Families was adapted from the *Book of Occasional Services 2018* for use at St. John's Episcopal Church, West Hartford, CT by Margie Baker.

Notes for use:

- These Stations of the Cross are adapted for use in families with children. The non-biblical stations have been removed. A few stations have been combined. The Resurrection is added as the final station. Some of the language for the prayers has been simplified.
- You do not have to move from “station” to “station”, but you may. Inside, you may place seven crosses (one for each station) throughout a room or a house. Outside, you may walk in the yard with or without crosses (sticks make wonderful crosses!), or you may choose to walk through the neighborhood, stopping at certain points to pray. If you choose to not process from station to station, simply take a moment of quiet between the stations to mark the change.
- If you have a sacred space or altar in your home, consider beginning and ending there.
- Stations of the Cross can have one or several leaders. Best practice is to have one leader per section (opening, closing, and each station).
- Leaders: each time you say *let us pray*, hold a moment of silence before continuing with the prayers. The silence invites everyone deeper into the prayers.
- Anything in **bold** is spoken by everyone.
- Music is a welcome addition to the Stations of the Cross:
 - If you know a Trisagion (Holy God, Holy and Mighty...), it may be sung instead of spoken at each station.
 - A simple chant can be used as you process from station to station. A few Taizé suggestions are “Jesus, Remember Me,” “Bless the Lord, My Soul,” and “O Lord, Hear My Prayer.”