

ST. LEO THE GREAT CATHOLIC CHURCH



THE WAY OF THE CROSS

SOLEMN STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The Celebrant and Minister carrying the cross (and optional Ministers carrying candles) enter from the either the Narthex or the Sacristy and proceed to the front of the Sanctuary. The Lector goes to the ambo.

Meanwhile, two verses of the hymn "Stabat Mater/At the Cross" will be sung.

*Stabat Mater dolorosa
Juxta Crucem lacrimosa,
Dum pendebat Filius.*

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

CELEBRANT:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

R/. Amen.

CELEBRANT:

The Lord Jesus says, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Me."

Let us pause for a moment, and in silence before God let us name the cross that we bear. Let us name the cross that this community bears. Let us name one of the many crosses onto which the poor, the oppressed and the sick are daily nailed.

Let us pray.

All pause for a moment of silent recollection.

CELEBRANT:

God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, give us the courage to take up the cross, and so to walk with Christ from death to life. As we recall his sacred passion, death and resurrection, stir up within us the Holy Spirit and guide our feet into the way of peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

LECTOR:

Jesus came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will, but yours be done." Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength.

In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; but Jesus said to him, "Judas is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?"

Then they seized him and led him away. But Peter was following at a distance.

CELEBRANT:

Come! Let us walk the way of the cross. Let us listen to the ancient story of life meeting death, of love struggling to overcome hate, of violence losing its power to peace. Let us cry out to God with Christ suffering and give God glory with the risen Savior!

As the celebrant moves toward the First Station, two more verses of "Stabat Mater/At the Cross" will be sung.

*Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword had pass'd.*

*Oh, how sad and sore distress'd
Was that Mother highly blest
Of the sole-begotten One!*

STATION I

CELEBRANT:

The First Station, Pilate Condemns Jesus to Die

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed the crowd again; but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" He said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that Jesus should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over.

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

God of justice, Judge of all humanity, the face of Christ is bruised and the body of Christ is beaten every time we fail to do what is right when we are encouraged to do wrong. Give us the courage of Jesus to hold fast to what is true and just.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, often I judge others and fail to be understanding or loving. Help me to see the people in my life through your eyes, not the eyes of Pontius Pilate. I love You Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as You will.

All stand and sing:

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

STATION II

CELEBRANT:

The Second Station, Jesus Accepts His Cross

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. They took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

God of those the world deems lost, you are always near to those whom others condemn and cast off. Give us the strength to walk with all whom this world marches toward death, that we may see in them Jesus on his way to the cross.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, you embraced your cross to redeem the world. Help me to embrace the crosses in my life-the hardships, struggles, disappointments, pain. Only by recognizing my own weakness, can I discover your strength. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

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

STATION III

CELEBRANT:

The Third Station, Jesus Falls the First Time

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

Jesus said, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you, desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

God of those crushed under the weight of hatred and violence, you freely choose to be likewise crushed. Give us the power to suffer with those who have no choice that they may never go down alone.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, you know how often I fall trying to follow you. Yet you are always there to lift me up. Help me always to trust in your loving care for me. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

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

STATION IV

CELEBRANT:

The Fourth Station, Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

The child Jesus' father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

God of our mothers, God of Joseph and of Mary, you know in your heart the pain of losing a child to violence. Be with those whose children suffer in any way.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, your mother Mary's grief was surpassed by her love for you. So often you come to me in others and their love gives me new life. Help me to see how often you love me through the people in my life. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

***Bruis'd, derided, curs'd, defil'd,
She beheld her tender child
All with bloody scourges rent.***

STATION V

CELEBRANT:

The Fifth Station, Simon Helps Carry the Cross

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

After mocking Jesus, the soldiers stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

God of all who helps those in need, you are always at hand to strengthen our backs and stiffen our resolve. Wake us up to the daily opportunities that we have to shoulder each other's burdens, even when we think we are only passing by.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, sometimes I am indifferent to the needs of others in my life. I even neglect those whom I love. Help me to see that loving others is the surest way to find you in my life. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

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

STATION VI

CELEBRANT:

The Sixth Station, Veronica Offers Her Veil to Jesus

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

Then the righteous will say, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these you did it to me."

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

God of the courageous, brave Veronica stood against the mighty to comfort and console your Son, condemned to death. Give us her courage; stir up in us her strength that we, too, will push through barricades and bureaucracies to wipe the sweat and blood of suffering from the faces of the poor.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, at times I am afraid to reach out to others. I do nothing when I should act, I say nothing when I should speak out. Give me a deeper and more courageous faith. Help me to trust that you are with me. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

***O thou Mother! fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above;
Make my heart with thine accord.***

STATION VII

CELEBRANT:

The Seventh Station, Jesus Falls the Second Time

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

God of the infirm, hope of all struck down by disease, ease the suffering and shatter the loneliness of those who are sick and of the dying. May no one die alone this day!

ALL:

Lord Jesus, failure and disappointment sometimes lead me to despair. I hide behind my pride and self-pity, withdrawing from you and others. Give me the hope I need and help me never to be afraid to begin again. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

***Make me feel as thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ our Lord.***

STATION VIII

CELEBRANT:

The Eighth Station, Jesus Speaks to the Women

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

A great number of the people followed Jesus, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

God of compassion, how often have you beaten your breast and wailed aloud for all you see! Open our hearts to the mystery of suffering, of suffering with others when there is no other way. Give us the love of these women of Jerusalem.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, your great compassion for others overwhelms me. I feel petty and selfish when I think of you and the way you love. Help me to pour out my love, that you might fill me with your love. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

***Holy Mother! pierce me through;
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified.***

STATION IX

CELEBRANT:

The Ninth Station, Jesus Falls the Third Time

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

My soul clings to the dust; revive me according to your word. When I told of my ways, you answered me; teach me of your statutes. Make me understand the way of your precepts, and I will meditate on your wondrous works. My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

Strengthen us according to your word, O God, that we who walk this way of the cross with your beloved child, Jesus, will know to call upon you from the depths of despair and reach for you out of all our failures.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, your failing strength makes me see how helpless I am. Without you, I can do nothing. Help me to rely on your strength, to see how much I need you. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

***Let me share with thee His pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died.***

STATION X

CELEBRANT:

The Tenth Station, Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

When they came to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of the Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him.

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

How often, God, have the poor been stripped of dignity while the rich and the apathetic sit down and watch. Rouse in us a longing for justice, an eagerness to clothe the naked and to house the homeless.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, seeing you so cruelly humiliated makes me realize how I cling to my accomplishments, my possessions, my way. Help me to let go of those things in my life that prevent me from growing closer to you and others. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

***Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him who mourn'd for me,
All the days that I may live.***

STATION XI

CELEBRANT:

The Eleventh Station, Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." People stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, his chosen one!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

Saving God, we hear the sly cry, "Save yourself!" every day by those who hawk the things that are supposed to make our life complete. But we know that it is you alone who saves us, whenever we probe in awe the nail marks in your hands and feet. May we never believe false promises!

ALL:

Lord Jesus, I can never doubt your great love for me when I see you crucified. Help me to see your cross as the great sign of your love for me. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

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

STATION XII

CELEBRANT:

The Twelfth Station, Jesus Dies upon the Cross

ALL **KNEEL** THROUGHOUT THE PRAYERS AT THIS STATION

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the son of God!"

There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. They used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

Cantor will sing first and all repeat the refrain; cantor will sing the verses:

Father, I put my life in your hands. (Psalm 31)

ALL:

I love you Jesus, my love. I love you with my whole 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.

All stand and sing:

***Virgin of all virgins best,
Listen to my fond request
Let me share thy grief divine.***

STATION XIII

CELEBRANT:

The Thirteenth Station, Jesus is Taken Down From the Cross

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

When the soldiers came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the temple authorities, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

God of the living, how long will we have to bury the broken bodies of all who die in war, from starvation, through neglect? The death of Jesus is enough! Change the water of our sadness into the wine of compassion so that we may take down all the bodies nailed to crosses.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, seeing your body taken from the cross reminds me how fearful I am of letting go of my own life. I am frightened when I think of being unimportant, useless, helpless. Help me to place my life in your hands. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

***Let me, to my latest breath,
In my body bear the death
Of that dying Son of thine.***

STATION XIV

CELEBRANT:

The Fourteenth Station, Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

All genuflect

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

R/. Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

LECTOR:

So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

All kneel and pause for an appropriate amount of silence.

CELEBRANT:

"Let the dead bury the dead," your Son had told us, O God. And we know that Joseph's chest was as heavy with sorrow as his hands were with Christ's lifeless body. And we grieve to think of Mary Magdalene's numb heart, she who loved him like no other. Give us the fortitude to wait outside the tomb whenever one whom we love rests inside. And bring to perpetual light and peace all whom we have buried from this church this year.

ALL:

Lord Jesus, when I see the great stone sealing your tomb, I feel alone and abandoned. Even though you sometimes seem distant or absent in my life, help me always to believe in your closeness and loving presence. I love you Jesus, my love; grant that I may love you always and then do with me as you will.

All stand and sing:

*Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,
Be Thy Mother my defence,
Be Thy cross my victory.*

*While my body here decays,
May my soul Thy goodness praise,
Safe in Paradise with Thee.*

The Celebrant and Minister carrying the cross return to the front of the Sanctuary.

CELEBRANT:

Let us turn to Christ Jesus with confidence and faith in the power of his cross and resurrection.

The Lector leads the petitions:

Risen Lord, pattern of our life forever. We pray:

R/. Lord, have mercy!

Promise and image of what we shall be. We pray:

R/. Lord, have mercy!

Son of God, you came to destroy sin and death. We pray:

R/. Lord, have mercy!

Word of God, you delivered us from fear and death. We pray:

R/. Lord, have mercy!

Crucified Lord, forsaken in death, raised in glory. We pray:

R/. Lord, have mercy!

Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep. We pray:

R/. Lord, have mercy!

You who come in glory to judge the living and the dead. We pray:

R/. Lord, have mercy!

CELEBRANT:

Let us pray to be able to forgive those who have sinned against us, as we have been forgiven:

ALL:

Our Father...

CELEBRANT:

Hear the prayers of your people, O God, who have walked in faith, hope and love this way of the cross.

Keep us faithful to Christ's sacred passion, as we pray, fast and share what we have with the poor. Stir up within the hearts of those to be baptized the desire to carry Christ's cross with your church. May all the world know of your saving deeds. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

CELEBRANT:

May God bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

R/. Amen.

CELEBRANT:

Let us bless the Lord!

R/. Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN, **Option 1:** “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days”

*Lord, who throughout these forty days,
For us did fast and pray,
Teach us to overcome our sins,
And close by you to stay.*

*And through these days of penitence,
And through your Passiontide,
For evermore, in life and death,
O Lord! With us abide.*

*Abide with us, that through this life
Of doubts and hope and pain,
An Easter of unending joy
We may at last attain!*

CLOSING HYMN, **Option 2, on next page**

CLOSING HYMN, **Option 2:** “Were You There”

*Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
O! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble!
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

*Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
O! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble!
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?*

*Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
O! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble!
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?*