



Fourth Sunday of Lent March 18, 2012 B

Pray the Stations of the Cross at Home

The Stations of the Cross are a beautiful way for us to connect with fourteen painful moments in Jesus' life. Praying the stations also helps us to see how these events continue to occur in our world today. Parents, please take time to talk and pray with your children about these moments in the life of Jesus.

First Station: Jesus is condemned to death

Meditate on how Jesus, the innocent one, must have felt when he was condemned to die a criminal's death. Meditate on how our legal system still makes it possible for us as a nation to execute innocent people.

Prayer: *Jesus, because you were once condemned as an innocent man, you know how it feels when innocent people today are condemned to death for believing in you or for crimes they didn't commit. Jesus, help us to create a global family in which no one suffers because of their religion and where there are no state-sponsored execution.*

Second Station: Jesus carries his cross

Meditate on Jesus carrying his cross along the road to Calvary. Meditate on and pray for all who are afflicted with heavy crosses this day.

Prayer: *Jesus, you carried your cross to show solidarity with all people down through the ages who would suffer for their belief in you and for fighting for truth and justice. I pray in a special way for Christians who are being persecuted and killed today because they espouse Christianity. I also pray for all those who are carrying a cross of any kind, especially those in my family and circle of friends.*

Third Station: Jesus falls the first time

Meditate on Jesus falling the first time under the weight of his cross and his mistreatment by the soldiers.

Prayer: *Jesus, life at times becomes very hard and it is not easy to always hang in there during the tough times. I pray for all who are discouraged at this time or in*

danger of becoming discouraged. I also pray for myself that I can faithfully endure the crosses in my life.

Fourth Station: Jesus meets his mother

This is one of the most emotionally charged Stations of the Cross. What pain must have been in the hearts of Jesus and Mary as they meet on the road to Calvary.

Prayer: *Jesus, as I reflect on the encounter between you and your mother, I think of many things—the pain in the hearts of parents whose children are killed in war, reporters killed as they report atrocities, parents who mourn the loss of their children. Jesus, comfort grieving parents.*

Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry his cross

Meditate on how Simon, a stranger, may have felt as he helped Jesus carry his cross, how his brief time with Jesus may have impacted his life forever.

Prayer: *Jesus, thank you for all the Simons in our world, all those wonderful people who spend time, energy and money helping suffering people. Bless their ministry and keep them strong. I also thank you, Jesus, for all those who have been a Simon to me in my life.*

Sixth Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Meditate on this very tender moment between Jesus and Veronica, how she risked stepping out of the jeering crowd to show compassion to Jesus and how she must have felt when she saw the image of Jesus on her towel.

Prayer: *Jesus, when Veronica reached out to you in your suffering, you in turn gave her the wonderful gift of leaving your image on her towel. Bless today and always all the wonderful nurses, nurse's aides and caregivers for the sick in hospitals, nursing homes and in their own homes.*

Seventh Station: Jesus falls a second time

Meditate on how the journey for Jesus becomes harder and harder and so he falls a second time under the weight of the cross. Meditate also on those whose burden is so heavy that

they too fall down and do not feel like getting up.

Prayer: *Jesus, when you fell down and got up a second time, you expressed your solidarity with all who fall down as they deal with all heavy burden. By getting up again, you showed us that with your help, we too can get up after we fall down.*

Eighth Station: Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem

Meditate on the tender care Jesus showed to the weeping women of Jerusalem.

Prayer: *Thank you, Jesus, for the way you show us how to be compassionate to others even when we are suffering ourselves.*

Ninth Station: Jesus falls the third time

Meditate on how at this point in his journey, Jesus is so exhausted that he falls flat on his face. How hard it had to be for him to get up and go on. But he did it out of love for us.

Prayer: *Jesus, getting up after you fell the third time had to be so difficult. Your courage and strength inspire me to keep carrying my cross when I think I cannot go on one more day.*

Tenth Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments

Meditate on how the soldiers ripped from Jesus his clothing which was now stuck to his bleeding body. On a deeper level, Jesus was stripped of his dignity.

Prayer: *Jesus, as I reflect on this station, I think of all those who are stripped of their dignity because of who they are, based on their gender, color, economic level and religion. Jesus, I lift up to you all these people for your holy care and ask you to convert the hearts of all who strip others of their dignity.*

Eleventh Station: Jesus is nailed to the cross

Meditate on the excruciating pain Jesus must have felt as the soldiers hammered the nails through his hands and feet. Reflect also on all those who are physically abused: children and teenagers, spouses, activists, prisoners.

Prayer: *Jesus, sometimes we sadly doubt your love for us. At such times we have forgotten the length you went to show us your love. Jesus, be with those who today are physically abused for any reason, but especially for their belief in you.*

Twelfth Station: Jesus dies on the cross

Meditate on how Jesus on the cross hung naked between heaven and earth with hands outstretched. He is telling us:

“This is how much I love you.” Think of all the innocent people who this week will be killed because of their belief in Jesus.

Prayer: *Jesus, as I meditate on your cruel death, I pray for all who have been killed because of their belief in you. I also pray for all who die a very painful death because of the lack of pain medication.*

Thirteenth Station: Jesus is taken down from the cross

Meditate on this, the “Pieta” station in which Jesus lay in the loving arms of his sorrowful mother. What this moment must have been like for her.

Prayer: *Mary, tell us of your pain at the foot of the cross. Mary, comfort all parents who live to see one or more of their children die, especially mothers who hold their dead children in their arms.*

Fourteenth Station: Jesus is laid in the tomb

Meditate on the care and love that Nicodemus and his friends had as they took Jesus’ body to be buried.

Prayer: *Jesus, thank you for inspiring our Church to develop burial rites that help us to deal with death. May all who die today live with you forever.*

Reflection question: Which station or stations speak to you most and why?

Have a blessed week,

Je Saram