

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church

STATIONS OF THE CROSS



Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane
Sculpture Photographed at The Louvre – Paris France

Photo by Maureen Alexander

Prayed by
The Lourdes Stephen Ministry

Opening Prayer:

Leader: God of power and mercy, in love You sent Your Son that we might be cleansed of sin and live with You forever. Bless us as we gather to reflect on his suffering and death that we may learn from his example the way we should go.

Reader 2: Take my hand as I make this way of the Cross. Inspire me with those thoughts that will make me realize how much He loves me. Give me light to apply each station to my daily life and to remember my neighbor's needs in the Way of Pain.

Leader: We ask this through that same Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

First Station: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me." He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as You will." When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 26:36-41)

Reader 2: Loving God, Your word shows us that You are full of feelings from compassion to wrath to joy. When You created us in Your image, You gave us feelings too. We are so grateful to You. We rejoice in Your love for us, and we want to love You back. We hope and trust that You will be with us every step of the way on this caring journey. Help me to devote one hour each week to my care receiver and in this way stay with him/her during their journey. Receive our thanks and praise for all Your gifts, and especially now for the gift of feelings.

Leader: Lord, grant us Your strength and wisdom that we may seek to follow Your will in all things.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Second Station: Jesus, Betrayed by Judas, is Arrested

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: Then, while [Jesus] was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. His betrayer had arranged a signal with them, saying, "The man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him and

lead him away securely." He came and immediately went over to him and said, "Rabbi." And he kissed him. At this they laid hands on him and arrested him. (Mark 14: 43-46)

Reader 2: Listening Lord, we pour out our hearts to You in praise, sorrow, profound need, or joyous thanksgiving, and You are always there for us-listening, caring, soothing, and healing. Give us the patience, compassion, and skill we need to follow Your example and also to be good listeners. Bless us through this time of learning; use it to equip us to listen well. Give us opportunities to listen to one another, and use our care for one another to build bonds of Christian love between us. Help us Lord to never betray the confidence that our care receiver places in us. Thank You for hearing our prayer and for answering it.

Leader: Lord, grant us the wisdom to listen carefully and attentively to You so that our lives may faithfully reflect with confidence the good news You bring.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Third Station: Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: When day came the council of elders of the people met, both chief priests and scribes, and they brought him before their Sanhedrin. They said, "If You are the Messiah, tell us," but he replied to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I question, you will not respond. But from this time on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." They all asked, "Are you then the Son of God?" He replied to them, "You say that I am." Then they said, "What further need have we for testimony? We have heard it from his own mouth." (Luke 22: 66-71)

Reader 2: O Lord, the Jewish officials didn't understand what it meant for You to be Messiah, and they condemned You as a criminal worthy of death. Our Lord and God, because You reach out to us in love, we are able to touch others with the power of Your love. Continue to mold and shape us into dispensers of that love in our community. Give us the strength to continue sharing Your love and mercy even when the road becomes difficult. Not even death could stop You from loving us. Give us the same determination and power to love and care for our care receivers.

Leader: Lord, help us to grow in love that we may never cease to help provide comfort to those who are the hurting and help bring forth the kingdom that You promised.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Fourth Station: Jesus is Denied by Peter

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about!" As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus the Nazorean." Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man!" A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives You away." At that he began to curse and to swear, "I do not know the

man." And immediately a cock crowed. Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: "Before the cock crows you will deny me three times." He went out and began to weep bitterly. (Matthew 26: 69-75)

Reader 2: Help me, Lord, not to be like Peter. When hard times come, help me to trust You more. We would never dare to step out as caregivers if we did not believe that You are with us, working in and through us. We know that we cannot achieve the caregiving results our care receivers need by ourselves, but we trust that You are at work through us and the caregiving process, and that You will bring about the results You want in Your own time. Thank You for strengthening us to boldly proclaim Your healing power and for calling us and using us.

Leader: Lord, grant us the gift of honesty that we may not fear to speak the truth even when difficult.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Fifth Station: Jesus is Judged by Pilate

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: The chief priests with the elders and the scribes, that is, the whole Sanhedrin, held a council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He said to him in reply, "You say so." The chief priests accused him of many things. Again Pilate questioned him, "Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of?" Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.... Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barrabas... [and] handed [Jesus] over to be crucified. (Mark 15: 1-5, 15)

Reader 2: Lord, our care receivers oft times stand in the same place You stand condemned by family and friends because of the care and devotion they exhibit for a loved one.. Most merciful Jesus, Mercy Himself, help us to silently stand firm with our care receivers thereby demonstrating through us the love You have for them and the eventual healing that they'll experience because You were the Divine Lamb that was led to slaughter.

Leader: Lord, grant us discernment that we may see as You see, not as the world sees.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Sixth Station: Jesus is Scourged and Crowned with Thorns

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck him repeatedly. (John 19: 1-3)

Reader 2: So help me Lord to never miss an appointment with or disappoint my care receiver. Help me to speak truthfully to my care receiver and not wallowing in pointless excuses and defenses. By Your Spirit, guide me to see clearly where I have missed Your mark, so that I might confess truly and fully. Help me to experience the forgiveness You offer in Christ, and to live in the freedom of the cleansing You alone provide.

Leader: Lord, grant us patience in times of suffering that we may offer our lives as a sacrifice of praise.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Seventh Station: Jesus Bears the Cross

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: When the chief priests and the guards saw [Jesus] they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him. I find no guilt in him." ... They cried out, "Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify Your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. *(John 19: 6, 15-17)*

Reader 2: You take up a heavy cross, Lord. A cross we don't want to see, much less carry. But carry it we must. The load that we Stephen Ministers carry we can bear, but the load that our care receivers carry, at times seem to be a crushing load. Lord Jesus, You share our burdens and lighten them when we feel crushed by all the problems life can pile on us. You went to the cross to relieve us of the burden of our sin and death. You have promised that we will not only share Your yoke, but will also share Your victory over sin and death and enjoy eternity with You. Thank You for loving us so. Build us up with Your love and make us so strong and secure in You that we have the strength not only to carry our daily load but also to bear others' burdens.

Leader: Lord, grant us strength of purpose that we may faithfully bear our crosses each day.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Eighth Station: Jesus is Helped by Simon the Cyrenian to Carry the Cross

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. *(Mark 15: 21)*

Reader 2: Lord when I see the crushing load that my care receiver is forced to bear, like Simon the Cyrenian, I too am called by You to help share his burden, endure the toil, and suffer the inconvenience. Help me to feel safe in Your presence and to lead my care receivers into the safety of Your loving arms. Give my care receiver and all of us so much faith in You that we have the courage to live, serve, and love as You want us to. I thank You for helping me to say, "glad to help" rather

than, "I'm too busy". I pray for Your continued strength as both my care receiver and I walk this journey together.

Leader: Lord, grant us willing spirits that we may be Your instruments on earth.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Ninth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.' At that time, people will say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?" (Luke 23: 27-31)

Reader 2: Your mother demonstrates her love for You, Lord. Veronica sees to **your** discomfort. Now a group of women mourn Your suffering. Thank You Lord for these women who, demonstrated the true meaning of Stephen Ministry. Suffering is such a dirty business. It's so upsetting. So hard to watch. And, so easy to turn away. Give me the merciful grace to apply the lessons of Your Passion to the suffering of my care receiver.

Leader: Lord, grant us gentle spirits that we may comfort those who mourn.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Tenth Station: Jesus is Crucified

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. [Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."] (Luke 23: 33-34)

Reader 2: Lord, when a care receiver experiences grief over the death of a loved one it oft times seem that the entire weight of the world has landed on their shoulders. However, because of Your merciful love You have sent us Stephen Ministers to help shoulder the load. Grant us the understanding, knowledge and wisdom acquired during our 50 hours of training so that we can tenderly and lovingly minister to them. Have mercy on us, Lord.

Leader: Lord, grant us merciful hearts that we may bring Your reconciliation, forgiveness and tender loving care to all.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Eleventh Station: Jesus Promises His Kingdom to the Good Thief

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." He replied to him, "Amen, I say to You, today you will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23: 39-43)

Reader 2: Dear Lord, how I thank and praise You for Your mercy. You give us, not what we deserve, but infinitely better. Thank You for hearing the cries of our care receivers, and for responding much as You did to the thief who sought Your help. Thank You for remembering each of us, and for the promise we have of Paradise beyond this life. There's much we don't understand about the afterlife, but what we know is that we will be with You, seeing You face to face. And in Your presence there will be no more suffering but we'll all experience the fullness of joy. That's more than enough for us!

Leader: Lord, grant us perseverance that we may never stop seeking You.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Twelfth Station: Jesus Speaks to His Mother and the Disciple

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. *John 19: 25-27*

Reader 2: The Mother of Mercy comforts You, Lord, even if for a brief moment along the way. Help us Stephen Minister by our caring commitment and love to say to our care receivers "I'll give comfort and solace to You, I am here to help ease Your pain. We are all Your children through Your gift of Mary's Divine Maternity at the foot of the cross. We ask Your Mother to pray for us, Lord. May her intercession for mercy on behalf of us and our care receivers find a place of enduring refuge in Your forgiving Heart.

Leader: Lord, grant us constancy that we may be willing to stand by those in need.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Thirteenth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit"; and when he had said this he breathed his last. (Luke 23: 44-46)

Reader 2: God of all mercy and compassion, we pray for those so troubled and torn that they would consider ending their lives. Be with them, rescue them, and protect them. Send them Stephen Ministers who care and can lead them out of the wilderness of suffering to a place in their lives where they can experience forgiveness, freedom, and joy. Give us hearts of mercy and compassion toward all who suffer so profoundly, especially those who have lost someone to suicide. Comfort and console them as only You can. Use us to embody Your mercy and compassion in our caring ministry, that both we and those we minister to may thank and praise You for the precious gift of life..

Leader: Lord, grant us trust in You that when our time on earth is ended our spirits may come to You without delay.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Tomb

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 1: When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be handed over. Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it [in] clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed. (Matthew 27: 57-60)

Reader 2: A borrowed tomb in a potter's field serves as the resting place for Your Body, Lord, a sinless Man who was put to death as a criminal. The stone the builders rejected was rolled into place. The sun sets and darkness covers Calvary as Passover is celebrated throughout the land. The quiet of three days of darkness precedes the glorious joy of the dawn to come. Lord, help us in caring for those in our care to never fail to remind them that the sun will rise again and that the Son will rise again.

Leader: Lord, grant us Your compassion that we may always provide for those in need.

All: Lord Jesus, help us walk in Your steps.

Closing Prayer:

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, Your passion and death is the sacrifice that unites heaven and earth and reconciles all people to You. We ask that You continue to bless the Stephen Leaders, Stephen Ministers and their Care Receivers. Lord Jesus, you came as our servant to save us from sin, death, and the devil. You set aside all Your rights and privileges and used Your power to heal us and meet our greatest needs. Your authority to teach and to heal came from Your willingness to give Your life for us. Give us the courage and humility to follow your example of service. Work in us and through us to make us into servants who give ourselves for others. Give us the servant-authority we need to use Your powerful gifts to care for others. May we who have faithfully reflected on these mysteries follow in Your steps and so come to share Your glory in heaven where You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.