



The Way of the Cross

A PRAYER FOR HOPE AND HEALING AMIDST A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

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Praying the Stations During This Time of Social Distancing

The Stations of the Cross is a widely practiced devotion, especially during the season of Lent. Unfortunately, gathering for this devotion in our parishes has been disrupted by the need for social distancing during this pandemic. This prayer resource is purposely flexible and can be used in a variety of ways.

CREATE A PRAYER SPACE

Find a place in your home suitable for prayer. This place should be comforting and quiet. If you have a crucifix, consider making it the focal point of your prayer space. Feel free to arrange any icons or other meaningful religious items around it.

Creating space for prayer is not only about the physical space. We must also make room in our minds and hearts. Find a time

when you can truly quiet yourself, and allow yourself to breathe, free of distraction.

SOLO DEVOTION

In its simplest form, one can simply read this prayer on one's own. We suggest reading it aloud.

If you prefer to be guided through the prayer, you can pray along with the audio ver-

sion available from the Open Your Hymnal podcast. You can find it at www.openyourhymnal.com/episodes/stations-of-the-cross or by using the Spotify code below:



AT HOME WITH FAMILY

If you are at home with family, you might consider praying the Stations of the Cross together as a daily or weekly devotion.

Assign someone to be the reader, or alternate taking turns. The prayer will flow best if these decisions are made ahead of time.

VIRTUAL PRAYER

In this time of social distancing, many faith communities are using virtual tools to foster connection and prayer. Consider praying the Stations of the Cross with friends over a video conferencing platform. You could also do a livestream of the service to share with others via social media. Members of our faith communities are longing to maintain a connection with other parish families. Offering a platform for a community to come together to pray the Stations of the Cross is a great way to maintain connection.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Silence and Prayer Whether praying alone or with others, allow time after the reflections for silent prayer. Allow silence for reflection as you move from station to station.

Music Many parishes incorporate sung chants and other music into their Stations of the Cross. Feel free to add music to these Stations. In the audio version of this prayer,

related by Open Your Hymnal, you will hear some suggestions for music.

Faith Sharing These meditations can also serve as prompts for faith sharing in small groups. As many groups continue to meet in virtual ways, you might consider offering these meditations for group reflection and conversation. They can serve as a way to help process and discuss the challenges of the pandemic and social distancing.

May we all be safe and well and joined in prayer at this challenging time.

Opening Prayer

*Heavenly Father,
we come to you in the midst
of fear and struggle.
Calm our anxious hearts,
and give hope to all who despair.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, bearer of our sins,
healer of our every ill,
walk with us through our trials,
through our darkest hours.
Open our hearts to the hope offered by
the mystery of your dying and rising.*

*Holy Spirit, breath of life,
bringer of truth,
plant your word deep within us.
Let the story of your passion
inspire us anew to walk our path
of discipleship.*

*We pray this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

THE 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.*

READER:

Jesus' condemnation is one of injustice and cowardice. It is the condemnation of truth itself. Pilate finds no crime in Jesus, yet he falls to the pressure of the angry crowd.

This station calls us to reflect on the importance of discerning truth and whether we allow that truth to guide our lives. In this present moment we are bombarded by voice after voice, message upon message. During this pandemic it is more important than ever that we heed the advice offered by those who proclaim truth.

And so we pray:

ALL:

Lord Jesus Christ, our Way, Truth, and Life,
help us to discern your voice
from the noise,
help us to know your truth from deceit,
and keep us rooted in the hope
of your gospel.

We pray this through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

THE 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.*

READER:

At the time, crucifixion was reserved for the lowest of classes. As he takes up his cross, we see Jesus again aligned with the poor and marginalized.

We are all suffering a variety of challenges in the wake of this pandemic. As we tend to our own struggles, let us also be mindful of those most impacted by this time of social distancing: those who have lost work, those without access to medical care, the elderly, the poor.

And so we pray:

ALL:

Lord Jesus Christ, bearer of our crosses,
give us the strength to meet the challenges
of these difficult days.
Help us to live your call to serve the poor,
to heal the sick, to clothe the naked.
Bless us with the creativity and the courage
to find ways we can continue to serve
the least among us.
We pray this through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.