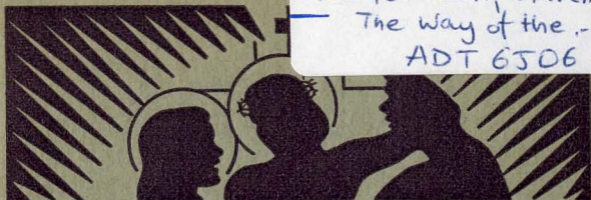


Liederbach, Clavens  
The way of the ...  
ADT 6506



THE  
WAY OF THE CROSS  
for  
CROSSBEARERS

by  
Father C. A. Liederbach

Price 15¢

A GRAIL PUBLICATION





**THE WAY OF THE CROSS**  
*for*  
**CROSSBEARERS**



Dedicated to Our Lady of the Martyrs  
the like of whose Son  
and  
the like of whose Anguish  
This Vale of Tears will never again see.  
by  
Rev. Clarence A. Liederbach  
of the  
Diocese of Cleveland

---

**A GRAIL PUBLICATION**

---

**St. Meinrad**

**Indiana**

*Nihil obstat:*

*V. Rev. Fintan G. Walker, Ph. D.  
Censor librorum*

*Imprimatur:*

✠ *Paul C. Schulte, D. D.  
Archbishop of Indianapolis*

*March 29, 1949*

---

**Drawings by  
John W. Krupa**

---

**All Rights Reserved.  
Copyright 1949 by  
St. Meinrad's Abbey, Inc.**

**Deacidified**

Pope St. Leo speaks beautifully of meditation on the **Passion of Our Lord**: "Indeed, among all the works of God by which man's admiration is dazzled, what so delights and baffles our mind's gaze, as the Passion of the Saviour? To loose mankind from the bonds of the deadly transgression, He hid the might of His majesty from the fury of the devil, and opposed him with the weakness of our lowly nature. For if the proud and cruel enemy could have known the counsel of God's mercy, he would rather have striven to soften the hearts of the Jews into mildness, than to fire them with unjust hatred; lest he should lose the thralldom of his captives, while attacking the liberty of One Who owed him nothing. . . . Such was the tender love He bore even towards His murderers, that praying to His Father from the Cross He asked not that He might be avenged, but that they might be forgiven."

**The Stations of the Cross**, it is true, confine themselves principally to the last two of the Sorrowful Mysteries of the

Rosary. But even in this narrowed scope, their vivid tableaux are a comfort to the bereaved and the burdened, to those who wince under the smart of personal failure, and a well-spring of fortitude and of high resolve to the ordinary Christian who would warily pick his way through Life's rubble, earnestly striving by the grace of God to pass among the things of this world in such a way as not to lose those of the next.

There is no Station but that it reminds us pointedly, albeit ever so gently, that any cross of ours is but a fraction, a splinter of the Cross of Christ; that sin alone excepted, every privation, every grief,—even the bitterest,—that is now ours, was once Christ's long ago; that our sufferings, seen in Calvary's perspective, dwindle and pale because they can never match the unmerited Suffering of Christ and His Mother. What man can say literally that he was flogged, crowned with thorns, and crucified for the crimes of others? What man's self-pity can long survive its antidote in the Stations? Here in the dramatic preliminaries of Calvary's climax and aftermath is to be found not only peace of mind over personal misfortunes but renewed courage and calmness for dreaded ordeals. None of this is new to those who have frequently followed Christ and His widowed Mother from Pi-

late's Pretorium to Joseph of Arimathea's Tomb.

The Stations contribute immeasurably to our spiritual lives in yet another way,—they teach the Inevitability, the Beauty, the Power, the Value, and the Necessity of the Cross. How important is this lesson? We can gauge its importance from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (8,17-18) wherein the Apostle writes that we may be also glorified with Him only if we suffer with Him... "for I reckon that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come..."



## PRAYER BEFORE THE ALTAR

Dear Jesus, / I come once more before  
You, / and in Your sacramental Pres-  
ence, / I intend to return in spirit / to  
Good Friday morning / in the Holy City, /  
there to revisit / the tragic scenes / of  
Your Suffering and Death, / and my res-  
cue / from certain eternal damnation. /  
Walk with me as You walked / with Your  
Disciples to Emmaus, / and speak to my  
heart / as we go together, / following  
Your footprints in blood / on the trail of  
obedience / to Your death on the Cross. /

"Take up your Cross, / and follow  
me!" / I accept Your invitation, / fully  
aware that if / I would faithfully follow  
my Master, / I cannot expect otherwise /  
than that my life too / must become / a  
Way of the Cross / mirroring Your own. /  
I come into the world, / condemned be-  
forehand / to die on some certain day, /  
like a criminal. / No two crosses are  
alike, / —but I must carry one, / what-  
ever it may be. / Wherever Original Sin  
has once been, / there we find the Cross  
offered / as its antidote.

As I follow my Master, / I can expect  
to meet / some who will help me, /  
others who will hurt me. / Stay with me



always, dear Lord; / most of all, / when  
the shadows lengthen / and the gloom  
gathers / on my Calvary, / I beg You,—  
never leave me! /

O my Good Shepherd, / I need the  
forgiveness / that I find so hard to grant  
others. / I need Your forgiveness / as  
much as did Mary Magdalen / and the  
Good Thief; / I have failed You / as  
much as Peter / and Judas ever did. /  
What would my life be / without Your  
countless absolutions of my sins? / When  
I refuse to forgive / even the least of  
Your little ones / —I refuse to forgive  
You. / To assure myself of Your Mercy, /  
from the bottom of my heart, / here and  
now before Your Altar, / I forgive every-  
one / without exception, / who has in-  
jured me. / I beg Thee to bless those /  
who have injured me / no less than  
those whom I have hurt. /

I desire to gain / all the indulgences, /  
for myself and for others, / which Holy  
Mother Church / has attached to this  
devotion. /

### **Act of Contrition**

O my God, / I am sorry for ever  
having offended You / in any way, / in  
thought or word or action. / I wish to  
love You / with the same love / that  
Thy Blessed Mother loves You with. /  
With the help of Your grace / I promise  
never to sin again. Amen. /



## FIRST STATION

**Pilate rashly condemns  
his Innocent Creator,  
and sentences his Eternal Judge to die.**

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

Was the Son of God led out to a criminal's death because of Pilate's weakness, —or because of my sinful repeated rejections of grace? My Jesus, how strange that I should so often whine under stinging words I feel are undeserved, when I myself have so often sat like Pontius Pilate in rash judgment of others, more innocent in Thy eyes than I, and have hurt them by needlessly and

heartlessly condemning them! When I am unjustly condemned, I can almost take my place at Your side,—but not quite; for I am truly a sinner, and have richly deserved my punishment. Have I never done anything to deserve a Cross? Do I carry my Cross willingly? Or do I balk, and whimper that God owes me something,—something more than He owed His only Son?

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## SECOND STATION

**My Saviour welcomes His Cross.**

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

Who would pretend to follow You empty handed, Lord, and not shoulder Your Cross? Since that noonday when the Son of God stretched out His eager Hands to become the First Crossbearer, it has been a point of honor with Christians to love the Cross and to carry it well. Indeed, "Whoever does not carry His Cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." You have clearly stated the only condition under which You will accept me into Your flock,—a Christian

is always a Crossbearer. Not only is my Heavenly Father's honor at stake, but my own eternal salvation is bound up with my Cross, and I shall save or lose my soul according as I accept or reject it. When I take up my Cross, the Cross You have presented me, I take my eternity into my hands! How have I treated my Cross? Have I prodigally rejected my sanctification and endangered my salvation by lining my wayside with castaway crosses. Even the two thieves shouldered theirs! O my Jesus, help me so to carry my Cross as not to become a Cross for others!

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



### THIRD STATION

#### Jesus Falls.

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

He falls, but after a pause that seems interminable, He rises again. Does He seek to rid Himself of His Cross at the first opportunity,—to be excused from it, or to exchange it for another? How tightly You cling to it, as though fearful that it might be taken away! One day, I shall see that Cross, now being dragged through Jerusalem's alleys, riding majestically through the clouds to the General Judgment. In its shadow I shall stand to hear my fate. What of my Cross? I have a chance, before I leave this world

never to return, to carry it for love of You. If I carry it well, it will lift me up to heaven on my Assumption Day; if I evade it, and reject it, I shall tremble when I see Your Cross in the heavens. It is no small thing to contemn the Cross You offer me daily,—by my every decision I myself decide where I shall spend my Eternity! How have I regarded my Cross,—lovingly, or hatefully?

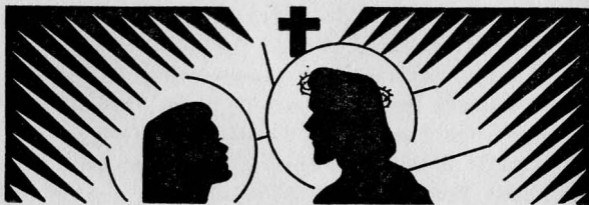
(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## FOURTH STATION

**Mary Immaculate follows her only Son  
even to His execution.**

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

How the grieving of Eve for Abel, Abraham's anguish over Isaac, the affliction of another widow at Naim over her only son, pales beside the heartache of Mary's Fourth Sword! Yet, for all her deep sorrow, no rebellion seethes in her heart, no bitter words of recrimination rise to her lips. She, whom Gabriel declared "blessed among women" continues to magnify the Lord in her soul, and her spirit still rejoices in God the Father, even though He is about to take



away the Son He had given her at the Annunciation. The new Isaac does not flinch in the face of an agonizing death,—neither does Mary. Mary is second only to Jesus in wholeheartedly submitting to the Divine Will, even when it brings death. From that day to this, in the face of every Crossbearer, Mary sees the features of her Son, and she remembers Good Friday; from that day to this, whoever truly carries a Cross, does not walk alone. Christ's Mother claims him for her own. O Mary, teach me that as long as I cannot read God's mind, it is the part of wisdom to rely entirely upon His Fatherly Providence. Have I carried my Cross resignedly and submissively, or have I senselessly kicked against the goad?

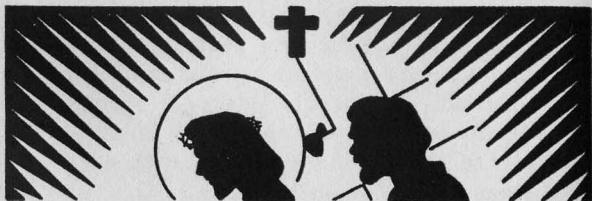
(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## FIFTH STATION

**Our Lord's Cross is thrust  
upon Simon of Cyrene.**

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

The Cross Simon accepted at first only  
under duress, he quickly assumed  
through compassion for this Stranger;  
he and his sons were among the first  
fruits of the Way of the Cross.

O Lord, help me to convince myself that  
in this life no one ever really escapes  
the Cross; each one carries either Your  
Cross or one of his own making. When  
I carry a cross of my own making, I  
must be my own paymaster; who carries

God's Cross, gets God's pay. Who carries Christ's Cross has Christ's help. The part of Christ's Cross I shirk returns to His lacerated Shoulder. Have I carried my share of Christ's Cross only under duress, shirking it at every opportunity,—or has it really been a source of merit, a Tree of Life, for me?

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

~~And may the souls of the faithful departed~~  
rest in peace. Amen.



## SIXTH STATION

### Veronica's Thoughtfulness is Rewarded a Hundredfold.

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

Veronica's Veil,—like every Veil of Religion,—proclaims a Good Samaritan's valiant kindness. Here beats a loving heart that generously braves derision and ridicule to assist a stricken home-ward-bound Image of God! Nothing is little that we deny Christ,—or do for Him. Veronica, like everyone else who showed the least kindness to Christ,—the Bethlehem Shepherds, the Woman at the Well, Zacheus, Mary Magdalen,—received her hundredfold in this life, in

the next possesses life everlasting. Who carries his Cross manfully with Christ will be sure to meet Mary, Simon, and Veronica somewhere along the way ahead,—he will not lack for friends. “What do people think! What will they say?”—and how differently Pilate, Simon of Cyrene and Veronica react!

O my Jesus, You never allow anyone to outdo You in generosity! Give me, I beg, Veronica’s courage to be kind to my fellow-condemned,—to the least of Your little ones,—that I may be kind to You! Have I been kind to those whose Cross must be at least as heavy as my own?

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## SEVENTH STATION

### Jesus Falls Again.

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

Still He clings to His Cross, and exhausted as He is, He rises nonetheless resolutely to struggle on. O my Jesus, who am I to say, "I have suffered enough!" because I seem to have suffered more than others? If I do what I can, You will help with what I cannot do alone. Then what supreme folly for me to tempt Your Father's Justice with a rebellious "Why don't You treat me as I deserve!", for how could I survive if He ever took me at my word? What have I even done to deserve what bless-

ings I have received, — however little account I take of them?

We pray here, Jesus, for those who have fallen not just once, but over and over again, and especially for those who are losing heart, and who in depression and discouragement, are tempted to shorten by their own hand the time that remains to them for carrying the Cross,—for storing up treasure in a land where God will wipe away all tears and sorrow shall be no more. Faltered I have beneath my cross,—have I always risen,—do I rise now, — to carry on with renewed resolutions after my Master?

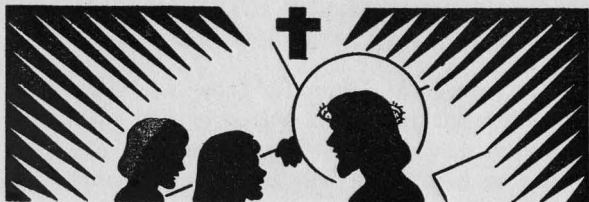
(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## EIGHTH STATION

**Jesus Discourages a Maudlin Sympathy.**

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

When the Daughters of Jerusalem would wail over You, my Jesus, You were quite matter of fact: "I really don't mind this too much, because this is the way My Father wants it. But your tears are misdirected; only a little while ago, your men stood before Pilate, and in My Father's Presence, called down My Blood upon you and your children. Your lot will be ever so much more tragic than Mine!"

My Jesus, teach me to live patiently with



the problems I cannot solve because of Adam's Punishment, and to see in them the Cross Our Father wishes me to carry only that He may have reason to honor me before angels and men. I carry my Cross in His Presence, and I believe that I shall never be the loser for having kept His Commandments,—that He will make all things right in the end, and that He will turn all my sorrow into joy. So long as He is Loving in this life, and Just in the next, what cause have I to envy another's lot? Teach me then to say, when He takes as when He gives, "Thanks be to God!", and whether my lot changes for better or for worse, "Welcome be Thy Holy Will!" Grant that I may not lose the gold of my Cross's weight for a counterfeit human sympathy!

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## NINTH STATION

### Jesus Falls a Third Time.

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

So near, yet so far from His goal, the  
New Isaac toils with the Wood of Sac-  
rifice up the slope of Calvary. He will  
not yield up the Cross His Father has  
given Him,—for to yield the Cross is  
to yield the Crown!

My Jesus, I pray now for that greatest  
of graces, without which even the grace  
of performing miracles is meaningless.  
I pray here for the grace of final per-  
severance,—that Death may find me  
faithful to my Cross, come what may.

Come what may, my Cross must mean more to me than my right eye and my right arm, more than anything the world holds out to me,—more than my life itself. How much longer have I to persevere,—another hour? another day? another year? And it will be done and over with forever! Perhaps even now the end is in sight, just over the horizon's edge. Is this a time to abandon the Cross I have carried so far?

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## TENTH STATION

### Jesus is Publicly Stripped.

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

The Pure Son of an Immaculate Virgin stands exposed to the lewd gaze of a ribald mob in silent commentary on all who dote on indecent human exposure, and in reparation for the sins of the burlesque, the night club, and the bathing beach. In silent eloquence, He stands in judgment upon all who traffic in human bodies to the eternal ruin of human souls, as though men and women were so many playthings, and not destined for adoption, after their rendezvous with Time, into the Royalty of

Heaven. There are some things which no one has a right to sell, to give, or to buy,—much less to demand or to accept from another,—and Virtue is one of them.

My Jesus, grant that I may never love anything You have made more than You, my Greatest Good! Strip me of all that keeps me from You,—my pride, my disorderly affections. Grant that I may truly love You in my neighbor,—and truly love my neighbor for love of You! What is it in my life that comes between me and my Saviour? Can it be my hankering after what He did not intend me to have? My repeated flights from His Cross?

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## ELEVENTH STATION

**Jesus is Nailed to His Cross.**

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

As a Body more perfect than Absalom's is nailed to the Cross, You showed by Your example that we need never fear those who can destroy the body but cannot touch the soul. Now at last the Cross is truly and inseparably Yours,—there is no danger that anyone will come between You and Your Father's Will, to take it from You. "Thy Will be done." So long as some things mean more than living, I am foolhardy if I try to solve my personal problems at the expense of God's Commandments. Would that I too

might be nailed to my Father's Will,—  
that His Will might dominate my life  
completely,—because His Will is the  
dearest, the sweetest, the most loving  
influence, the safest and surest guide  
for the confused pilgrim in this vale  
of tears.

Have I carried my Cross manfully?

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel,  
and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed  
rest in peace. Amen.



## TWELFTH STATION

### Jesus Dies.

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

For love of Adam's children, what God spared Abraham and Sara, He did not spare Himself and Mary; what God spared Isaac, He did not spare His only-begotten Son. Jesus and Mary suffered, —why shouldn't I? O my Jesus, how fortunate for me that You prayed for Your enemies on the Cross,—for me among them! Fortunate for me, that since Good Friday, You have never stopped forgiving. When death comes to me, may it find me faithfully clinging to my Cross at the last!



My Jesus, I thank Thee now more than ever for that Sacrament in which I make my peace with You,—after a hundred falls as after one,—and start afresh to serve You. Every day that I go to confession is a New Year's Day,—a fresh start with new resolutions and new hopes. Grant that I may never desert my Cross!

“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” Who comes this Way, cannot come without his cross. Here I kneel and ask the Good Thief and Mary Magdalen to pray for those who have deserted the Cross, and have lost the Way,—and may lose Life Everlasting,—that before the sun sets before them, they too may stumble safely back into the Fold.

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## THIRTEENTH STATION

### Mary and the Babe of Bethlehem.

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

Guilt and shame fill my heart and weigh down my soul as I recall my share in my Brother's Assassination. Christmas Eve's hopes and dreams fade as Simeon's Prophecy is lived out in the twilight of Good Friday on Calvary. Where are Bethlehem's Shepherds and Angels, where are the Magi, where are those whom He befriended,—as Jesus goes to Joseph in Limbo, and Mary is left even lonelier than the Widow of Naim?

Did Mary cry out in rancor against the Father of her Son, and demand an ex-

planation,—“Why have You done this to us!”? “Thy Will be done” sufficed for this “blessed among women”; it ought to suffice for me. God owes me nothing, —not even explanations. Those who die faithful to the Cross will come to rest securely at last in the arms of the Mother of the First Crossbearer.

O Mary, if your Son had not forgiven and prayed for me, how could I ever ask you to forgive and pray for me now and at the hour of my death? If your Son and you have forgiven me, what is there that I cannot forgive others?

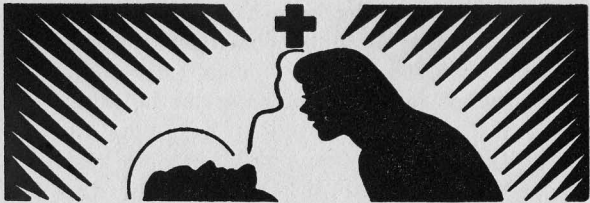
(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel, and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.



## FOURTEENTH STATION

**The Body of Jesus  
Awaits the Resurrection.**

(Meditate briefly.)

We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise  
Thy Holy Name,

Because by Thy Holy Cross, Thou hast  
redeemed the world!

Until He returns to Mary at dawn on Easter, Our Lord visits Joseph and all the holy souls in Limbo. What He did for Himself on Easter morn, He will do for me at the General Resurrection; what He did for His Mother at her Assumption, He will do for me on Judgment Day only if, like Mary, I am found faithful to my Cross at the end. Meanwhile I must live in such a way that I shall not be ashamed to be called from my grave into the blinding sunlight of the Eternal Easter.

How much more of my journey remains?  
Am I closer to my own Fourteenth Sta-  
tion than I suspect? In this world, can  
I promise myself tomorrow?

If I carry my Cross to the end, I shall  
rest with all who died with the Cross  
since Peter and Andrew,—with all the  
holy Crossbearers of other days and  
other years. In their blessed company,  
I shall bide the day that I am summoned  
to the right hand of my Judge. I must  
be there at His right hand, no matter  
what it may cost me. No matter what  
I must forego, I must carry my Cross!

(Silently examine your conscience, then kneel,  
and say,—)

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed  
rest in peace. Amen.

## BEFORE THE ALTAR AGAIN

O my Jesus, whenever I follow You on the Last Mile of Your earthly life, You always teach me many lessons. First of all, You teach me that there must be no room for reprisal, no room for self-righteousness, no room for self-pity either, in the heart of anyone who calls himself "Christian,"—that I must esteem and value Your Cross no matter what form it may take. You remind me that Your Father knows what He is about, that He is always in control of His creation, and that He pays well,—a hundredfold and more,—for all we volunteer to do in His service. I will never be the loser, no matter what heroic sacrifices I may be asked to make to keep His Commandments. I cannot long study Your example without understanding that if ever I arrive safely at heaven's portals, it will be only because my Cross has brought me there. I reject it only at my own risk. But carrying the Cross is a matter of sanctification as well as of salvation,—to be a great saint, one

must first be a great Crossbearer. After what You have suffered for me, and have forgiven me, all that You ask and all that I can do for You is little enough,—much too little,—to do for You.

My Jesus, help me to carry well the Cross God wants me to carry, and for as long as He wants me to carry it. Grant above all that I may never be a stumbling block for other Crossbearers; grant that I may so shoulder my Cross as not to become a Cross to others! I pray now for the intentions of the Holy Father,—the Chief among Crossbearers.

(Pray for the Sovereign Pontiff's intentions to gain the indulgences.)

## PRAYER TO CHRIST CRUCIFIED

Look down upon me, / O Good and  
Gentle Jesus, / whilst before Thy Face I  
humbly kneel, / and pray and beseech  
Thee / to fix deep in my heart, / lively  
sentiments / of Faith, Hope and Charity, /  
and true Contrition for my sins, / the  
whilst I contemplate, / with great love  
and tender pity, / Thy five most grievous  
Wounds, / recalling to mind, / the words  
which David, Thy prophet, / said of  
Thee, / O Good and Gentle Jesus, / —  
“They have pierced My hands and My  
Feet; / they have numbered all My  
bones.” /

(A plenary indulgence may be gained once daily under the usual conditions of Confession, Communion, and at least an “Our Father” and a “Hail Mary” for the Holy Father’s intentions, if this prayer is said before a representation of Christ Crucified; a partial indulgence of 7 years may be gained at other times if this prayer is said before the same representation.)



## PRAYER TO JESUS CHRIST, KING

O Christ Jesus, / I acknowledge You  
as Universal King. / All that has been  
made, / was created for You. / Exercise  
over me / all the rights that You have. /

I renew my baptismal promises, / re-  
nouncing Satan, / his pomps and his  
works, / and I promise to live as a good  
Christian. / Especially do I pledge my-  
self / by all the means in my power /  
to bring about the triumph / of the rights  
of God / and of Your Church.

Divine Heart of Jesus, / I offer You  
my poor actions / to obtain that all  
hearts / may recognize Your consecrated  
Kingship / and that thus the Kingdom of  
Your peace / may be established in the  
whole world. Amen. /

(On Feb. 21, 1923, the Sacred Peniten-  
tiary granted a Plenary Indulgence to be  
gained daily by all the faithful who would  
devoutly recite the above prayer under the  
usual conditions: Confession, Communion  
and prayers for the Holy Father's in-  
tentions.)

Some practical questions about the Stations suggest themselves.

**Can I say the Stations of the Cross without visiting a Church?**

Yes; Holy Mother Church has provided that all who, for a good reason (illness, confinement, imprisonment, infirmity, travel, pagan surroundings), cannot make the Stations in their usual form, may gain all the indulgences of the Stations of the Cross by using a "Station Crucifix."

A "Station Crucifix" is one that has been blessed for the purpose by a priest who has the proper faculties. In a very real sense, the Station Crucifix is entitled to a place alongside the Rosary in the Catholic's Spiritual Arsenal. The rules which govern the use of the Station Crucifix are quite simple:

- a) The Crucifix should be held in the hand when one is praying alone. If several persons are saying the prayers in common, it suffices if only the leader holds it while the others pray along, or alternate, or follow only mentally.

- b) To gain any indulgences at all, one must of course be free from mortal sin. Contrition,—not confession and Communion,—is required.
- c) At the very least, there must be a pious recollection and remembrance,—if not actual meditation,—on Our Lord's Passion.
- d) Physical strength permitting, the person,—or the group,—using the Station Crucifix, recite the "Our Father," "Hail Mary" and "Glory be" twenty times without a notable interruption.

Should their weakness make it impossible to recite these prayers twenty times, they can gain the indulgences by making an oral act of contrition and conclude it by the prayer,—“We pray Thee, therefore, come to the assistance of Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed by Thy Precious Blood!”, then adding at least three times “Our Father,” “Hail Mary” and “Glory be” in their heart,—while someone else says them aloud,—and reflect briefly on the Passion of Christ. If not even this is possible, the sick may gain a plenary indulgence by kissing or even by merely looking upon the Crucifix in the hands of another, and reciting a short prayer or ejaculation in honor of the Passion and Death of Our Lord.

If they cannot even say an ejaculation, simply kissing or looking upon the Crucifix suffices to gain a Plenary Indulgence.

**How does the Church signify her approval of the Stations? How does she encourage us to meditate upon Our Lord's Passion and Death?**

By all but bribing her children with the most persuasive power, the most attractive gifts at her disposal in her spiritual Treasury.

The faithful, whether alone or in congregation, who perform this pious exercise with at least a contrite heart, may gain:

- a) a plenary indulgence every time they complete the Stations in a Church or place where they have been rightfully erected.
- b) another plenary indulgence if they receive Holy Communion on the morning of the day on which they make the Stations,—or if, having made the Stations ten times, they receive Holy Communion on any day of the following month.
- c) a partial indulgence of ten years and ten times forty days (the length of a Lenten fast) for each Station visited,

if for some reason, they were interrupted and could not complete the Stations.

- d) Those who are using a Station Crucifix are entitled to a partial indulgence of ten years for each recitation of "Our Father," "Hail Mary" and "Glory be" if they were reasonably prevented from completing all of the prescribed prayers.

By these liberal indulgences, like so many blandishments, the Church would coax us to that which every right-thinking Christian perceives to be not only a salutary practice, but a downright duty,—meditation upon Our Divine Master's Sufferings and Death.

**What is the "usual form" for making the Stations of the Cross?**

- 1) Movement from one Station to the next, as far as the attendance and the location of the Stations permit. For congregational purposes, it suffices if the priest, accompanied by two acolytes, goes from Station to Station, while the congregation responds to the usual prayers from their pews. It is advisable that the people rise and genuflect at each Station with the priest.
- 2) Meditation on the Passion of Our Lord in at least a general way, and accord-

ing to the measure of one's ability. It suffices to know that the Crosses visited represent the places where Our Lord suffered, and to sympathize with Him. Any prayers, however much suggested, are not required.

- 3) The Visitation of the Fourteen Stations should be one continuous uninterrupted act. One may interrupt the Stations to hear Mass or to receive the Sacraments.

#### NOTE

(What we have said above about the Station Crucifix, the Indulgences, and the "Usual Form" of the Stations, summarizes rather adequately the general legislation on these subjects. Those who wish more detailed and authoritative information on the Stations, may consult such liturgical works as "Pastoral Companion" (Bonzelet), "Matters Liturgical" (Wuest-Mullaney) and "The Raccolta".)















828589