



***Praying the Stations of the Cross  
with Meditations Written  
By King's Students, Faculty, & Staff***

At the cross her station keeping,  
Mary stood in sorrow, weeping,  
When her Son was crucified.



V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

**The First Station:** Jesus Is Condemned To Death

As we embark on the spiritual journey offered by the Stations of the Cross, we're confronted with two powerful terms—condemnation and death. While we can experience a good deal of personal growth reflecting on individual level condemnation—the type we may have a tendency to issue when we encounter someone whose actions we disapprove of, or someone who doesn't share our values, cultural mores, or religious beliefs—let's not forget about the societal level of condemnation we permit to happen, and ask ourselves

why we allow it—or ignore it—and what we can do to shake ourselves from our complacency.

When we consider what it meant for Jesus to be condemned to death at the hands of the state—in the person of Pontius Pilate—we might ask, was it indifference or fear that motivated the crowds and so-called religious leaders to fail to protect him and even endorse the death of Jesus? Did they not care that the state was going to inflict pain and torture upon an innocent man? Were they afraid his radical message of love and forgiveness would upend the social order and erode their privileged positions in society? As Christians, we like to think we would have had the courage to speak up and defend Jesus, but would we have?

If we're going to ask provocative questions about the people of Jesus's time, we also need to ask ourselves: is it indifference or fear that keeps us from speaking out against injustices today, including the execution of prisoners by the state—or worse, the killing of people who were not guilty of killing another person? Of what are we afraid when we don't demand that governments stop condemning innocent children to death from weapons produced and sold by our own country? Why are we indifferent to the relatively high rates of maternal and infant mortality, malnutrition and poverty among some marginalized groups in this country? Does our indifference not condemn them to suffering and death just as real as that endured by Jesus?

If we are to carry the cross with Jesus, we must be alert to those ways we can spare our sisters and brothers from condemnation and death.

Meditation by Margarita M. Rose, Ph.D., Professor of Economics

While she waited in her anguish,  
Seeing Christ in torment languish,  
Bitter sorrow pierced her heart.

V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

**The Fourteenth Station:** Jesus Is Laid In The Tomb

In this time of Covid, nothing is usual. In our modern society, with all of our differences, it's rare to truly share something in common on a wide scale. To some degree, this Lent, we can all relate to a pervasiveness of death and loss.

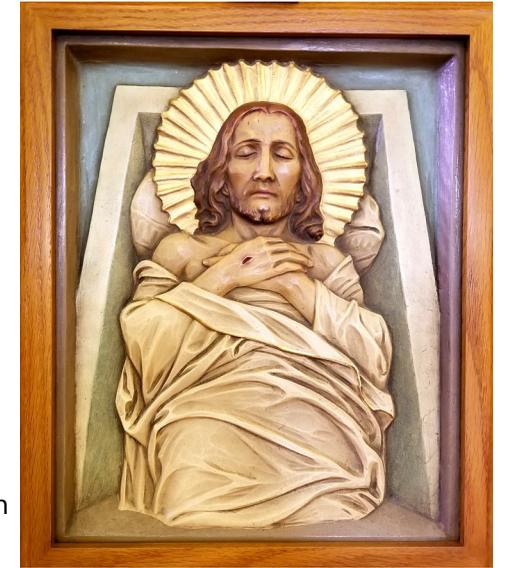
For the early Christian community, Jesus's death was the central shared feature. In the Fourteenth Station of the Cross, the unfair, brutal killing via the crucifixion has given way to the peace of an end to Jesus's physical pain. It was a liminal time. The Fourteenth Station is crafted to show us this liminality. The image of Jesus being laid in the tomb is one of finality and yet, as Christians, seems to us unfinished. Eventually, as we know in this familiar history, out of deep and unexpected loss emerged a faith community that would once again know joy and hope, through rebuilding and remembering.

In this liminal time, with vaccines rolling out and new challenges still arriving daily, how will we wait and act in anticipation of resurrection? How can we put one foot in front of the other and try to live in compassionate service of those who grieve or are afraid?

As we close our observance of the Stations of the Cross, we ask: Can we be like the followers of Jesus and their families and friends who, in their time of uncertainty and in Jesus's memory, built a new way forward to house God's eternal message of hope?

Meditation by Margaret Kowalsky, M.T.S., Director, Office of Study Abroad

Let me to your love be taken,  
Let my soul in death awaken  
To the joys of Paradise.





V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

**The Thirteenth Station:** Jesus Is Taken Down From The Cross

What can we do when there is no hope? When things get difficult there is usually some chance that things may get better, that the worst we fear will not take place. But then there are times when hope leaves us. Perhaps it is the death of a loved one, a firing from a job, or the news of a devastating illness. Like those who helped take Jesus' body down, we can't transport ourselves into another reality. We are numb and empty, foreigners in our new lives. Nothing rushes in to fill the space of what is gone.

Our task at such times is often just to keep moving, almost despite ourselves, because hope is not pulling us forward. And that can be a hard task. There is loss that is real, there is pain that is now, and the notion of fulfillment, relief or closeness tomorrow seems empty.

When we see the body of Jesus taken down from the cross, we do not then confront the resurrection, either his or ours. We pray for the grace to continue, and the strength to share the pain of others as we are able.

God, remain with us in our tears.

Meditation by William Bolan. Ph.D., Director of the Shoal Center for Community Engagement

Savior, when my life shall leave me,  
Through your mother's prayers receive me  
With the fruits of victory.



V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

**The Second Station:** Jesus Carries His Cross

Frequently we try to run away from our cross. We're afraid of it. We often complain about the problems that occur in our lives. We continually ask God why bad things are happening to us, even when following his word. We're good people; don't we deserve the best for ourselves?

But Mary, the mother of Jesus, tells us to forget about the reasons for our problems and reminds us to be ready and to be strong. Mary is suffering just like Jesus, just like us, but she reminds us not to lose faith in the Lord. Mary understands there is a reason behind our sufferings and our sadness.

My aunt always says that God never gives us a challenge that we cannot endure. Therefore, we must not run away from our problems but embrace them and fight. Let's not be afraid, but fight, because the Lord will provide us with the strength and courage we need. Let's all carry our crosses without fear, with dignity, and never losing faith in the Lord.

Meditation by Christian Hernandez, Class of 2023

With what pain and desolation,  
With what noble resignation,  
Mary watched her dying Son.



V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

**The Third Station:** Jesus Falls The First Time

The multiple Oscar-winning film Chariots of Fire shares the story of two British athletes who were gold-medal runners at the 1924 Olympics in Paris: Eric Liddell, a Scottish Christian, and Harold Abrahams, an English Jew. In the film, in order to gauge

the man who may be his competitor in the Olympic games, Abrahams comes to watch Liddell compete in a quarter-mile race. Heading into the first curve of the track, one of the other runners knocks Eric Liddell, pushing him off the track. He falls.

It seems the race is over for him. But Liddell gets up and, though by now far behind the other runners, takes off after them. He pushes himself. And pushes. And pushes. And catches up, first with those in the rear, but then, through determination, with the frontrunner, who makes the mistake of looking behind and beside him to keep an eye on Liddell. Liddell overtakes him and wins the race.

A professional trainer who was present comes up to Liddell after the race and tells him, "That's not the prettiest quarter I've ever seen, Mr. Liddell, but certainly the bravest."

As the Epistle to the Hebrews challenges us, "Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame..." (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Meditation by Rev. Russ McDougall, C.S.C., Campus Minister, Lecturer in Theology

Ever patient in her yearning,  
Though her tear-filled eyes were burning,  
Mary gazed upon her Son.

V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

**The Twelfth Station:** Jesus Dies On The Cross



Coming onto a year of our community experiencing this pandemic, I believe that all of us have been touched by death in one way or another. We often hear that death is a natural part of life, and not to be sad but know that our loved ones are in a better place—and so many other sayings created to help ease our grief and be happy. While those sayings are true and come from a good place, we should also learn to accept grief and feel it. Do not push it down, avoid it, run from it. The fastest way to feel better is to allow yourself to feel everything and give yourself time and patience.

Working in an ICU during a pandemic, I have been face to face with death on multiple occasions—and every time you can see the family's reaction, and every time you can only do so much to help, because they bear the brunt of their of feelings and emotions.

The Mother of God felt such tremendous pain and sorrow as only a mother can while watching her child die in front of her eyes. But she grieved and she moved forward, knowing that she will see her Son again. We can ask God to help us carry our burdens, but in the end, they are still something that we must go through. And He is right next to us every step of the way, encouraging us in whatever way we need.

Meditation by Olena Czabala, Class of 2021

Virgin, in your love befriend me,  
At the Judgment day defend me.  
Help me by your constant prayer.



V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

**The Eleventh Station:** Jesus Is Nailed To The Cross

What inspires you? In your darkest moments, what comes to mind that keeps you going? Is it your family? Your friends? Yourself? At a time like this, with the world in a constant state of chaos and panic, it is easy to lose faith and forgo the paths we are meant to take. Rather than succumbing to this mindset, we must hold fast and stay focused.

Nailed to the cross, our Savior held fast and endured pain for our sake. From his pain, we draw inspiration. We learn that overcoming obstacles is a necessary part of life that builds character. Often times we allow ourselves to give up in the face of adversity, but I urge us all to push through. Think of the Lord and his sacrifice. Have hope, stay inspired. When you feel yourself floating, find your anchor. Take this time to express gratitude, patience, and perseverance.

Isaiah 40:31 states, "those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint." In this time of reflection, we must look within ourselves and find the things that motivate us. Hold on to those things. Serve as an inspiration to others. The pain that we feel on earth is temporary, but the kingdom of God is forever.

Meditation by Theodora C. Abah, Class of 2021

Fairest maid of all creation,  
Queen of hope and consolation,  
Let me feel your grief sublime.

V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

**The Fourth Station:** Jesus Meets His Sorrowful  
Mother

Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me." Let us not look at the cross as just two pieces of wood that forms a lower case 't'. There is also a saying that reads... "That's my cross I have to carry". This quote looks at the cross as struggles and strains on our life that keep us weighed down. But I challenge you not to think of the cross in this self-pitying way either. In the days of Christ when someone walked with the cross over their shoulder that meant one thing...death.

I am a mother of 4 children: Ijahnae 16, Abel 14, Tae'Bron 3, and Jae'Leigh 1. As a mom I am willing to do anything for my children. Even to the point of risking my life for them in any emergency. To be honest, even things that are not really emergency, like jumping off the third step of the house, or my one year old trying to run when she can barely walk yet. I would not think twice about risking my life because there is an overabundant and sacrificial love I have for them. I would deny myself for them. No body that is more into themselves would be willing to make that sacrifice for their children and loved ones.

Could you deny yourself for Christ? Picking up the cross could ultimately mean death/tragedy/trials. And by knowing that is the cross you are picking up, could you love him enough to still follow him? Just like a mom, nobody that is more into themselves would be able to fully be obedient to "Take up your cross and follow me". Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means the loss of your friends? Are you willing to follow Christ if it means the loss of your possessions? Are you willing to follow Christ if it means public humiliation? In some places in the world there is no freedom to worship Christ...it really does mean death.

God loved the world so much that he gave his Son for you and me, and forgave past present and future sins. For all that and more...are you willing to take up your cross and follow Jesus? It is not to say that evil and bad will follow you and there will never be a moment of joy, but for my kids to know that in the worst of situations that they can count on me, it is obvious that I will also be there for the best of days as well. In the movie Bad Boys they say it best: "We ride together, we die together. Bad Boys for life."

You are not forced to take up the cross. It is a choice that you will make out of the love you have for Jesus. I am not forced to take care of my children...but the joy I have with them surpasses the fleeting feelings of sadness or anger. Ever since I accepted Christ as Lord and Savior of my life, it isn't easy to take up the Cross, but the joy and peace I have following him even when the uncertainties arise in my life, I am still committed to taking up my cross and following him.

Meditation by Jasmine L. Giddings, Director of Multicultural and International Student Programs

Who, that sorrow contemplating,  
On that passion meditating,  
Would not share the Virgin's grief?





V. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

### **The Fifth Station: Simon Helps Jesus To Carry The Cross**

Simon was a man in a crowd, an observer of Jesus' procession to his crucifixion. In an instant Simon's life was changed forever when he was chosen to bear the Cross of Jesus. Simon must have felt the blood and sweat of Jesus and seen His beaten, battered, and broken body. Simon must have heard the insults, the shouting, and the taunting from the crowd when he took up the Cross of Jesus as compelled by the soldiers, while Je-

sus, the Son of God, King of the Universe, had the humility to allow Simon to help bear His Cross in order that He may save the World from sin.

Our lives can change in an instant. We do not know when we will be asked or what cross we will be compelled to bear. Will we be strong enough to bear the cross put upon us? Will we become discouraged? Will we be afraid? Will we be insulted, chastised, or physically and emotionally harmed? Will we have the endurance to see it through?

Will we have the humility to allow others, whether family, friend, or stranger, to help us bear our own crosses? Will we have the faith to let Jesus help us bear our own crosses?

Will we be aware and willing when others need us to help bear their crosses? It may not always be obvious as many, including ourselves, will try to hide their crosses from others while desperately clinging to hope that another will offer to lighten the load, even if only for a few moments.

Jesus understands our struggle in our humanity to bear our crosses.

Jesus understands our struggle to allow others to help us bear our crosses.

Jesus understands our lack of understanding when given the opportunity to help others bear their crosses.

Lord Jesus, help us to act and to have strength through you to bear our own and others crosses, and help us to have the humility to accept your love and the love of others while doing so.

Meditation by Christopher O'Brien, Ph.D., LAT, ATC  
Dean of Health Sciences, Associate Clinical Professor of Sports Medicine

Christ she saw, for our salvation  
Scourged with cruel acclamation,  
Bruised and beaten by the rod.

V. We adore you, O Christ, and we praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

### **The Tenth Station: Jesus Is Stripped Of His Garments**

After he falls the third time, but prior to his crucifixion, Jesus is stripped of his garments, a gesture of humiliation in an instance when, it seems, death is not enough. But things are not so simple, for if we follow Mark's Gospel in this year's lectionary cycle (B), Jesus has also been *dressed back up* in his garments after having a purple robe placed on him, which is *itself* then stripped away. Moreover, the original garments, given back to Jesus, are *later removed again* when he is taken down from the cross. This makes for a curious set of reversals: the narrative tells of a man who has his clothes forcibly torn away and replaced with a different set of clothes, which are then ripped off in order to put back on the original clothes that will themselves then be stripped away once more after a torturous execution. With all this choreography of dress and undress, what, we might ask, is Mark up to?

In his reading of the Gospel of John, writer Ronald Rolheiser speculates that Jesus' inner garment symbolizes his knowledge that all is possible in God. Moving this thought to Mark, could we say that as we encounter Jesus in the 10<sup>th</sup> station, it is this very intimate knowledge that the soldiers are stripping from him? Their effort, then, would be to abandon Jesus to the despair that, other than death, nothing is possible. And if this is the case, then prior to the act of crucifixion, the soldiers are *already* extinguishing life, and with it, hope, in place of which they impose the purple cloak, which mockingly suggests that the living God of the possible is but an idol, a phantom of the wishful imaginary, and that the uncompromisingly brutal fact is that the best a human being can aspire to, in a world where everyone dies, is kingly royalty, all the hallmarks of which, eventually, also pass away.

But now no sooner have the soldiers taken away his clothes and taunted him with this robe than they take it back and return his clothes to him. Why not crucify him without them? It is, arguably, far more degrading, if not less trouble. Maybe it is that these soldiers, these forces of sovereign empire and imperial oppression, somehow catch a glimpse of the futility of it all, and the haste with which they give Jesus back his own clothes, in place of the mocking sentiment with which they stripped them in the first place, bears this time a sense of unspeakable foreboding that compels a kind of restoration, an intuition powerful enough that when they again remove those garments after Jesus breathes his last, these same soldiers carefully split them up and evenly parcel them out. Perhaps suddenly, the divided garments of divinity seem inexplicably more appealing than the haughty garments of humanity, and one wonders whether, when the Magdalene later found the empty tomb, the speed with which she ran to the other disciples carried her so quickly on her way that she failed to see the already forgotten and fading plum colored rag that had been cast to the side of the road by hands that had once pierced in death the One whose garments they now clung to for dear life.

Meditation by James Ambury, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Philosophy

At the cross, your sorrow sharing,  
All your grief and torment bearing,  
Let me stand and mourn with you.





**The Ninth Station:** Jesus Falls The Third Time

V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

You fell as I,  
Tempted thrice as I  
in a weakened frail state.  
Humbled in need of help:  
for You, the help of brother Simon Cyrene.  
For us, your renewed body.  
One that can no longer faint,  
one that no longer grows thirsty,  
but is filled with the living water.  
With our cross we no longer have to stumble,  
But can freely give our crosses to the One who conquered all sin.  
Led as a lamb to the slaughter,  
The greatest act of love,  
once again reuniting mankind with the Father.

Meditation by Joseph Millus, Class of 2023

Mother, may this prayer be granted:  
That Christ's love may be implanted  
In the depths of my poor soul.



**The Sixth Station:** Veronica Wipes The Face Of Jesus

V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

Every painstaking step Jesus takes is one step closer to his death. The weight of the cross he carries is not from his own faults, but from ours. Fully aware of this, He remains undeterred and continues to trudge on bearing the beatings the soldiers keep inflicting on him, though his face cannot hide his pain and anguish. So moved am I that I cannot stop myself from doing the little I can to help him—but the only thing I have is a cloth. The imprint of his face on the cloth I wipe him with bears the agony of His face.

Lord, I pray that I find the strength and belief to carry my own cross the way Jesus did. I hope I am able to accept my sufferings rather than deny or ignore them. I pray that like Veronica, I also am able to aide and assist people as they carry their own crosses. Let me overcome the fear and laziness that keeps me from following your example. During times of trials and tribulations, help me find the courage to continue on the journey and not to lose faith.

Mediation by Alphina Thopurathu, Class of 2023

Christ she saw with life-blood failing,  
All her anguish unavailing,  
Saw him breathe his very last.



V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

#### **The Seventh Station:** Jesus Falls The Second Time

Even with help, Jesus stumbles and falls to the ground. In deep exhaustion he stares at the earth beneath him. "Remember, you are dust and to dust you will return." He has seen death before. Now he can feel the profound weakness of disability and disease and aging itself, there on his knees, under the weight of his cross.

Jesus is on the ground again. The weight of the cross is pressing on him. Should he give up? I would think of doing so. It would be so easy to surrender, the physical pain is unbearable. However, his purpose outweighs any physical pain put on him. The cross is a symbol of dealing with burdens and problems. We also can rise from our troubles for a second time. We need to rise from our own falls, even while comforting those around us. We must do what seems impossible.

Meditation by Michelle Oliva, Director of Undergraduate Admission, and Colleagues in the Office of Admission

Mary, fount of love's devotion,  
Let me share with true emotion  
All the sorrow you endured.

V. We adore you, O Christ, and we  
praise You.  
R. Because by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

#### **The Eighth Station:** Jesus Meets The Women Of Jerusalem

For years, I attended the stations of the cross every Friday of Lent. As a student in Catholic grade school and high school, the rituals of the Catholic tradition were engrained as sacred habits. So when asked to be part of a virtual Stations of the Cross, I was honored. But admittedly, it has been years since I attended Stations regularly.

My Lenten observances are now private and involve mostly early morning snippets of reflection before getting ready to leave for work. Short reflections on the life and death of Jesus, and his journey on the road to Calvary. Whispers of prayer for continued strength and the ability to focus on the lessons that Jesus' life example showed us of how to "take up the cross and follow him".

Jesus' mission on earth was engrossed in service to others. He continuously taught us that our worldly existence was not about what we could get, but rather what we could give to others. As I consider the 8<sup>th</sup> station, it is poignant that he took that moment in the middle of his own grave suffering, knowing full well that he was walking to his death, to comfort the women of Jerusalem with what seems like an ominous message. "Do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children." Was he foretelling that the women and their loved ones would suffer as he suffered? Or was he challenging them to recognize their own trials and tribulations and to notice the suffering all around them?

This is a very trying time in the history of our world. The rippling effects of the COVID pandemic continue to cause suffering in our own lives and the lives of so many students, coworkers, friends and family. We can weep for ourselves and our children. We can follow Jesus by recognizing our pain and the pain and hurting of those around us. We can "take up the cross" by showing compassion, patience, tenderness, and kindness. Recognizing the pain, fear, apprehension, and isolation of others reminds us to respond with kindness when answering phone calls or speaking to others. We can help soothe and comfort one another by our words and actions. We are called to advise, calm fears, squelch misconceptions, educate and support those suffering in our midst daily.

Meditation by JoAnn Kosik, MHA, PA-C, Director, King's College Student Health Services

Virgin, ever interceding,  
Hear me in my fervent pleading:  
Fire me with your love of Christ.

