

The Way of the Cross with the Carmelite Saints

All: In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: Let us pray,

Lord our God, in your mysterious wisdom you fill out the Passion of Christ through the suffering that his members endure in the many trials of life. As you chose to have the mournful Mother stand by your Son in his agony on the Cross, grant that we too may bring love and comfort to our brothers and sisters in distress. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Leader: The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*At the cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.*

Reader: “When the soul reaches the stage at which it pays little attention to praise, it pays even less attention to disapproval. Blame strengthens the soul: what’s more, it acquires a special and tender love for its persecutors.”

St. Teresa of Jesus

“Take neither great nor little notice of who is with you or against you and try always to please God. Ask Him that His Will be done in you. Love Him intensely, as He deserves to be loved.”

St. John of the Cross

All: Lord, my soul is before You. You know me deeply, You know all about me, You read into my inmost thoughts. There is no space or time in my life when You did not visit me with Your love, with Your friendship. I thank You for all of this, my God. My path in this life is traced out, is certain: with each step, I want to be with You, in joy and in struggle, in peace and in misunderstanding, in company and in solitude. Your presence, O Jesus, makes my soul strong, even in weakness. Amen.

Leader: The Second Station: Jesus Carries His Cross

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*Through her heart, his sorrow sharing,
All his bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword has passed.*

Reader: “Jesus lavishes His crosses as the most certain mark of His tenderness, for He wills to make you like Him. So, why be afraid of not being able to carry the cross without weakening?”

St. Therese of the Child Jesus (The Little Flower)

“He who seeks not the cross of Christ seeks not the glory of Christ... It behooves us not to go without the cross, just as our Beloved did not go without it, even to the death of love...”

St. John of the Cross

All: Lord, so many times I knew Your tenderness in my life. Especially in the painful moments, when I could no longer find words to say, when it was impossible for me to pray, when there was only night... You became near, even in silence, with a barely perceptible touch. I saw You so many times, Jesus, that I could look You in the eye. Then, when the light returned, when the tears were dried, I felt a little more like You, a little more Your child. Amen.

Leader: The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*O how sad and sore distressed,
Was that Mother highly blest
Of the sole begotten One!*

Reader: “The science of the Cross can be gained only when one comes to feel the cross radically. The entire sum of human failures can be blotted out by the expiation of the Cross.”

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

“And if I fall at every moment, in a wholly confident faith I will be helped up by Him. I know that He will forgive me, that He will cancel out everything with a jealous care, and even more, He will ‘despoil’ me, He will ‘free’ me (Rom. 7:24) from all my miseries, from everything that is an obstacle to the divine action.”

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

All: Lord, I know that I do not know You as I should, as I would like. I know that I still have a long journey, walking behind You, following in Your footsteps, even in the shadow of the cross. Humanly speaking, Jesus, I am truly poor, but with You in my heart and in my life, I feel rich, I feel happiness. I do not want to hide myself before You; I open my arms, I open my heart so that You may enter into my poverty with true wealth, which is Your cross. Yes, my Savior: this is a sign of Your love. Amen.

Leader: The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*Christ above in torment hangs,
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying, glorious Son.*

Reader: “The Gospels here place no words in the mouth of Your mother. And You, too, my Jesus speak not a word. Your silence is eloquent.”

Bl. Titus Brandsma

“This Queen of virgins is also Queen of martyrs; but it was again in her heart that the sword pierced (Lk. 2:35), for with her everything took place within... Oh! How beautiful she is to contemplate during her long martyrdom, so serene, enveloped in a kind of majesty that radiates both strength and gentleness... She learned from the Word Himself how those must suffer whom the Father has chosen as victims... those whom He has decided to associate with Himself in the great work of redemption... crucified by love.”

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

All: Lord, I also want to remain in silence, in this moment, to gather that exchange of infinite love that unites You and your Mother. I lift up my eyes, Jesus, and see You, I stay to look at Your face, the eyes of your Son, that reflect the figure of your Mother. You do not speak, but give your Presence: You give Yourself, and You give your Mother. I receive her as my Lady, my dearest Mother. Amen

Leader: The Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry the Cross

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*Is there one who would not weep,
Whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold?*

Reader: "All bear their crosses although these crosses be different. If a person wants to gain freedom of spirit and not always be troubled let him begin by not being frightened by the cross. Then he will see how the Lord helps him carry it."

St. Teresa of Jesus

"The followers of Christ have their place in this battle, and their chief weapon is the cross. What does that mean? The burden of the cross that Christ assumed is that of corrupted human nature, with all its consequences in sin and suffering to which fallen humanity is subjected. The meaning of the way of the cross is to carry this burden out of the world."

Sr. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

All: Lord, I am afraid. I want to flee from every pain, from every trial. All of those times when the shadow of the cross reappears in my life, I struggle to continue in hope. Perhaps I am tired now, Jesus. But I want to try once more, I want to make myself closer to Your heart. I extend my hand and grasp Yours; I offer the little strength I have, the nothing that I am. Only with You will I be able to carry the cross. Amen.

Leader: The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold?*

Reader: "Jesus is not alone on the way of the cross. Today, as then, not only are there adversaries, but there are those who assist Him. Representative of those who love Him and wish to assist Him is Veronica.

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

"... to the soul that is more advanced in love, more conformed to the divine Will, God communicates Himself more. A person who has reached complete conformity and likeness of will has attained total supernatural union and transformation in God."

St. John of the Cross

All: Lord, I have only one desire in my heart: to be Your friend, to walk with You, to share in Your life. I know that You are suffering, walking along the way of sadness. I see so many people around. I also come, I search for You, I make myself as close as possible to You. I want to love You Lord. Together with Veronica, I search Your holy face, O Jesus who are my light. Amen.

Leader: The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with bloody scourges rent.*

Reader: “When you walk in the dark night and in the emptiness of spiritual poverty, you will think that everyone and everything is failing you – including God. But nothing is failing you.”

St. John of the Cross

“We’d never want to fall?... What does it matter, my Jesus, if I fall at each moment; I see my weakness through this, and this is a great gain for me.”

St. Therese of the Child Jesus (The Little Flower)

All: Lord, I miss You. How can You tell me that You are always near, that You share everything with me? I feel the solitude, the sadness, the anxiety. You also fell under the weight of infinite pain from the cross. How can I find You again, my Shepherd? I, the lost sheep, need You my Lord. Rise up again, arise, good Shepherd! Now I will follow You all the days of my life. Amen.

Leader: The Eight Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*For the sins of His own nation
Saw Him hang in desolation
Till His spirit forth He sent.*

Reader: “O Jesus let me weep for myself, for I am nothing but dry wood to be cast on the fire. But You give new life to the dry wood by grafting it onto the wood of the cross.”

Bl. Titus Brandsma

“So, when the divine Master finds a soul generous enough to share His cross, He takes her as a partner in His suffering, and that soul must accept it as proof of the love of Him who wants her to be like Him.”

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

All: Lord, You are my Fire! Like poor wood, by now without life, I only want to throw myself into Your arms. Gather me close, I pray, O Lord! It does not matter if this means that I will need to be united more closely to the cross. Only with You can I be happy again. Our united tears will become a song of joy. Amen.

Leader: The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*O thou Mother! Fount of love,
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with thine accord.*

Reader: “Even though you should fall one hundred times, to prove your love for Him, rise each time with even greater strength.”

St. Therese of the Child Jesus (The Little Flower)

“If you do not fear falling alone, do you presume that you will rise up alone? Consider how much more can be accomplished by two together than by one alone.”

St. John of the Cross

All: Lord, I am ashamed of myself; I fall and fall again. And when I find myself like this, down and without anymore strength in myself, I then understand that the only thin I can do, the only step to take is to enter into myself again, like the lost son in the parable, and there, in the depths of my soul, to rediscover Your love. Clinging to this I can rise up again, only urged on by infinite trust in the tenderness of Your friendship, O my Savior. Amen.

Leader: The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*Make me feel as thou hast felt;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ, my Lord.*

Reader: “The soul that is stripped of self and clothed in Jesus Christ has nothing to fear from the exterior world. Therefore, I renounce myself each day so that Christ may increase in me.”

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

“Who is it that sees the Lord covered with wounds and afflictions with persecutions who will not embrace, love them, and desire them.”

St. Teresa of Jesus

All: Lord, so many times, I have felt stripped of everything that I held precious, indispensable in my life. So many experiences in the world have made me understand that, in the end, nothing remains except Your presence, Your faithful love. I thought, therefore, of leaving behind useless things, perhaps even so many companions that did not bring me to You. Little by little, I stripped myself and re-clothed myself in the most beautiful garment, which is You, my Jesus. Amen.

Leader: The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Mailed to the Cross

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*Holy Mother, pierce me through,
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Savior Crucified.*

Reader: “I resolve to remain in spirit at the foot of the cross to receive the divine dew, the blood falling to the ground with no hastening to gather it up. I then understood that I was to pour it out upon souls.”

St. Therese of the Child Jesus (The Little Flower)

“Crucified inwardly and outwardly with Christ, you will live in this life with fullness and satisfaction of soul, and possess your soul in patience.”

St. John of the Cross

All: Lord, by Your grace, I have arrived at this point, at the foot of the cross. I see You nailed to the wood, but even more to the pain, to love, to Your will to save us. Every drop of blood that falls is a promise of new life, for each of us. O Jesus, I want to learn every day to gather the precious drops of Your words for us, of Your infinite love, and then, without keeping them for me, I want to give them to all those who I meet along the way. Amen.

Leader: The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*Let me share with thee His pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torment died.*

Reader: “Death cannot be bitter for the soul that loves, for in it she finds all sweetness and delight of love. She rejoices over death as she would over the thought of her betrothal and marriage, and she longs for the day and the hour of her death.”

St. John of the Cross

“The Savior hangs before you with a pierced heart. He has spilled His heart’s blood to win your heart... The arms of the Crucified are spread out to draw you to His heart. He wants your life in order to give you His. Hail, cross, our only hope!”

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

All: Lord, Your death is a great school; here I can learn to love, to truly live; here I can find a sense of life. Before You, crucified one, I see that love and pain are one and it is through this that death has not sting. Thank You, Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Leader: The thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live.*

Reader: “You will not arrive at what you desire by following your own path, or even by high contemplation; but only through a great humility and a surrender of the heart.”

St. Therese of the Child Jesus (The Little Flower)

“She is at the foot of the cross, standing, full of strength and courage, and here my Master says to me: ‘Behold you Mother’ (Jn. 19:27). He gives her to me for my Mother... And now that He has returned to the Father and has substituted me for Himself on the cross so that ‘I may suffer in my body what is lacking in His passion for the sake of his body, which is the Church’ (Col. 1:24), the Blessed Virgin is again there to teach me to suffer as He did.”

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

All: Lord, I know that there is nothing great, bright or strong for me to present to You. I have nothing more if not my heart. After this long walk in Your footsteps, through trial and the pain of the cross, I desire only to give You my heart, my love, my life. I abandon myself to Your embrace; I know that you receive me. Amen.

Leader: The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

Leader: We adore you O Christ and we bless you.

All: By your Holy cross you have redeemed the world.

*By the cross with thee to stay;
There with thee to weep and pray,
All I ask of thee to give.*

*Virgin of all Virgins blest!
Listen to my fond request:
Let me share thy grief divine.*

Reader: “The soul must empty itself of all that is not God in order to go to God... For Christ, desire to enter into complete nakedness and poverty in everything.”

St. John of the Cross

“It is by the Blood of the cross that he will make peace in my little heaven, so that it may truly be the repose of the Three. He will fill me with Himself; He will bury me with Him; He will make me live again with Him, by His life. Oh my Three... I surrender myself to You as Your prey. Bury Yourself in me that I may bury myself in You until I depart to contemplate in Your light the abyss of Your greatness.”

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

All: Lord, the last step of Your descent – an entrance into the darkness of the tomb. I hoped, arriving here at the top, to see a clearer light, to receive the beneficial rays of the sun. Instead, it is still not time for this. However, I choose to remain with You, to descend also into the obscure solitude of the tomb, of the darkness. I am not afraid, because I believe that Your love is stronger; I know that You will rise and give new life to me. You are Lord, Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life. Amen. Your love is stronger; I know that You will rise and give new life to me. You are Lord, Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life. Amen.