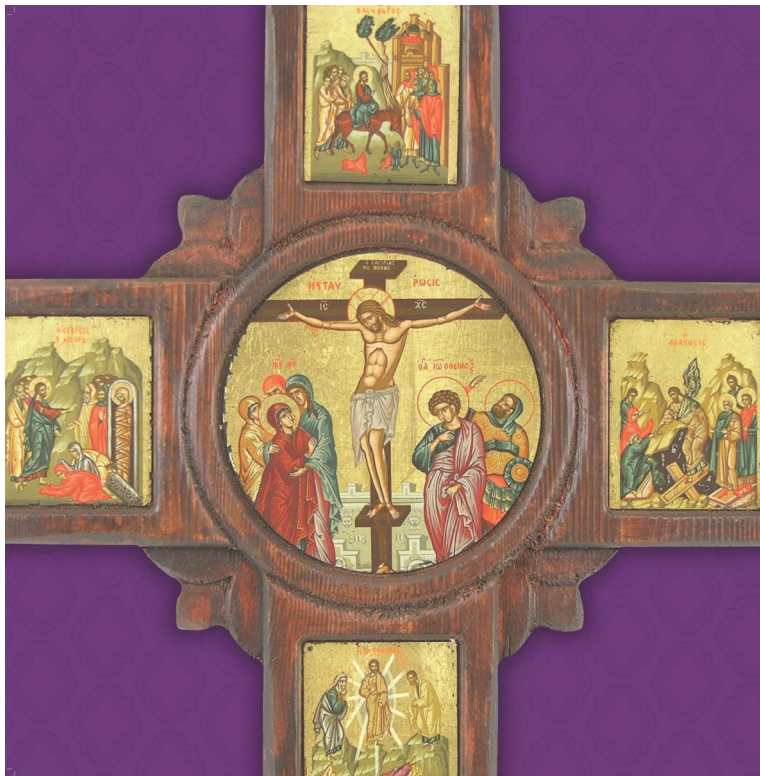


# Stations of the Cross



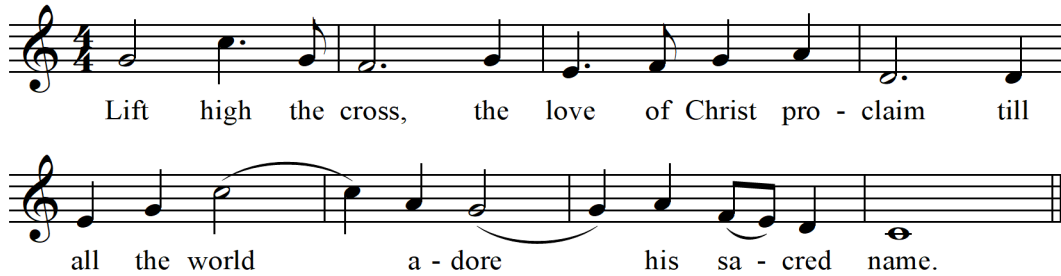
## Bearing the Cross TODAY

by Ann Naffziger

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the sanctuary for the opening prayer.*

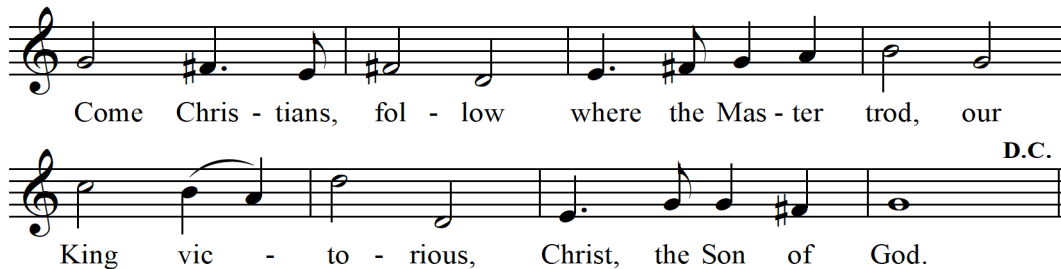
*All stand.*

Refrain:



Musical notation for the Refrain in 4/4 time. The melody is written on a single staff in treble clef. The lyrics are: Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim till all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.

Verse:



Musical notation for the Verse in 4/4 time. The melody is written on a single staff in treble clef. The lyrics are: Come Chris - tians, fol - low where the Mas - ter trod, our King vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God. D.C.

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:18, George W. Kitchin, 1827-1912, and Michael R. Newbolt, 1874-1956, alt.  
Tune: CRUCIFIER, with refrain, Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875-1947; © 1974, Hope Publishing Co.; arr. Todd Wilson.

## Opening Prayer

**Leader:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

**Leader:** Lord Jesus, you came to teach us how to live with great love and compassion. In the end, you were crucified for your faithfulness to your Father and his laws of love.

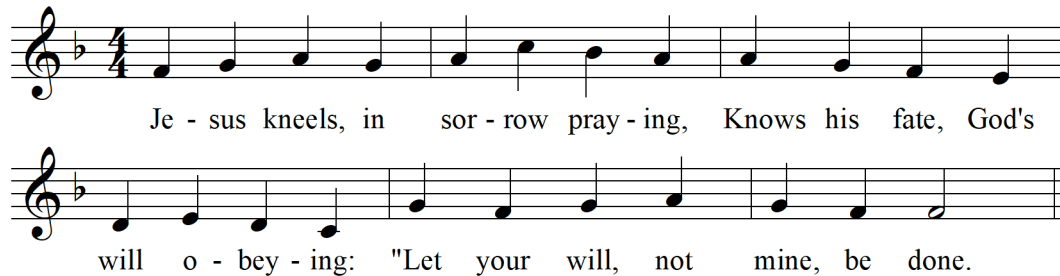
All: We gather to commemorate your suffering on that last day in Jerusalem so that it will not have been in vain. You faced your death with great courage and acceptance and we want to learn from that.

**Leader:** We, too, have crosses to carry in our own lives. Teach us how to carry them with dignity and endurance as you did.

All: Amen.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the first station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 1 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

Introductory Verse



Je - sus kneels, in sor - row pray - ing, Knows his fate, God's  
will o - bey - ing: "Let your will, not mine, be done.

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Tune: STABAT MATER DOLOROSA, 88 7, *Maintzisch Gesangbuch*, Mainz, 1661

**The First Station:  
Jesus is Condemned to Death**

**Leader:** The First Station: Jesus is condemned to death.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 1:** Pontius Pilate sensed that there was something unusual about this prisoner who had been brought before him (Mt 27:11-26). Pilate was reluctant to condemn Jesus, realizing that he had been handed over “out of jealousy,” and warned by his wife that Jesus was innocent. Yet in the face of a crowd that threatened to become violent, Pilate literally washed his hands of the situation and declared himself not responsible for Jesus’ death, even as he ordered Jesus to be flogged and then crucified.

*All kneel.*

All: Christ Jesus, give us the strength and courage to speak out and act against injustice.

**Leader:** Pontius Pilate did not have the strength to stand up to evil and so he became an accomplice to it.

He took the easy way out and gave in to what the crowd wanted rather than rendering justice. He could have set Jesus free. Instead, he condemned him to a torturous death.

Two thousand years later, we must ask ourselves: have we sometimes been an accomplice to evil because we did not stand up to it?

Have we remained silent or reacted out of fear rather than standing up with courage when popular opinion condones intolerance, hatred, or violence?

Have we condemned Jesus all over again, by condemning others?

All: Jesus, help us to stand firm for peace and compassion when fear, hatred, or rage threatens to sweep us away.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the second station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 2 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 1

Meet - ing Pi - late's earth - ly pow - er, Je - sus lives these  
fi - nal hours Con - fi - dent in heav - en's might.

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*The Second Station:  
Jesus Takes Up His Cross*

**Leader:** **The Second Station: Jesus takes up his cross.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.**

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 2:** Jesus never asks us to do anything that he wouldn't do himself. He forgave those who crucified him. He welcomed the outcasts, and he did not pass judgment on the woman caught in adultery. He even took up his own cross, a heavy load of wood for someone who has already been beaten, mocked, and spit upon, and he begins to carry it himself.

*All kneel.*

All: Christ Jesus, forgive us for laying crosses on the shoulders of other people.

**Leader:** **Jesus said "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it" (Lk 9:23-24).**

**We worship a God who became human and did not attempt to escape any of the physical pain or mental anguish that humans experience.**

**We all have our own crosses to bear: injury or illness, the loss of a loved one, unemployment, a housing crisis, a major move, worry for a parent or a child. We can bear them knowing that Jesus knows what it is like.**

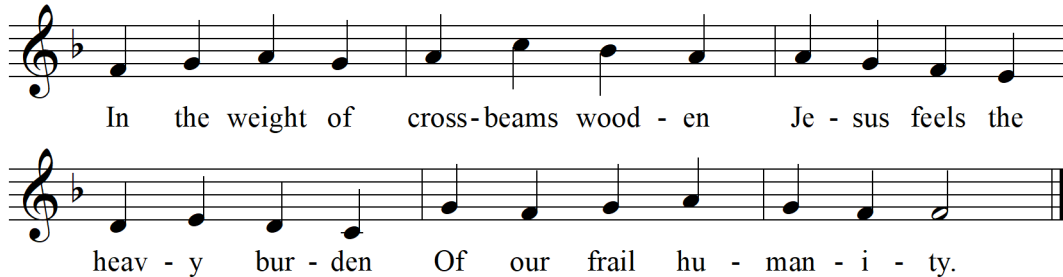
All: Lord Jesus, give us the strength to bear our own crosses.  
Help us to know your presence with us in our pain.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the third station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 1 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the third station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 1 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 2



In the weight of cross-beams wood - en Je - sus feels the  
heav - y bur - den Of our frail hu - man - i - ty.

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*The Third Station:  
Jesus Falls the First Time*

**Leader: The Third Station: Jesus falls the first time.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.**

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 1:** For Jesus' friends and followers who had seen him teaching and working miracles with such authority, watching him fall under the weight of his cross must have been terribly distressing. A man in the prime of his life just a day earlier is now so weak that he can't stand up. He had fed 5,000 hungry people, cured paralytics, and raised Lazarus from the dead, but now he falls, unable to muster the strength to stay on his feet. This is a very, very human Jesus.

*All kneel.*

All: Christ Jesus, we, too, sometimes falter under the weight of the crosses we must bear.  
When we do fall, give us the strength to rise up again.

**Leader:** God the Father doesn't send angels to bear Jesus up. No, God allows him to fall without coming to his rescue. If we couldn't believe in Jesus' humanity before this, we are able to see it now. Like anyone else in that situation, Jesus was crushed under the weight of something no human could bear.

All: Jesus, help us to know that you never abandon us, even when we fall under the weight of the crosses we must bear.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the fourth station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 2 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 3

Stum-bling un - der weight so crush - ing, Jeer - ing crowds up -  
on him rush - ing, Je - sus falls, re - turns to dust.

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

**Leader:** The Fourth Station: Jesus meets his sorrowful mother.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 2:** Jesus was in agony on his way to his crucifixion, certainly Mary was experiencing her own agony in watching him suffer. Not only must she have suffered to see his physical pain and humiliation, but she suffered because she couldn't do a thing to relieve it. Many parents report that they would rather suffer themselves than see their child suffer, but suffering isn't exchangeable.

*All kneel.*

All: Mary, teach us to stand as a witness to the suffering of others, so that they know they are not alone.

**Leader:** After being betrayed and deserted by his closest friends, having the religious authorities unjustly accuse him, and having the crowds turn against him, what must it have meant for Jesus to be met by his mother along his torturous route to death? He would have known she couldn't do a thing to stop his pain, yet her presence must have been a healing balm to him. Amidst the noise and chaos of the jeering crowds, here was someone who loved him completely, fully, and without condition and she didn't run away from him in his hour of greatest pain.

All: Mary, Mother of Sorrows, teach us your compassion and love for all those who are suffering.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the fifth station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 1 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

Verse 4

*All stand.*

She who knew her heart, in sor-row Would be pierced, here  
brave-ly fol-lows In her Son's dis-tress and pain.

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

**Leader:** **The Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the cross. We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.**

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 1:** Mark's gospel tells us, "They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus" (Mk 15:21). By this time, Jesus was clearly so weak that the soldiers feared he wouldn't be able to reach Golgotha under his own power, so Simon gets pressed into service.

What must it have been like for him? Did he do it willingly when he saw how Jesus was suffering? Was he horrified by the violence of it all? Was he repulsed?

*All kneel.*

All: Everyone in this world has a cross to bear, visible or invisible. Help us to be more aware of those carrying heavy burdens so that we may help them on their road.

**Leader:** **And what of Simon's children, Alexander and Rufus? How old were they? Were they there too, watching their father play a part in this traumatic event? The scene must have been frightening and confusing for them, yet they witnessed their father easing the incredible suffering of another man.**

All: Jesus, may we be witnesses of compassion and mercy as we share the burdens of others.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the sixth station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 2 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 5



Si - mon, one with Je - sus bear - ing, Shows the way of  
our own shar - ing, Tak - ing up our dai - ly cross.

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

**Leader:** The Sixth Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

*All genuflect, then stand.*

**All:** Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 2:** So many had abandoned Jesus or turned against him calling for his death. Yet even in his intense pain and suffering there were people who reached out in compassion to ease his pain: his mother standing near so that he knew he wasn't alone, Simon helping to shoulder the cross, and now Veronica who may never have met Jesus before. With her cloth, she reached out to wipe off the blood, spit, sweat, or tears that soiled his face. It was such a small act, but an act of great courage because the soldiers could have beaten her away. She couldn't make Jesus' pain stop, but her tenderness might have eased his anguish for just a moment.

*All kneel.*

**All:** Thank you, Lord, for all the people who have not been afraid to be near me in my times of suffering and have helped to ease my pain.

**Leader:** Jesus preached that whatever we do to the least of his brothers and sisters, we do to him.

**Who in our world are we called to reach out to in courage in order to ease their pain or suffering?**

**Some people may be easier for us to approach than others: a relative grieving the loss of a loved one, a neighborhood child struggling in school, or an elderly neighbor. What about the chronically ill, the homeless person you pass every day, those forgotten in the prison on the outskirts of your city, or the refugees and migrants pouring into our country? Can you recognize Jesus in them? What might you do to wipe their faces?**

All: Help me, Lord, to recognize your face in the faces of all those who are suffering and in anguish. Grant me the courage to reach out to them.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the seventh station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 1 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 6

Bold - ly fac - ing dis - ap - pro - val She, in cleans - ing  
seeks re - mov - al Of the stains of ag - o - ny.

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*The Seventh Station:  
Jesus Falls A Second Time*

**Leader:** **The Seventh Station: Jesus falls a second time.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.**

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 1:** Despite the tender care and presence of his mother, Veronica, and Simon—who is helping him carry the cross—Jesus falls again. He simply doesn't have the strength to stay on his feet after the torture he has suffered. As horrific as his torture was, there are people in this world today who have been—and some who continue to be—tortured just as horrifically, and often for longer periods of time. Prisoners, hostages, refugees, abused children, and victims of domestic violence know the pain of physical violence and psychological anguish.

All: Jesus, you know the pain of people who are still being tortured today. May we do everything in our power to intervene.

*All kneel.*

**Leader:** **We may think we don't know anyone who is experiencing such anguish. The reality is, much suffering is hidden in our neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. It may be we simply don't want to believe the neighbor next door is being beaten, or the child around the corner is being abused, even though there are hints crying out to be recognized.**

**Then there are the millions who are incarcerated or fleeing brutal regimes who may indeed be at a great physical distance from us. As hard as it is to witness to their pain, is there anything we can do to acknowledge it? Can we support legislation to end the death penalty? Can we donate to a reputable aid agency that is working across national lines? Many people are falling in our world. Do we see them?**

All: Jesus, help us to see and respond to those experiencing great suffering so that in responding to them we respond to you.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the eighth station as the verse is sung.*

*Reader 2 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 7

Fall - ing once a - gain, Lord Je - sus Shows the suff - er -  
ing that frees us As we strug - gle on our way.

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### The Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

**Leader:** The Eighth Station: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

*All genuflect, then stand.*

**All:** Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 2:** The gospel of Luke tells us that as Jesus made his way toward Golgotha, “A great number of people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, ‘Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children’ (Lk 23:27-28).

Again we see that despite the tide of violence and vengeance that has turned against Jesus, some women have stood fast in their faithfulness to him. They are not ashamed to raise their voices to cry out and weep at the injustice and inhumanity of these events.

All: Give us the courage, Lord, to speak out against injustice and to stand by the suffering victims.

**Leader:** What should we make of Jesus' response about weeping not for him but for themselves and their children? Perhaps it is because Jesus willingly chose this path knowing the suffering it would entail, so he does not need pity.

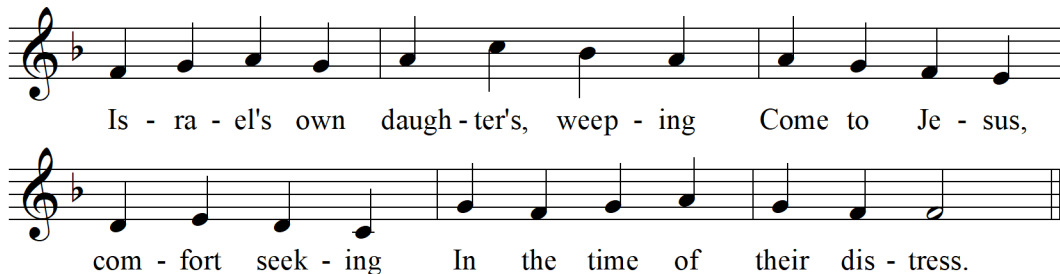
**But he also knows that a world that will choose to execute him will also inflict great suffering on others. He knows that his death will not mean the end of suffering and that those who follow him will also encounter great pain and trials.**

All: Lord, let us never become so hardened that we are not moved in the face of another person's pain.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the ninth station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 1 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

All stand.

Verse 8



Is - ra - el's own daugh - ter's, weep - ing Come to Je - sus,  
com - fort seek - ing In the time of their dis - tress.

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

**Leader:** **The Ninth Station: Jesus falls for the third time.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.**

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 1:** After he had fallen a third time, Jesus may have doubted that he had the strength to get up and continue on his path. Perhaps we, too, have had an experience of such grief or pain that weighed us down so mightily we were unsure we could, or even wanted to, get back up and continue living.

Where did Jesus find the strength to get up again? Where did we find the strength to get up again?

*All kneel.*

All: Jesus, grant that we may provide strength for others who have fallen.

**Leader:** **It is good for us to have a Savior who is fully human,  
a Savior who did not escape the agony and pain of the human  
condition.**

**Because Jesus went through this Passion and death, we have an  
advocate who knows and understands our greatest trials. When  
we are suffering and we fall, we know that Jesus knows what it  
is like.**

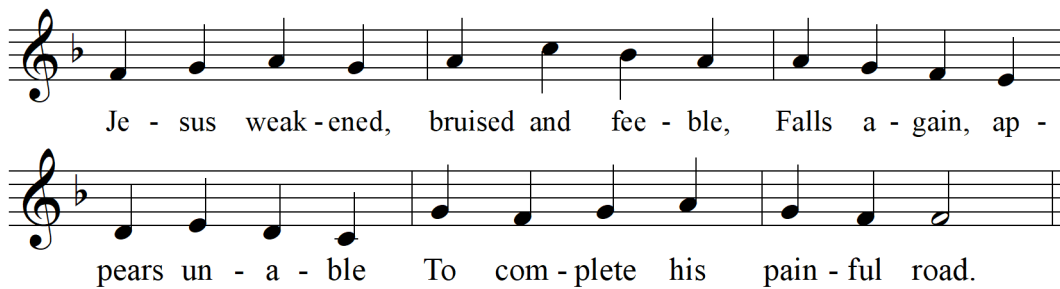
**Because he got up yet again, we can have confidence that we,  
also, can rise again from our fallings, even when we fear we  
might not be able to.**

All: Jesus, grant us the strength to rise up and continue on our paths when we have fallen.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the tenth station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 2 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 9



Je - sus weak - ened, bruised and fee - ble, Falls a - gain, ap -  
pears un - a - ble To com - plete his pain - ful road.

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Tune: STABAT MATER DOLOROSA, 88 7, *Maintzisch Gesangbuch*, Mainz, 1661

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

**Leader:** **The Tenth Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.**

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 2:** Matthew's gospel tells us, "When they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him" (Mt 27:35-36).

After all of the physical torture the soldiers had put Jesus through, they now strip him of any remaining dignity by stripping him of his clothes so that he will suffer even greater humiliation as he hangs on the cross.

How, we might ask, can people be so inhumane as to do that, and then sit down to watch their victim in his suffering? Yet humans continue to humiliate other humans in our world still today.

*All kneel.*

All: Jesus, open our eyes to how you are being stripped of your dignity even now when the least of your brothers and sisters are stripped of theirs.



**Leader:** How is Jesus stripped of his clothes today?

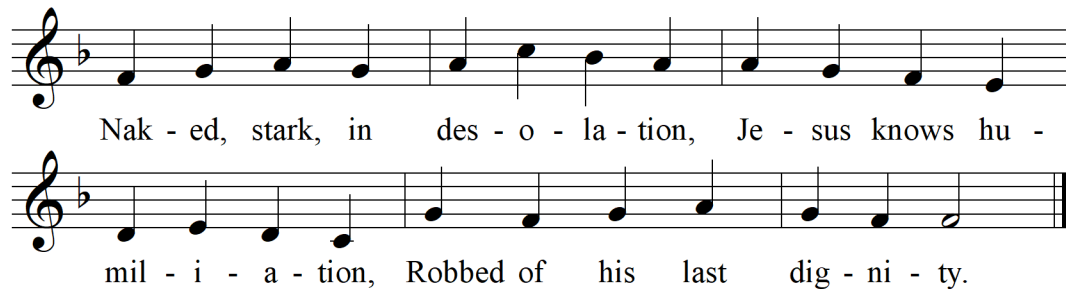
**He is stripped whenever someone is raped. He is stripped when refugees flee their homes in terror. He is stripped when homeless camps are raided. He is stripped whenever a child is abused. He is stripped whenever we betray another's confidence. He is stripped whenever the poor are cheated.**

All: Lord Jesus, help us to see how we contribute to your passion by causing others to suffer. Grant us the courage and the integrity to change our ways.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the eleventh station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 1 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 10



Nak - ed, stark, in des - o - la - tion, Je - sus knows hu -  
mil - i - a - tion, Robbed of his last dig - ni - ty.

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*The Eleventh Station:  
Jesus is Nailed to the Cross*

**Leader:** The Eleventh Station: Jesus is nailed to the cross.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 1:** Anyone who has seen a movie or play about Jesus' crucifixion or has spent any time imagining it has no doubt been disturbed and even sickened by the scene in which Jesus is nailed to the cross.

It is a healthy reaction to a very sick event. To *not* be upset, disturbed, pained, or outraged, is to be calloused and unfeeling. So if this moment in Jesus' passion affects you, be grateful, for it should. It means you still have a heart.

*All kneel.*

All: Jesus, grant that we may never grow callous to your suffering in this world today.

**Leader:** Even as Jesus endured these terrible minutes of the crucifixion, still some friends and loved ones stayed near him, including Mary Magdalene and his mother. Matthew's gospel tells us "many women were also there" (Mt 27:55). They could not do anything to ease his physical agony, but their presence and witness could show him that he was not alone.

**There are so many who are nailed to crosses in our world today: crosses of illness, addiction, poverty, or abuse. It can be painful to stand by them in their suffering, but we are called to witness to their suffering so that they will know they are not alone.**

All: Jesus, give us the strength to stand with those who are in pain so that they may know at least the comfort of our presence.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the twelfth station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 2 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 11

Hands which heal and bless and feed us, Feet which to the  
king - dom lead us, Now are pierced with bru - tal steel.

*The Twelfth Station:  
Jesus Dies on the Cross*

**Leader:** **The Twelfth Station: Jesus dies on the cross.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.**

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 2:** Jesus cries out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt 27:46) and dies. In some ways, it may be troubling to imagine Jesus feeling forsaken by God. Yet in another way, we can take heart in it. Anyone who has ever felt the absence of God or felt forsaken by God in a terrible time, can take comfort that even Jesus knows what that feeling is like. Looking back, we can see how God was still caring for him and present to him in his final hours: in Simon helping him to carry the cross, Veronica wiping his face, his mother Mary staying with him, the women witnessing to him that he wasn’t alone. Yet he couldn’t feel it. So it is with us sometimes. In the midst of a dark time, we may not be able to feel God’s presence, but He is still there.

*All kneel.*

All: God, help us to know your presence with us, even in our times of darkness.

**Leader:** **Finally Jesus’ agony is over and his pain is ended.**

**Perhaps you have known a loved one who died a painful death and you felt a sense of relief that their suffering had ended.**

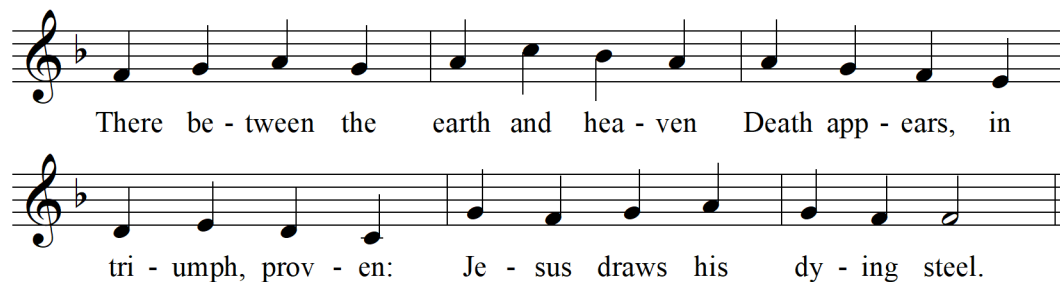
**Yet the pain, horror and confusion of Jesus’ friends and followers has just begun. They don’t understand yet that he will rise again. What are they to do now? What are we to do after the death of a loved one?**

All: Jesus, give us the strength to go on, even in our times of deepest despair.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the thirteenth station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 1 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 12



There be - tween the earth and hea - ven Death app - ears, in  
tri - umph, prov - en: Je - sus draws his dy - ing steel.

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Tune: STABAT MATER DOLOROSA, 88 7, *Mainzisch Gesangbuch*, Mainz, 1661

*The Thirteenth Station:  
Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross*

**Leader:** The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is taken down from the cross.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 1:** According to Matthew's gospel, after Jesus died, a rich man named Joseph of Arimathea, who was also a disciple, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Joseph took the body down and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth.

In 1498 Michaelangelo sculpted the Pieta imagining this moment when Mary held her dead son in her arms. Jesus' suffering was over, but Mary's was not.

All: Mary, Mother of Sorrows, thank you for your faithfulness.

*All kneel.*

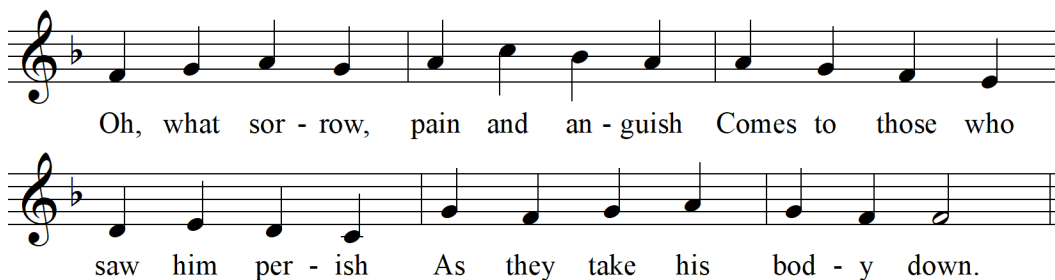
**Leader:** How many countless parents still watch their children die: from malnutrition, disease, gunshot violence, warfare, and accidents? Can we stand by these parents in their suffering? Can we refuse to turn away from their pain? Can we be a source of compassion for them? Can we fight for justice so that more innocent lives are not lost by preventable reasons?

All: Mary, Mother of Sorrows, give us courage and fortitude in the face of unspeakable pain.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to fourteenth station as the verse is sung.  
Reader 2 goes to the cantor stand as the music is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 13



Oh, what sor - row, pain and an - guish Comes to those who  
saw him per - ish As they take his bod - y down.

Text: Alan J. Hommerding, © 2000, 2002, World Library Publications, Inc. All rights reserved.  
Tune: STABAT MATER DOLOROSA, 88 7, *Maintzisch Gesangbuch*, Mainz, 1661

The Fourteenth Station:  
Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

**Leader:** The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is laid in the tomb.  
We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

*All genuflect, then stand.*

All: Because by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

**Reader 2:** After Jesus was wrapped in a clean cloth, Joseph laid him “in his own new tomb which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away.” (Mt 27: 60) Some of the women who had followed Jesus watched all this and surely were stunned by the seeming finality of it all. All of the chaos and violence and horror of the day have ended with this silence. What else could there be to do or to say?

*All kneel.*

All: God of life and God of death, let us know your presence when we feel that life will never be able to come out of death.

**Leader:** We know the ending of this story that the women outside of the tomb didn't know. We know this isn't a final silence. Yet we should not skip over the pain to get to the resurrection.

Jesus taught that just as a grain of wheat must fall into the earth and die before it bears much fruit, so we must go through death in order to come to new life. We would rather skip over the pain, darkness, and death, but Jesus did not, so we will not escape it either.

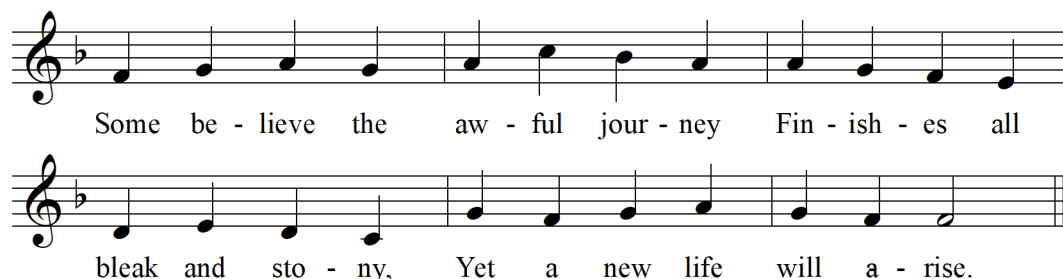
May we have the strength to endure it, knowing that after Jesus' death, we, too, are promised new life.

All: God of life and God of death, give us hope and trust in the resurrection, even in our darkest moments.

*Led by the cross and candles, the presiding minister processes to the sanctuary as the verse is sung.*

*All stand.*

Verse 14



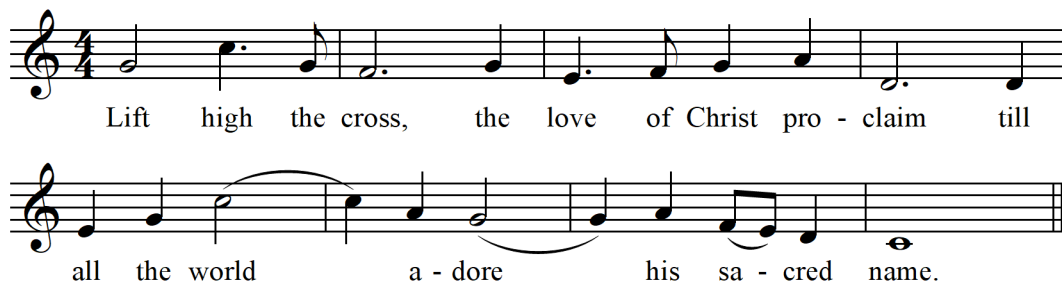
Some be - lieve the aw - ful jour - ney Fin - ish - es all  
bleak and sto - ny, Yet a new life will a - rise.

## Closing Prayer

**Leader:** Jesus, as we go out from here today may we leave with greater compassion and mercy for all who are suffering their own Passions this day.

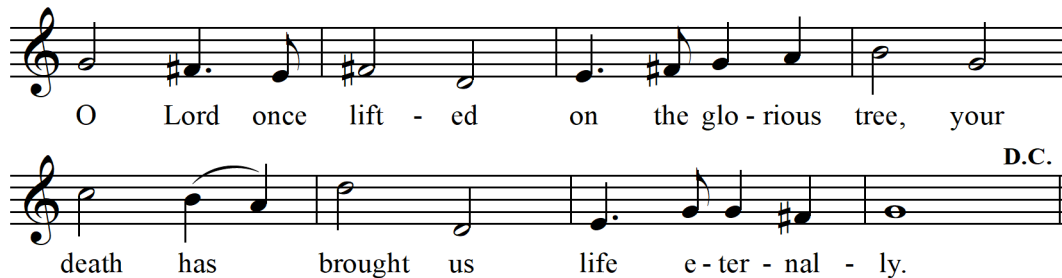
All: Jesus, help us to see your face in the lives of those who are struggling. May we always look to you for strength as we endure our own trials. We ask that you grant us trust that suffering and death will not have the last word because of your death and resurrection. We pray this all in your name.

Refrain:



Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim till  
all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.

Verse:



O Lord once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree, your  
death has brought us life e - ter - nal - ly. **D.C.**

Text: 1 Corinthians 1:18, George W. Kitchin, 1827-1912, and Michael R. Newbolt, 1874-1956, alt.  
Tune: CRUCIFIER, with refrain, Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875-1947; © 1974, Hope Publishing Co.; arr. Todd Wilson.

*After the procession out, the presiding minister returns to the front, welcomes everyone.*

*The speaker(s) is then introduced.*

## Questions for Reflection

**March 4**      **When have you experienced God's profound mercy?  
How have you responded?**

**In what areas of your life do you need God's mercy?**

**March 11**      **When has God given you strength to bear hardship in your  
life? How has that experience deepened your faith in God?**

**What hardship do you face at this time in your life, and how  
might you turn to God for help?**

**March 18**      **How has the love of Christ been poured out upon you?**

**Where do you thirst for the love of Christ?**

**March 25**      **How have you lived as the light of Christ in the world?**

**Where is there darkness in your life that needs to be healed by  
Jesus Christ?**

*At the end of the evening:*

*Fr. Jeff thanks the speaker for his/their presentation.*

*He thanks those who prepared food, set-up, clean-up.*

*Invites everyone to return.*

*Closes with a prayer.*