

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

# *By Your* Cross & Resurrection



FR. MARTIN PABLE, O.F.M. CAP.





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The Stations of the Cross have been a popular devotion among Catholics and other Christians for centuries. The traditional fourteen scenes (“stations”) follow the journey of Jesus as he carries his wooden cross to the hill of Calvary, where he was crucified and died. Devout Christians are drawn to meditate on these scenes in order to draw strength to continue their own spiritual journey.

There are several ways or approaches for “making” the Stations. One is to focus on the person of Jesus: what he endured physically and his corresponding internal, spiritual states; his profound love for us; his compassion and gratitude for the faithful disciples along the way to Calvary; his complete obedience and surrender to the will of his Father in heaven. Another approach would be to meditate on the other persons involved in the Stations: the rough Roman soldiers, the sympathetic people grieving for him, his own mother and other family members and devoted friends.

These Stations use a personal approach: Where am I in each of the fourteen scenes? What kind of response am I called to make as I contemplate each Station? A cautionary alert: Different persons using this booklet may well derive different insights other than the ones I suggest. That is perfectly acceptable. If this small booklet inspires people to draw closer to Jesus Christ and to their brothers and sisters in the human family, I shall be richly rewarded.

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## FIRST STATION

# Jesus Is Condemned to Death

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***We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you,  
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.***

Lord Jesus, when you stood before Pontius Pilate, you knew you were innocent of all the charges made against you. Yet you did not defend yourself, except to remind Pilate that he, like all of us, are obliged to seek and profess the truth in all circumstances. You also knew that this was the “hour” when you were to willingly surrender your life in order to redeem the human family from sin and open for us the way to eternal life. You showed us, as well as Pilate, how to conquer our fears through the power of love.

Have there been times in my life when I allowed my fears—of displeasing others, of losing face, of being criticized—to make choices I knew were wrong? If so, I now ask forgiveness of God and for the grace to do what I know is right when I have to make difficult decisions in the future. More positively, I need to pray for the grace to stand up for what is right, even in the face of social pressure. I need to remember what St. Paul once wrote: “Am I seeking to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a slave of Christ” (Galatians 1:10).

*Lord, give me the courage to do the right thing in spite of my fears of being rejected or ridiculed. May I strive to do always what is pleasing to you without counting the cost.*





## SECOND STATION

# Jesus Takes Up His Cross

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***We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you,  
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.***

Lord Jesus, halfway through your public life, you began to warn your followers that if they want to be your disciples, they must be willing to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow in your footsteps (Matthew 16:24). It must have disappointed you when they did not even respond, but you were patient with their slowness to understand the necessity of suffering for spiritual growth.

“The cross” can take many forms in our own life. Ordinarily we do not experience it as a physical burden, except perhaps when we are afflicted with severe physical pain. But emotionally and spiritually, the cross can cut deeply into our flesh and our spirit: losing a job, seeing our loved one suffer, losing a valued friendship, being criticized or ridiculed when we thought we were doing the right thing. The list goes on.

The only important question here is: How will we respond? We are asked to “take up” our cross, regardless of our feelings: fear, disappointment, hurt, shame, desire to retaliate. Without understanding why this is happening, we need to unite ourselves with Jesus and trust that somehow our bearing of the cross will be life-giving for ourselves and for others.

*Lord Jesus, I do want to be your faithful disciple. Help me to embrace the crosses that will mark my life journey for love of you and for my spiritual good.*

The background of the entire page is a mosaic of religious figures, likely from the Stations of the Cross, rendered in a classical, painterly style. The figures are depicted in various poses, some with halos, and are set against a warm, earthy color palette of browns, tans, and muted reds. The mosaic is composed of rectangular tiles, creating a textured, aged appearance.

# *By Your* Cross & Resurrection

Making the difficult journey to the cross with Jesus reminds us of the suffering he endured for our sake and the new life he won for us in the process. Reflect with Fr. Martin Pable on the meaning of the fourteen traditional Stations of the Cross, and you will draw strength for bearing your own cross as a follower of Jesus.

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