Stations of the Cross

Reflections and Prayers

Written by St. John School

8th Grade Students

**Station 1: Jesus is condemned to death**

It hasn’t felt real yet. Walking into the palace, I know what is about to happen, but it just feels like a bad dream. Pontius Pilate stands there, looking proud, and says “You are condemned to death.” A cheer from the crowd is so loud, it’s deafening. My hands are bound, and will not be unbound until they are on my cross. In this moment, I feel alone. Only God is behind me. But I push forward. I walk with the guards to the start of the road. My journey starts here. Here I am, Lord. I am ready.

Pontius Pilate: Jesus, I see you as man in front of me who has done no wrong. I see you as being struck down upon. I do not want to hurt you. Except, it is my job to make the people happy. When I ask what I should do they shout “Crucify Him.” I hear them mocking you as I watch. I want to do something but cannot. I can only feel sorry for you. I must crucify You because it is what the people want. It is not what I want. This is unjust, Lord. I hope God will save you.

Prayer: God, please guide me to do the right thing and not the most popular thing. Have faith in me and help me into being a better human. God, save me from peer pressure that is making me do the things that I do not want to do. Please help me to act not as Pontius Pilate did and crave to the pressure of the people.

*This reflection is written from the point of view of an onlooker in the crowd as Jesus was condemned to death*

Dear Jesus,

As I look, I see all these people shouting and jeering at you. I can’t help but wonder, what if they had all seen what you can truly do? Humans tend to do things just because others are doing that thing. In this instance, most of this crowd had nothing against you yesterday. But now, consumed by the rage of the mob, they despise you. People will depict Pilate as a bad man, but in reality, I think he did what he did in fear that if he ruled you innocent, he would take your place. And all of these things are reasons you died on the cross for us. To un-cloud our judgement and to bring us to an eternal life in heaven with you and your father.

Prayer:

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen. God, as you look down upon us from heaven, you see us sin. In sacrificing your only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross, you have taken us one step closer to an everlasting relationship with you in heaven. Please help us see that the easy thing is not always the right thing, like when Pilate condemned Jesus to death, instead of doing the right thing and ruling him innocent. Thank you for showing us that. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen

**Station 2: Jesus takes up His cross**

Reflection (Jesus): As the cross is brought to me my anticipation grows. They push the cross towards me, trying to make me weak, I feel nothing but strong. I pick the cross up. It is very heavy, but I know that it is the weight of all the sins I will forgive by doing this for my people. As I am watched by the soldiers and citizens who feel pity for me, I want them to know that I myself am proud. I am proud to be the leader who will soon make such a difference that they will then flourish in life and be forgiven of their sins. However, I do feel pain for my mother. I so dearly wish for her to understand, I know that she will soon though. My people will understand as well. They must believe that I am their savior.

Prayer: Dear God, help me to bear others’ cross. Help me to empathize with those who have sinned and forgive them. Show me how I can help others be forgiven. You are our example, our role model of what to do when things are too much to bear. Remind me that I can carry a heavy load to help others. Show me the path to faith and redemption through the strength you have given me. Amen.

Refection:

When I took up the cross, I felt anger for these people who had condemned me to death but I also felt sorry for them for from now on they have to live with the fact that they helped crucify Gods only son. I would not pick up my cross for me, but I picked it up for all humanity. As I started my long walk I could feel the cross weighing down me, but at that moment I was not thinking about me I was thinking about how I had the world on my shoulders. AsI walked by everyone starting at me some people were crying others were yelling at me.

Prayer:

Jesus helps us every day to face our challenges or the things that keep us from reaching our all time goal. Jesus can you help me remember to be kind and helpful during this time of need. And to reach out to my friends and family experiencing tough times. Jesus thanks you for watching over us every day- what you did by talking up your cross is outstanding.

Reflection:

As I take the cross, I feel nervous but relieved to finally take the cross on. I feel nervous because I know carrying the cross will be difficult and it will be hard for the people who love me to see me bearing this burden. I feel relieved because I’ve waited a long time to carry this cross. I want to take everyone’s problems on to show them how much I love them. I’m thinking of you all as I take the cross and holding hope in my heart for all of you.

Prayer:

Dear Lord, help take up my own cross, like Jesus took up his cross.

Even when things are hard, help me to keep going like Jesus did as he carried his cross.

Even when people doubted Jesus, he kept going.

Lord, I pray that you give me the strength I need to keep going when I doubt myself.

Amen.

**Station 3: Jesus falls the first time**

Jesus: The cross was so heavy. I fell, I fell for the first time. The dirty ground hit my knees. I was so tired. I didn’t want to move. I was on the ground. I waited for help. No one helped me. I hurt, I felt pain, and I laid there. People tell me to get up. I can’t, I feel so weak. I got up to keep walking and I felt so too much pain. I felt weakness shatter through my body. I don’t deserve this, but I will do it for the people.

Prayer: God help us when we hurt. Help up get up when everyone wants to push us down. Help us find the strength to help ourselves overcome hard tasks and help others do the same.

**Station 4: Jesus meets his mother**

Mary: I watched as you trudged up the path slowly. As you got closer, you seemed to be getting farther away. I want to drown out the yelling and screaming of the crowd and protect you from the wrath of the guards. It overwhelms me to see you like this so, when you are close enough, I leap out of the crowd and embrace you. They yelling immediately starts but I still hold you, heart in my throat. After a minute I step back and continue alongside you.

Prayer: God, help us to always stay with you and Jesus, like Mary did even though he was going through terrible times. Help us to see you as someone to rely on when we go through hard times.

Jesus: As I continue the walk to Calvary, I see you. Mary, my mother, and the mother of all believers. I see the pain in your eyes, I feel the sorrow and empathy you show for me as I struggle on this journey. It pains me to know that I, the condemned one, will struggle less than you, my mother. My suffering will be put out soon, and I will join my father, but you will stay with the pain of losing your son.  As my gaze stays on your holy face, I come to realize that my father meant for you to stay on Earth, to guide and teach, and he has a plan for everyone.

Prayer: Dear God, as ourselves and others struggle in life, with school, home or church, help us to remember that we all have a plan that we might not know about, and that they are all different, like when Jesus and Mary suffered for each other, not realizing that they would end up together in Heaven.

**Station5: Simon of Cyrene carries the cross**

Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the weight of the cross so that it does not drag on the ground. And in my opinion, this shows courage and it shows that he was there for Jesus when he needed help. It shows a man who had the strength to walk with Jesus and to bear his cross.

Reflection:

I Simon of Cyrene cannot stand to see our savior Jesus Christ suffer from the weight of this cross. I will help Jesus carry this cross to the final destination. Many may discourage me or be angry but that isn’t important because I'm doing what is right.

Dear God,

Please help those who are hurting right now and in need of support, please give us the strength to do not just what was asked of us but to what is right. Help us to live in Jesus’ name and to be the best possible version of ourselves. Help us to be grateful for our blessings and pray for those who are not as fortunate.

**Reflection**

The cross bears down on me. I am no longer able to bear it. The people around me kick at me and spit on me, and they don’t care if I can get up. The soldiers, however, wish to hurry with my death, and they find a man named Simon. He was from Cyrene, and he was traveling through. He did not seem particularly pleased ant being chosen to help me. But he did what he was told. He picked up one end of the cross, and I got up. I cannot thank him enough. Although he will not know it, he is bound for the kingdom of heaven.

**Prayer**

Dear Jesus, I know that sometimes I may not want to help anyone. Especially if I am doing something I like doing. Please let me give myself freely and help others, even if it is detrimental to myself. Or even if I am ridiculed or shunned for it. Please help me to be able to help others carry their crosses, just as Simon did, without complaining, and let me extend my hands to everyone in need.

**Reflection:**

The path was dirty and rocky, my feet ached, and my stomach churned. Right as my legs were about to give out someone from the crowd came to me and hoisted my cross up and helped me carry my cross on this dreadful journey.

**Prayer:**

Dear Lord, help me to be selfless and giving like Simon was when he stepped out in front of the angry crowd to help Jesus. Help me to recognize that someone is in need like Jesus was and to find the right way to help them.

 **Station 6: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus**

**Reflection:** Veronica: As I stumble through the crowd of yelling and hate, I see Jesus. He looks sad and lonely, as if he has lost all hope. He was weak and tired. I want to help him, but how? What could I ever do that would measure up to Him, the Messiah? The love I have for Jesus was so strong, but I felt too afraid to run out there and help him. What could I do? His face was sweaty, streaked with blood, and covered with dust from the street. I had to help him, but over and over I thought “how?” I grabbed my veil that was protecting me from the hot sun and ran to him. I ran past the guards and I reached my arm out. I wiped his face; I knew this was the least I could do to help him. As I cleansed him, I felt his grace and his beauty within me. He didn’t say anything, he didn’t need to. I could see the gratitude in his eyes. I knew this was enough. What I had done for him was enough. As I took the veil away from his face, there was a reflection. A reflection of the Kings face left on the cloth. I fell to my knees. As he carried the sins of the world upon his back, I knew he would not die in vain. He would soon rejoice in the kingdom of heaven forever.

 **Prayer:** Dear God, Veronica wiped your face when you were in a time of hurt and sorrow. When do I think of others and help them when they are feeling tired and weak? Do I pay enough attention to those in need? Or do I only focus on myself? Help me to be like Veronica. Help me to find the worth in others, no matter how different we are from each other. When I see others in need and I know I can help them, force them on me. Help me to show bravery and kindness no matter the circumstances and regardless of how tired and weak I may be.

Reflection:

As I make my way up the hill everything hurts. My back aches from the heavy weight of the cross. My feet are sore and blistered. It takes everything I have to keep walking. I want to collapse, to give up. As I am thinking these things a woman pushes through the crowd and past the guards. She reaches out a cloth and wipes the blood, sweat, and tears off of my face. I smile at her. She reminds me why I am doing this, why I am trying to bring salvation. It is for these kind people, these kind acts that I will die.

Dear God,

Help me to reach out to others and meet people with kindness like Veronica did. Help me to see the good in people even when it is hard, as Jesus did on his way to Calgary.

Amen.

Reflection:

God, I see this man named Jesus being so brutally tortured and it burns a hole in my heart. I have to do something to ease his pain. Help me have to courage to give kindness to all that are in need. I have wiped his face with a wet towel. There are no words between us, but somehow, I know that he needs to die for us. I step back and let him walk to his death. I look down and see my cloth. There imprinted on it is our savior’s face. He has given me reassurance that this needs to happen, and that he will be back, and he will save us from all sin forever. Thank you, Jesus.

Prayer:

Dear God, help us to be as caring as Veronica that day. Help us to make others happy and take away their pain. Jesus died for us and we will do good deeds in return. Help us to be good neighbors and family. Help us follow Jesus as you commanded. Veronica knew what was right, so help us have the eyes to see what is right or wrong. We will follow the works of Jesus and thrive from them. Jesus will bring us to the light.

Amen

Jesus: I try to keep going but the cross is so heavy. Blood from my forehead trickles into my eyes and down my face. My sweat and blood mix with the dirt and sand of the road as the wind whips more and more sand, gravel, and dust into my nose, mouth and eyes. The crowds jeer and call me names, as I walk the path to Golgotha. Up ahead, a woman pushes through the crowd, and comes out onto the road. She then reaches out to wipe my face with a cool, wet cloth. As her cloth leaves my face, I bless her, and I leave an imprint of myself on the cloth. It is so hard to keep going, but for people like Veronica, and all of the kind hearts in the world, I push on.

Reflection (from Jesus’s point of view):

When Veronica wiped my face with a cloth, I immediately felt better. The cooling on my face reminds me that God is helping me through this. A stranger felt the need to do what she can to help me, and I will be forever grateful.

Prayer:

God, please help me to be kind to everyone I encounter. Even if I don’t know them or there’s nothing in it for me, please help me to be like Veronica and make someone’s day.

Reflection:

When I saw you with the cross, Jesus, I felt pain knowing you were doing this for us. I wanted to do one small thing for you to make this difficult journey easier.

Prayer:

Jesus, Veronica did one small act for you, and it helped you through this hard time. Help me to do acts of kindness for others when they are in pain.

**Station 7: Jesus falls the second time**

Jesus: It was dreadful to know how many people have sinned. Carrying this cross made me think, Is this what I live and die for? For all who have sinned? When I fell, I could feel all the sins from the past wearing me down bit by bit. People were yelling with anger, happiness, and grief.

 Prayer: Please help us remember all our sins and replenish us with good. What our ancestor have done does not define who we are. Please look at the good in us

**Station 8: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem**

Reflection:

As I stumble down the hot dusty road, I see a group of women who are crying for me. My feet hurt, my side aches, and I am exhausted but I go to speak to them. I tell them not to weep for me but for themselves and their children. Then I continue to my death.

Prayer:

Jesus as you carry your cross, help me think more about others. Help me to remember that others have problems too. Help me to think less about myself and more for the world you have created.

**Station 9: Jesus falls the 3rd time**

Reflection:

I have fallen again, but this time I know it is the last. I can sense that we are close to what I was sent here to do, so I can save all of you. With that in my mind, I know I cannot lay on the ground and weep and think what can I do to end this now. I know I need to finish this journey, so I get back on my feet slowly, regaining my balance, but the pain, blood, and sweat are all around me. I need to walk, I need to get back up, I think to myself, and slowly I am standing and taking steps and I know that these steps is going to be the most important in my journey so far.

Prayer:

 Dear Jesus,

I fall sometimes and a few of those times I strive to get right back up, but sometimes, to be honest, I am lazy and find excuses. Then I think to myself, you had no excuse and you always pushed back up no matter the pain that you were in. You pushed back up with that heavy cross on your back and mean words making weights on your ankles. I pray that I will use you as an inspiration when I fall down, so I can remember the all the strength you had. Amen.

Reflection: When Jesus is close to death, he falls a third time. Although he is tired and sore and struggling to get to the top of the hill, he gets up. Why would he use his last bit of energy to receive more pain from being nailed to the cross? It’s because Jesus loves all and wants to do better for everyone.

Prayer: Dear God, may you give Jesus strength and guidance to the top of the hill, may he gain respect of the people of the world when he dies and may he peacefully watch over the people of the world and for the rest of eternity. Amen.

Jesus: As I fall the third time, the blood, the treacherous needles digging into my skull, and the sorrowful devil taunting me as I have had me enough, I feel the butterflies in my stomach, or more as knots of weeds and wire. The ground feels hard, the dirt is everywhere on my face, I can barely see. I can scarcely see the ending of where I will fall and become crucified. I wish I could give my parents, and even my disciples one last story of God. The thought of my family and disciples being treated this way are horrible. My loving and brave mom that has to watch me go through this. My strong, reliable father that has always helped me through life, and always cares for me. I really don’t want them to go through this...

Prayer: Almighty God, please when my peers are going through hard times with nerves of stress , help them find braveness as Mary did and the strength and confidence as Joseph did. And when they fall help them  stand up and keep going as Jesus did until he fell the final time. Amen

**Station 10: Jesus is stripped of his garments**

As I was being stripped of my garments, I could only focus on one thing. My mother Mary’s face. She was filled with pain and sorrow. The only thing I wanted to do is run over and comfort her and to tell her everything is going to be okay. But I was surrounded, by the soldiers ripping off my clothes and dividing them between each other. I couldn’t do anything to help my mother and the people I love. I couldn’t say goodbye and couldn't tell her I love her for the last time. I remained calm and relaxed I didn’t want to worry her any more.  It was getting closer and closer to the end, but I was doing this for a reason so I kept going.

 **Prayer-**

Dear Jesus,

As you were being stripped of your garments, I can’t imagine what you were feeling. Because you went through this pain for me and for everyone. Help me to be grateful for what I have, Help me to support others when they are going through a tough time. Encourage me to go out and take a role in helping my community.

Reflection: I was stripped of my clothes, the only item of value I had. My struggle on the cross should help you let go of material items, and be enriched in faith, and holiness, and live forever in heaven with me.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, you were stripped of your garments, the same way you stripped us from our sin when you died on the cross. Help me be like you, and always forgive others, no matter the cost, even at the cost of my own life.

**Station 11: Jesus is nailed to the cross**

Reflection:

As Jesus is nailed on the cross, I feel the sharp pain of the nails piercing his hands and feet. Jesus was able to be humiliated and nailed to a cross out of love for me. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and forgiveness. Please help me realize the amount of pain and suffering Jesus went through, and help me forgive others, the same way god forgives us.

Prayer:

God, thank you for sending your only son to be crucified for our sins, please help me forgive others for things they have done to me. Thank you, God for continuing to love me and forgive me for my sins. Please help me follow your path.

Reflection:

As my cross is stood up right and my body hanging from the cross trying to stay alive, I look down. Not only do I see a crowed of angry people who have strayed from the path of my Father but I see my mother, my disciples and followers, and my friends. As I hang there slowly dying, I realize my Father's plan. Even though it will hurt he is having me die on this cross to show his love and redeem all of man kinds sins. And as I take my final breath, I yell out my God my God why have you forsaken me?

Prayer:

Jesus please help us go through the bad times just as you did on the cross, when things are looking down for us please help us remember that your suffering was even greater.

Jesus: Getting nailed to the cross for all humans’ sins is the greatest act anybody has done. Thank you God, for sacrificing your me for them. I am forever grateful for all the gifts that you have blessed us with. This act of kindness should change all people's mindset on how they should act. If you sacrificed me, people should be able to give up their time to help others to be on the right path. My death will give a clean slate for them. I hope that take the opportunity to give back and help others.

Jesus, help us to treat everyone with respect and kindness. Help us stay on track with our commitments to you. Do not let our emotions change our decisions. Thank you for sacrificing yourself for our sins.

**Station 12: Jesus dies on the cross**

Reflection

As I hang suspended between heaven and earth, I want to take one last look at my creation, my mother who loved me my disciples who followed me and the people who condemned me to this horrific death. I’m not mad they know not what they do. I close my eyes and breath my last breath.

Prayer

Dear Jesus I know at times I can judge people and hold a grudge please help me to forgive like you did, even though these people did this to you - you were able to forgive

**Reflection:**

Mary: I watched as my son was brutally beaten and hung to die on that cross. You only did good for the people of this world, you should not have ended up like this. You are dead nailed to a cross next to two thieves like you were one of them. Why did this happen, why you? As I watched you let your body let go of life, I remembered that you are the lamb of God. This is your purpose to die for our sins. You want to share what you had with God with everyone else. You do not want the people to mourn your death, but to celebrate it and know you will always be with us and teaching us the ways of God for the rest of our lives.

**Prayer:**

Dear God, please help me to push through any hard times I’m having with school, sports, or any other activity. Guide me to remember the ways Jesus wanted us to carry on after his death. Help me to be strong like Mary did on that day Jesus died on the cross.

Reflection:

Jesus: I slowly breathe in and out, as my end approaches. I understand this has to happen for their sins to be forgiven, but it causes me immense pain. As I take my final breath, I cry out “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Prayer:

Jesus, help me learn to give up things for the greater good. Help me understand how to give things up, without expecting anything in return. Thank you for giving up your life so my sins can be forgiven.

**Reflection:**

As I hang on the cross, I am mocked and spat upon but don’t become angry with the crowd. Instead, I say to them, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” At the ninth hour, I cry out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” and breathe my last. When I die, the curtains of the temple were torn in two, rocks split, saints resurrected from their tombs, appeared to many, and the earth quaked. Upon seeing this, the centurion and others keeping watch over me were filled with awe and declared, “Truly this man was the son of God.” Soldiers came by to break the legs of the crucified men and I, but when they saw I’d already died, they instead pierced my side with a spear. Water and blood came out at once, fulfilling the Scriptures.

**Prayer:**

Jesus,

Even in death you forgave those who mocked and hurt you. You didn’t yell or get mad at the crowd. Help me to do as you did and remain calm and forgive those who make me mad. Help me to have patience and not be so quick to anger. Amen.

Reflection: Here I am, dying on the cross. My mother weeping, heartbroken. I am confused as I shout “my god my god why have you forsaken me”. But I realize I am doing it for the people. For their sins. But this is not the end. I will come back. I will leave you with hope, not despair.

Prayer : God, help us choose our decisions wisely to help us stay away from sin, and help us be able to forgive our brothers and sister as Jesus did when they make a mistake.

**Station 13: Jesus’ body is taken down from the cross**

Reflection:

Dear Jesus,

When I was asked to take your body down from the cross, I felt empathy for your mother and for all the disciples. I felt sad for the world, because once you died there was a shock of sorrow and misery. When I took you down from the cross, I could feel the weight of the world. Then I knew we should out you somewhere safe. I will always remember you.

Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

It must have been awful when you died on that cross, knowing you aren't going to see your mother for a long time. When they took you down from that cross, they probably felt sadness and heartbroken. Sometimes I feel those things too. Please help me, my friends, and my family stay positive during hard times. Especially during this time during the Coronavirus. Please help me have the courage to help others as they helped you come down from the cross. My prayers are in your hands.

Reflection:

I see his body on the cross. He is bruised and bloody. With permission I take him off the cross. I look at your face, this is our savior, he died for our sins.

Prayer:

 Jesus, help me to help other when they are in need. Help me to never stop believing in my faith and follow God like you did.

**Mary:**Jesus, I watch as your broken body is taken down from the cross. The emotion overcomes me. Sorrow that your life was taken, confusion about why you had to end up like this, and anger at the world for tormenting you like this. I want to scream, shout, tear the world apart. But as I look more closely at your peaceful form, I feel something underlying my irrational overreaction. Faith and hope. I reclaim my faith in God, I know that God has a plan for us that is bigger than this.

**Prayer:** God, when the going gets tough in work, school, or any other activity, help me have faith in you and your plan for each and every one of us like Mary did when she saw Jesus being taken off the cross.

 **Station 14: Jesus is laid in the tomb**

Reflection:

As I laid Jesus in the tomb, I observed each wound that slowly led to his death. One on each hand, each foot, and a gash in his side. But his suffering went far beyond what I can see. I can’t even start to comprehend what he had to go through for us, I am still in shock. Today is the day Jesus suffered, the day he felt pain, exhaustion, loss, anger, sorrow, and agony, the day he walked the heavy cross to the place of his own death- the day Jesus died. But tomorrow is the day I will really feel we are at a great loss. Now I know that when I think that I’m not doing good, I can compare what Jesus did for others, and what he went through, and use that to learn to be respectful and caring, just like he was.

Prayer:

God, when life gets hard and things are not going my way, help me to be understanding and caring, and help me to understand that some people’s situations in life are a lot worse than mine, and that I should do whatever I can to help them out.

Reflection: Jesus, I watch as Joseph thoughtfully and carefully lays you in the tomb. I am sad. I am sad and angry that you are taken away from the world. I have to realize the courage that Joseph had while preparing your body. Though your journey on Earth may be over your imprint is not.

Prayer: God, help me to act with courage just like Joseph did. Help me to stand up for others even if it means making myself vulnerable.

Reflection Station 14: As I buried Jesus in the tomb I was sad and worried. I knew he died for the sin of everyone but it was still sad.

Prayer Station 14:  Jesus you died for are sins. You sacrificed yourself for the rest of the world. Help us remember you every day.

Reflection

I am dead.

I was put up on the cross and I breathed my last.

I am now wrapped in burial clothes

And covered in spices according to tradition.

And I am laid in the tomb.

It's done.

… or is it?

And lo’ and behold, I rose again on the third day.

So, it’s not finished?

No, it’s not.

It's only just begun.

For I came to wipe away your sins.

And to give you eternal life.

I came to give you hope, not despair.

Prayer

Dear Jesus,

When times get hard,

We give up.

We throw our hands in the air

And walk away.

I myself am guilty of this too.

However,

Jesus didn’t give up on us.

So, we can find the courage not to give up on him.

Let us be strong enough to hold on.

To not lose hope.