



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Introduction, Contents, Ideas for Use and Scripts

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Introduction:

This Stations of the Cross Kit is primarily designed to facilitate prayer. Since prayer is any conversation with God, these prayer moments can happen privately or in groups. This kit can be used for large congregations, or for small groups such as youth meetings and retreats, or simply loaned to individuals for private reflection.

What is unique about this kit is the use of music. Because this devotional service is designed for teens and adults together, the selection of the songs is done carefully, with both age groups in mind. Each year in February, new songs are selected, and a new kit is produced. For the greatest effect, we recommend you use the newest version.

In addition to the Stations of the Cross on CD One, you will find four additional Holy Week Meditations on CD Two. It is our hope that this ancient devotional will fit well with modern songs, and that you, the current generation of adults and teens, will experience "A Journey You'll Never Forget."

Cornerstone Media would like to thank the Youth Office for the Archdiocese of Louisville, Kentucky for making possible the first version of "Stations of the Cross." Thanks also goes to Jerry Finn for writing the first script. God bless you.

Contents

CD One: STATIONS OF THE CROSS

- Opening Narration
- Station One: Jesus is condemned to death
- Station Two: Jesus accepts his cross
- Station Three: Jesus falls the first time
- Station Four: Jesus meets his sorrowful mother
- Station Five: Simon helps Jesus carry the cross
- Station Six: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus
- Station Seven: Jesus falls the second time
- Station Eight: Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem
- Station Nine: Jesus falls the third time
- Station Ten: Jesus is stripped of his garments
- Station Eleven: Jesus is nailed to the cross
- Station Twelve: Jesus dies on the cross
- Station Thirteen: Jesus is taken down from the cross
- Station Fourteen: Jesus is laid in the tomb
- Closing Prayer

CD Two:

THE THEMES OF HOLY WEEK

- Holy Thursday:
Why Should We Stay?
- Good Friday:
Troubled One's Day
- Good Friday:
The Mind of Jesus Dies
- Holy Saturday and
Easter Sunday:
If Only Jesus Rises

Ideas for Using *Stations of the Cross*

We use the *Stations of the Cross* CD Kit twice each year. Our middle school youth use it as the centerpiece of the Stations of the Cross prayer service held in our church on a Friday evening, open to all parishioners. As the CD plays in the background, the youth re-enact the 14 stations. Because the CD includes teen reflections, no speaking is required by our young people. The service is not only easy to prepare, but prayerful and powerful to parishioners of all ages. It really helps bring the generations of our parish together as we reflect on the greatest sacrifice ever made. We use the *Stations of the Cross* CD Kit again with our high school youth, in a much simpler way. We lead the youth into the church, play the CD in a boom box, and proceed from station to station in our church for each reflection. That's it! This takes very little preparation, and it is a very powerful and meaningful reflection for our teens.

*Aaron Del Monte, Coordinator of Youth Ministry
Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Elk Grove, California*

We look forward to the arrival of Cornerstone Media's *Stations of the Cross* so that our liturgical dance team can use it to present the stations to youth in our parish, our general parishioners, RCIA, two elementary schools, and a high school. In our church, the dancers split into two groups. One group focuses attention on each station by candlelight procession, while the other group dances the musical excerpts from various songs. After the seventh station, the groups switch positions by passing candles in the church aisles and finish the stations' presentation. The conclusion brings them all together with spotlight and candlelight focus on the cross and a silent departure at the end. Both our young people and older people are drawn into the prayer and touched by the experience. Your work and expertise with the music gives us a tool to lead people in this beautiful prayer.

*Joan Beneteau, Coordinator of Youth Ministry
St. John the Baptist Church, Amherstburg, Ontario*

The Youth Group of our parish combine the "Crosswalk" with their annual "30-Hour Famine." This event starts on a Friday during Lent right after lunch when the youth begin to fast, till the next day after 5:15 p.m. Mass when they are fed by our parish. Every year our parish has used the newest version of Cornerstone Media's tape of the *Stations of the Cross* to lead us on our journey through the streets of Flint. We begin in the church with the first station, then we proceed outside, regardless of the weather, and walk through the streets, stopping to pray at each station. This takes us about an hour, and we end with the last station at the doors of the church. It is time for Mass shortly after we arrive. We process down the middle aisle with the eight-foot cross that we had carried on the Crosswalk and lay it down at the foot of the altar.

*Cindy Heck, Youth Ministry Director
St. Michael Church, Flint, Michigan*

Script - CD One: STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Opening Narration:

If we were to visit Jerusalem, we could actually walk the path that Jesus took from the time he was condemned to where he died and was buried. We could stop along the way and see where he was whipped, where he fell and finally was raised on the cross. This ancient prayer, the Way of the Cross, is our remembering the events of the last few hours of Jesus' life. Documented as early as the fourth century, people have been remembering the incredible sorrow, pain and love that drove Jesus on to his death . . . where he died for us.

Praying the way of the Cross is important because it is a journey that each of us walks throughout our life. We deal with pain, sorrow, and love all the time. Being Christian and following Jesus doesn't mean that you won't have to deal with tough times or that you won't have your own cross to carry. It does mean that you will have the strength and help to make it through those times.

As you experience this prayer today, listen and think about what you hear. Follow along the road and stop where Jesus stopped as he wearily and painfully walked to his death. Imagine what it was like for those involved in this journey and get in touch with what they might have felt. But most of all, as you participate in the way of the Cross listen to what the voice of God to you is saying as you take this journey you'll never forget.

We'll begin each station with this prayer: *Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.* Every time you hear that, please respond: *You are the Savior of the world.* OK, let's go—

The First Station: Jesus is condemned to death

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: So this is how it all begins . . . sentenced like a common criminal. Could these really be the same people who cried "Hosanna" and wanted to make me king only days ago? Now they're screaming for me to be crucified. Even the lies they've made up about me don't deserve this kind of punishment.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: How often do I go along with the crowd instead of standing up for what I believe in? When do I let others control my thinking because I want to be their friend? Would I have joined this crowd condemning Jesus? Lord, there were so many people willing to believe the lies told about you and go along with it. Give me the strength to stand up for what I believe in. Please forgive me when I don't do what I know is right and I go along with the crowd. I'm sorry for the times I might have hurt others because of this.

SONG: *Maybe / Sick Puppies*

The Second Station: Jesus accepts his cross

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: Father, your will is what I want to do here. Give me the strength to carry this heavy cross and with it, the injustices of the world. I know this is just the beginning of a tough and lonely walk, so please walk it with me.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: Lord, you were accused of something wrong and were forced to carry a huge, heavy cross to your death. How often do I get accused of things that I didn't do or which weren't my fault? How do I deal with things that aren't fair? Jesus, help me to be as courageous as you are. Show me how to stand up for the truth. Help me to accept the burdens of my life like you accepted the burden of your cross.

SONG: *What Do You Got / Bon Jovi*

The Third Station: Jesus falls the first time

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: How many times have I walked along here? I never dreamed it would turn out like this . . . let me get up . . . must get up . . . will get up . . . much further . . . more difficult . . . wearing this cross.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: What are some things that cause me to stumble and fall? How do I handle it when I "fall"? Do I just quit instead of getting up and going on? Jesus, even though you have been beaten, whipped, crowned with thorns, and given a heavy cross to carry, you got up when you fell. Inspire me please, to get up when I fall.

SONG: *I Won't Let Go / Rascal Flatts*

The Fourth Station: Jesus meets his sorrowful mother

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: This is difficult enough on my own – but please, not in her presence. As much as it hurts me, I know it hurts her more. Mom, you don't deserve this. All you've ever done is love me. Please don't cry. I've got to do this.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: Sometimes, I forget the pain I bring to people who love me. When I make selfish choices, sometimes others are hurt and I don't even care. Jesus, it must have been awful to look into your mother's eyes at such a terrible time. Help me to remember how much love it takes to care for someone. Give me understanding when those who take care of me try to shield me from getting hurt. Help me see their love . . . teach me to love this deeply too.

SONG: *Hidden Away* / Josh Groban

The Fifth Station: Simon helps Jesus carry the cross

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: I don't know who you are my friend, but thanks for helping me. I really need it right now. Every part of my body hurts from their beatings, but my heart hurts the most. Your name is Simon? Thanks Simon, for leaving the safety of the crowd to help me.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: Jesus, you accepted help when things were tough. How willing am I to let others help me, or do I see needing help as a sign of weakness? I can't go through life alone. I have to let people help me along the way, even people whom I don't know very well. Let me be strong in my weakness by trusting the hand that reaches out to me.

SONG: *Wait For Me* / *Theory of a Deadman*

The Sixth Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: This woman is willing to take such a risk for me. Doesn't she see how crazy everyone is getting around here? She is liable to be punished for showing that she cares for me. It's comforting to know that others are taking the same risks that I've taken.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: Friends care and their actions show it. Who are the Veronicas in my life? Have I thanked them? How willing am I to be a Veronica for those who are struggling? Jesus, help me to be willing to take the risk of helping someone who needs it. When I see someone struggling, give me the courage to help them in any way I can, even if it means being embarrassed.

SONG: *The Only Exception* / Paramore

The Seventh Station: Jesus falls the second time

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: This is so very difficult. I hurt so badly. I can hardly do this even with help. I'm so tired . . . I'm wearing out . . . and there is still a long way to go.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: How many times have I struggled and fallen again and again even when others were helping me? What am I struggling with that wears me out, hurts me and makes me want to give up? Jesus, sometimes I am overwhelmed with life's hassles. I had hoped that following you would make the path easier, but I can see now that it isn't easy for you either. When I get tired or disgusted and I fall again, remind me that you climbed back on your feet and kept going.

SONG: *I Won't Let Go / Rascal Flatts*

The Eighth Station: Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: You women have understood so well and have been so kind . . . this is very good. Love one another. Take care of each other as you've taken care of me.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: When things are tough, sometimes all I think about is myself. But even in your pain you put aside your feelings and felt the love of others. Help me to do the same. It is so easy to feel sorry for myself. I forget the others who still love me.

SONG: *Glitter in the Air / Pink*

The Ninth Station: Jesus falls the third time

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: I won't give up; I'm not going to let it end here. Father, lift me up. Give me the strength to make it just a little further. I know there's still more for me to do.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: Who are the people who have shown me how to survive? Who has shown me how to get back up and go on with my life, no matter how many times I fall? Jesus, it would have been so easy to give up here . . . but instead you got up again. Sometimes

I feel like giving up too. I know the good news is that you are always with me and you keep reminding me about the people who have helped me survive. Thanks for keeping them in my life. With them around I'll never give up!

SONG: *I Won't Let Go / Rascal Flatts*

The Tenth Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: My body is hurt and now they seek to humiliate me in front of everyone. They have taken everything from me that protects me and keeps me warm. All I have now is myself.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: Embarrassment added to the pain! How do I react when others disrespect me? How many times have I been abused? Handling tough times is hard enough, but to have someone disrespect me on top of that is too much. Lord, even when they stripped you of your dignity they couldn't take away the one thing that kept you going, your love for us. Help me to carry your love and respect on the inside and to show that love and respect on the outside.

SONG: *We Travelled So Far / Mary Chapin Carpenter*

The Eleventh Station: Jesus is nailed to the cross

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: Forgive them Father. They are only doing what others have told them to do. I have become a victim of accusers and abusers, standing far outside the range of these hammers and nails. For every hit, forgive them for what they do.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: Forgive them? How could you say that? Am I forgiving of those who "nail" me? And what about the nails I drive into others? Jesus, I am amazed at how you always forgive people, no matter how much they hurt you. Were you aware of the pain you were going through? Of course you were. Help me to choose not to nail others, and learn your willingness to forgive those who nail me.

SONG: *Your Love / Brandon Heath*

The Twelfth Station: Jesus dies on the cross

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

JESUS' REFLECTION: I'm thirsty . . . I can no longer breathe. Father, forgive them. John, take care of my mother. I'm dying . . . I'm dying. Father, into your hands I give my spirit.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: You gave us all you had. No one could give more. Could I love like this if my life were on the line for my friends? Jesus, you stuck with this 'til the bitter end. You went through pain and suffering beyond what I can imagine. Thank you, Jesus, for giving your all for me . . . for all of us. When I am in pain, you'll be my example, and help me make it through it. I want to be totally committed to loving others. Give me the courage to love like you, no matter what the cost.

SONG: *Beautiful / MercyMe*

The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is taken down from the cross

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: Now, your limp, broken body is taken down from the cross and laid in their arms. I can almost hear them sobbing as they held you for the last time. How do I deal with the loss or death of someone I love? Have I ever finished grieving for the loss of my friend? Have I ever gotten over one of my parents leaving home? Jesus, the feelings you give me are good. Help me learn to be in touch with my feelings and deal with them in an honest and healthy way. When I've lost someone or something and I feel sad or angry, help me understand the sadness, the anger, the disbelief that those who loved you must have felt when they held you that final time after your death.

SONG: *Chances / Five For Fighting*

The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is laid in the tomb

OPENING PRAYER: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

RESPONSE: You are the Savior of the world.

TEENAGER'S REFLECTION: Are there any relationships that I have to "bury" because they've died? How about family members or a friend who died? How do I say good-bye and let go while still keeping the good memories? I wonder what the disciples were thinking as they walked away from the grave. Maybe there was silence; I'd bet there was crying . . . and probably arms around

each other after they said good-bye and left you there. Think of the loneliness, emptiness, hopelessness. Jesus, even in the midst of pain and loss, let me never lose sight of hope. When it seems there is nothing else to hang on to, let me cling to hope and knowledge that in you there is eternal life.

SONG: *Someday / Rob Thomas*

Closing Prayer

Jesus, you walked and died on this way of the cross because you loved me more than life itself. Your body was beaten, bruised and broken for me. You were laid in the tomb, but even death could not end your life. Your death and your resurrection give me hope, and belief that I too can deal with anything that life hands me, as long as you and I share the cross together. I do not stand alone. I know that your risen spirit lives within me and in those around me. And now I am your body here on earth. My arms are your arms reaching out to others. Remembering the way you went to the cross gives me enough hope to get back after falling, and the realization that, as I walk my own way, you and others give me strength, and walk it with me.

Script - CD Two: THE THEMES OF HOLY WEEK

On CD Two, "The Themes of Holy Week," you will find four audio meditations running six to seven minutes in length. Each will focus on a different event or mood of Jesus' life from Holy Thursday through Easter Sunday. There are many ways to use these themes, from playing them as part of a worship service for the whole congregation, to reflection within small groups, to private meditation. You can add your own slides or video, or visualize these audio pieces through mime or dance. Be creative. But most of all, try to get in touch with your own experience in union with the journey of Jesus during these powerful four days.

Track #1: WHY SHOULD I STAY? (Holy Thursday)

Eucharist has become a worship event for hundreds, thousands, even millions of people weekly.

But why are we here? Why do we stay?

The simple table in the upper room no longer stands as a gathering spot of a dozen or so people.

The conversations at that table are now our conversations. The mystery of Jesus given in bread and wine is now given for us. And the ancient contradictions of Jesus' saving love shared at the same table with betrayal and incompetence still are present in our worshipping communities today.

So why should we stay at an imperfect table with imperfect people? Why should we endure sermons that misconnect or ceremonies that seem boringly repetitious? And why are we stunned by betrayal and scandal when it was all part of the first Last Supper?

Whatever good and evil we carry with us in life will be carried with us in every altar of worship. But that is not why we come to the altar.

We come here to be with Jesus, to feel his love, to be saddened by his betrayal, and to let ourselves be changed by his death and resurrection.

We will still sin in the future, but maybe we will sin a little less, and love a little more. We have been seated once again at this huge table with all its people and problems.

But we are still seated here with Jesus.

And that's why we will stay.

SONG: *The Only Exception* / Paramore

Track #2: TROUBLED ONE'S DAY (Good Friday)

Today is the Troubled One's Day. Today is the Day of the Weary One, the Beleaguered One, the Wronged One, the Unfulfilled One. Today is the Day for those whose dreams have not yet come true, whose plans have not worked, whose hands have not created; the day for those whose faith has been muted, whose hopes have been dashed, whose love has been rejected.

Today is our day, my day: ours because there is a part of all of us that cries out for more growth, more happiness than what has come so far; mine because the suffering is so intense, so lonely that no one else could possibly want to share it. And today, into my life walks another One who, like me, is Troubled, Weary, Wronged, Unfulfilled; who has dreamed more anxiously than I, planned more carefully, worked more diligently; whose faith has been challenged, whose hopes have been ridiculed, whose love has been misunderstood; and this person says to all the "me's" in the world: "Come with me: we are going to put this Troubled One to death. We are going to kill the part of me that cannot grow so that all of Me can be free to have Life, and have it more abundantly."

And so today I offer my sacrifice: and my sacrifice, my gift, is my fear: not a very pretty offering, but it's a part of me; and now I can say to my Friend: "Change it; make it more than it is now." And today, the Day of the Troubled One, a change, a consecration takes place that can renew the whole world.

Today, the Troubled One does. And my fear turns to peace, my peace brings joy, and my joy becomes my life.

SONG: *I Won't Let Go / Rascal Flatts*

Track #3: THE MIND OF JESUS DIES (Good Friday)

The light goes out of a child's life, snuffed out by poverty, disease, ignorance, indifference, abuse, and the daily lack of love. The Face of Jesus dies. An unsafe coal mine explodes, trapping thirty miners inside in a morbid death ceremony, leaving thirty families with no one to care for them. And the Arms of Jesus die. An old woman, crippled with arthritis, no longer able to come to be used as a babysitter for the grandchildren, no longer able to walk anywhere, sits in a rest home—alone—in a wheelchair, forgotten by the family who "needed" her a year ago. And the Legs of Jesus die. An alcoholic lies wasted on Second Street, his liver gone, his hopes crushed, his stomach empty, longing for everything, filled with nothing. And the Belly of Jesus dies. The student faced with an uncertain future, uncertain relationships, in an uncertain culture that scorns belief, pelted in class with the decivilization and destruction of life as we know it, wanders into a drugged escape. And the Mind of Jesus dies. People pass one another on the street with a vacant stare. Christians refuse an extended hand in their own churches. Whole generations throwing emotional rocks at one another, each calling the other "useless." The beat no longer goes on. The Heart of Jesus has stopped. The Body of Jesus dies. And Resurrection is our only hope.

Someone once said, "The Spirit gives life." And the Spirit of Jesus, untouched by death, roams the world the way a smile roams a face, the way the sun tans the working arm, the way blood

circulates in the walking leg, the way food nourishes the hungry stomach, the way Truth refreshes the mind, the way Love stimulates the beat of the heart. But the Spirit needs a body to live in, a body to give life to. And we have a Body that needs life, needs it more than ever. I wonder if we can get Body and Spirit together soon and produce another Easter Resurrection.

SONG: *Beautiful / MercyMe*

Track #4: IF ONLY JESUS RISES (Holy Saturday, Easter Sunday)

Easter stares us in the face like a distant sunrise on a freezing winter morning. We admire Jesus rising from the dark cold tomb. But we can feel left behind, standing trapped outside the miracle.

At these moments, we see Easter only as a Jesus Event. But we never get past the Good Friday of our own personal disasters.

We are so attracted to the Cross because we have lived our own suffering, and can relate to the hurt and pain of Jesus.

It's so strange. Jesus was only on the cross three hours, but many of us have left him there most of our lives.

We know him so well on Friday. Then we lose him on Sunday.

We stay Friday believers because we haven't learned or chosen to move beyond our suffering, our fear, and our pain.

We are puzzled by Jesus' Sunday invitation to rise, to live, to heal, and to go to the next level.

The Good News is not that we've suffered and sinned. The Good News is that we're forgiven, mended, alive again.

If only Jesus rises, then we haven't followed him far enough. This time, let's pick up our Friday Crosses and follow Jesus all the way to Sunday, throwing those crosses, as we go, into the fire of God's blazing love.

SONG: *Hidden Away / Josh Groban*



Cornerstone Media, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation that creates tools which promote dialogue on positive and negative values in popular songs, producing both print and audio materials to help parents, teachers, youth ministers, pastors and others who work with teens to communicate better about choices and relationships.