



St. Mary & St. Michael's Parish New Ross

Stations of the Cross



*New Ross Parish Community strives to be a welcoming,
life-giving PEOPLE, nourished by FAITH, WORSHIP of God and
SERVICE of all in the example of Jesus Christ.*



Introduction

MY LORD,

help me prepare to take these fourteen steps
in memory of your Passion.

As each step led you closer to your death
for love Of me, so may I, with each step
die more to myself.

Empty me, Beloved LORD,
of all thoughts
except those that will bring me to a deeper
understanding
of what you endured for my sake.

I offer myself
and my small journey
for all those who today still cause you agony
by perpetuating the rejection you suffered
as God-made-Man.

May we never forget
the depth of your love for us
as you repeatedly forgive our sins
which brought about your death.

LORD, if it is your will
lay my cross on me gently
and grant me the strength to carry it bravely
with you and for love Of you.





Final Prayer

**My LORD, My GOD, My ALL -
the deep sadness and shame I feel
as I have tried to imagine some of what you
suffered for me,
is softened by a gratitude I can never express,
an unfaltering hope in your infinite mercy and
an immovable trust in your undying love.
Possess me, LORD;
the darkness of my sinful being
with the light of your grace
until there is nothing in my thoughts,
words or deeds which can ever offend or
disappoint you again.
LORD, with the words "Thy will be done" —
I willingly accept my cross,
trusting that your love means I shall never be left
to carry it alone.
Amen.**



First Station Jesus condemned to Death



**LORD, teach me
not to judge nor harbour any unkind thoughts
towards others.
I can understand so little
and my judgement will almost always be biased
by motives of jealousy, greed or pride.
Help me, instead, to recognise my own faults
by allowing me to see myself as others see me,
and — especially — as You see me —
and then grant me the strength
to replace my shortcomings
with meekness and generosity of spirit.**



Second Station

The cross is laid on Jesus

TO DENY OURSELVES is to disown ourselves as the centre of our existence.

No matter how blessed we are in this life, we all have our crosses to bear.

Nobody lives a life completely unmarked by pain or tribulation or sorrow or hardship — in mind or body.

There is no escape from the cross. And Christ — fully human — bore the burden of His cross physically for all to see; to show that there is nothing He asks us to endure which He has not endured before us.

**LORD, teach me
that to fight against accepting my cross
adds immensely to its weight.
Show me how to lighten its load
by accepting that it is the will of our Father
that my life should have hardships,
for it is in the darkness of sorrow and pain
that we seek most fervently the light of truth,
and in the chill of loneliness and despair
that we struggle to draw close to the warm flame
of your love for us.**



Fifteenth Station

The Resurrection



WHAT WERE THE INITIAL THOUGHTS going through the heads of John and Peter? After all the anguish of the previous days, the humiliation of Christ's death on the Cross, they could be forgiven for being confused when confronted with the empty tomb; for not remembering that their beloved Lord had promised he would rise again after three days.

It was John, the disciple loved especially by the Lord, who saw, understood and believed first what the others came also to believe.

**LORD, at times it is hard to keep my faith
burning ever brightly.
Sometimes the flame of my belief grows dim,
especially, when I am confronted by the enormity
of my sinfulness
or by the pains and sorrows of this life.
When I struggle with my small crosses,
when I am tempted to ask 'why me?'
help me to remember that in my suffering
I share in yours.
I trust in your promise that I may also share
in your resurrection to supreme happiness
in your presence for all eternity.
MY LORD,
be always with me in this life,
so that I may be with you in the next.**



Fourteenth Station

Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHAEA was described as a prominent member of the Council, a virtuous and upright man who had not agreed with what the others had planned and carried out. His voice was a lone voice, drowned out by the noisy majority. Still he made his views known and having failed to prevent the atrocity, bravely went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. He then carefully wrapped the body, and laid it in a new tomb which he had prepared for his own use.



LORD,
 there will be times when I will have to stand up
 against the majority,
 out against the popular principles
 of an immoral society
 which has rejected the notion of self-denial
 and lives only for self-gratification.
 It might not be easy to stand out from the crowd,
 it might make no difference to anyone,
 but may I never deny what I have learned to be true
 from trying to follow your teaching,
 and your Way of the Cross.



Third Station

Jesus falls the first time



THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE on earth, Our Lord tirelessly forgave sins, cured disease and disability — which had often plagued the sufferers all their lives.
 As we stumble and fall
 from the same weaknesses we may have had for years, may we learn the lesson that God will never abandon us — unless we resolutely abandon Him.

LORD,
 when you fell under the weight of your cross
 which bore my sins,
 you got up again and carried on —
 unswerving in your obedience to your Father.
 Teach me to fix my sights on you,
 to persevere when I fall away from grace
 again and again.
 Let me draw from the mercy you show me,
 the strength to defeat my weaknesses.



Fourth Station

Jesus meets his blessed mother

CAN THERE BE any more agonising pain than seeing the humiliation and indescribable suffering of the one you love most while being powerless to help?



MARY, Mother of God and of Man,
help me to accept with serenity
the hardships and struggles I must witness
in the lives of those I care for and love.
Teach me to identify wisely
when practical help is needed,
when silent support is needed
and when my involvement would mean
unwelcome interference.



Thirteenth Station

Jesus is - taken down from the Cross



AGAIN OUR THOUGHTS turn to the beloved disciple John, to Mary and the other women who loved Jesus. What was there to say? What words of consolation could they offer one another as they tenderly took the bruised, lifeless corpse down from the cross.

Mary, there to the end, bravely hugs the marble-cold body of her Son to herself, as her friends gently prise Him from her arms. It is over; He has gone.

A sword pierced her soul.

LORD,
sometimes it is hard, sometimes impossible,
to see why things happen.
Tragic, heart-breaking things happen to
good people, to children, to the vulnerable —
and the world asks 'why?'
Help us to learn
how to accept what we don't understand
and to trust, to be still
and know that God is always near.
Banish the pride which dictates to us
that we have a right to know everything.
Console us in our grief
and save us from despair.



Twelfth Station

Jesus Dies on the Cross

IT IS ALL OVER. There must some relief as the agony
stops, the taunts die away; the body of Our Lord feels,
hears no more as His life drains away with His blood.
The Son of God has accomplished His Father's will.
To those at the foot of the cross this must have been the
bleakest hour. How would they manage? Why should they
even bother? What had it all been for?
The Mystery of the Cross.

LORD,
we know that your death was not the end,
but the means by which we can reach our end —
our goal.
You died before us to show us
that obedience to the Father's will
and dying to ourselves
is the way to Life.
As those we love reach the end of their lives
on earth,
grant that they may soon join you in perfect
and happiness
and grant us the consolation
which comes from faith and trust in Your mercy.



Fifth Station

Simon helps Jesus carry His Cross

THE TWO SIMONS: one a stranger who probably knew nothing
of Jesus; the other, one of Our Lord's closest and most ardent
friends.
The stranger shouldered some of the weight of
Christ's cross; the friend didn't recognise the burden that
needed to be shared.

**LORD, it isn't always easy
to see where help is needed.
Teach me that to concentrate on my own problems
is to close my eyes to the often greater burdens
of family, friends — and strangers.
May I learn to be less self-absorbed;
let me see how I may lighten the load of others —
and thereby shoulder a tiny part of the weight
of your cross.**





Sixth Station

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus



WHAT MOVED VERONICA to come forward from the surging masses and risk rough treatment from the brutal soldiers trying to control the frenzied crowd?

Was it pure compassion at the sight of the bleeding, bruised face of Jesus? Or did she see something of the Chosen One in this .scourged and bloodied figure? Did she feel the desperate need to make contact with the man whose touch had healed so many?

LORD, teach me
that even when I feel afraid and helpless
to ease the burdens of others,
the smallest gesture can mean a lot.
Sometimes just a smile or a kind word
or a touch of the hand Can make a difference.
May I treat kindly everyone I meet —
not just the attractive and appealing people
who are easy to be near.



Eleventh Station

Jesus is nailed to the Cross

FOR ALL THE PAIN we have caused Him, still His love makes excuses for us.

The cross on which Christ hung is the most powerful image in the history of mankind. The simplicity of two pieces of wood belying the complexity of its meaning for us.

To gaze on it is to see the pain, the burdens, the rejection, the injustice which Our Lord bore for love of us ; it's to see the ultimate sacrifice; it's to see the Way, the Truth — and the hope of glorious, eternal life.

But to earn a share in Christ's glory we must also endure a share of His suffering. We who are the cause of it.



LORD, teach us
to be brave;
to accept without complaint the pains
and hardships which may come our way.
Not to question why, but to say always:
Let thy will, not mine, be done.
To accept your will is to receive your grace.



Tenth Station

Jesus is stripped of His garments

THE FINAL INDIGNITY — to stand naked before a jeering rabble.
 Stared at by eyes that were too blind to see the Truth.
 The callousness of the soldiers defies belief as they share out
 Our Lord's clothes; showing more interest in throwing dice for
 them, than in the man who was about to die the most
 agonising death – out of love for them.
 Killing some time — as they killed their Saviour.



BELOVED LORD,
 I know that I am always naked before you.
 Nothing I do escapes your notice;
 I need never bother to offer excuses Or explanations
 for anything I do — or don't do.
 You see me as I am,
 and you see the potential you created in me.
 Please clear my mind of trivia
 and help me to become the person
 you want me to be,
 rather than a worthless shell
 wrapped in earthly trappings.



Seventh Station

Jesus falls the second time

CHRIST THE MAN, exhausted and aching in every limb and
 sinew, falls a second time, but again gets up and struggles on.
 To fall is human; to get up again we need divine help.
 God will always welcome back the sinner who, having fallen,
 overcomes his pride, recognises his total dependence on his
 Creator and reaches out for the help and strength of
 forgiveness



LORD,
 take my hand in yours, help me up.
 I know that if I manage even one small faltering step
 towards you, in your great love
 you will come Out to meet me.



Eighth Station

The women of Jerusalem mourn for Jesus

How HARD IT MUST HAVE BEEN to look on the flogged and bleeding figure of Jesus as He struggled under the weight of his cross, and not weep.

Yet Our Lord was not moved by self-pity, but pity for the suffering destined for His people; pity for the sufferings Man would inflict upon Man.

Today it is all easy to weep for blurring our sight of how the wrongs we have done have brought pain and disappointment to our loving Father.

**LORD, teach us
to turn our tears of self-pity into tears of shame
for the agony we have caused you;
lead us to make positive changes in ourselves
to remove those things which hurt you,
so that our tears may be turned to joy
as we feel your presence in our souls
and in our lives.**



Ninth Station

Jesus falls the third time



AT THE THIRD FALL surely it is nearly all over.

Surely Our Lord cannot drag himself up again. And yet he does. Do we? As we repeatedly fall, aren't we ready to give up? Utterly defeated, dejected and despairing of ourselves and our right to any forgiveness at all.

Yet Jesus taught us that there is no end to the Father's mercy as long as we keep trying, keep on turning to Him for help.

When Christ created His Church, He left us what we need to be saved: sins you forgive, they are forgiven."

**LORD, teach us
to respect and rejoice in the sacraments
you left your Church —
the continuous opportunities for forgiveness and
spiritual nourishment.
May we never become complacent or cavalier
in our attitude to the means Of our salvation,
but gain an ever greater understanding
of your boundless mercy.**