



## **Stations of the Cross with Migrants**



### **Introduction**

The Way of the Cross is a Christian prayer devotion. It helps us remember and reflect on Jesus, who carried his cross to Mount Calvary. The Way of the Cross reminds us that pain, suffering, and death are real, not only for Jesus on the road to Calvary, but also for us in this world we live in. An imaginative form of prayer, it employs one's senses, memories and emotions.

During this Lent, let us focus on the suffering of so many people who bear a heavy cross: the hungry, the unhoused, the forgotten, the lonely, the un and underemployed, the victims of human trafficking, the victims of gun and domestic violence, those in fear and hiding from ICE, those in ICE detention, all excluded people who are abused by a systemically unjust system. Each day, in larger numbers, many walk with Jesus and reenact the Way of the Cross.

Jesus Christ invites us to dream and strive for a different future, building a kingdom of peace, love, justice, and solidarity. May this invitation turn us into better Christians, moving us to compassion toward migrants and all vulnerable people as “we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home” (2 Peter 3:13).

***Bold italics = all***

[Inside St. Mark's—before the altar]

## **Opening Devotions**

***In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.***

***Amen.***

Lord, have mercy. ***Christ, have mercy.*** Lord, have mercy.

Let us pray together:

***Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother,  
Holy and blessed is your true name.***

***We pray for your reign of peace to come,***

***We pray that your good will be done,***

***Let heaven and earth become one.***

***Give us this day the bread we need,***

***Give it to those who have none.***

***Let forgiveness flow like a river between us,***

***From each one to each one.***

***Lead us to holy innocence***

***Beyond the evil of our days —***

***Come swiftly Mother, Father, come.***

***For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy:***

***Forever your name is All in One.***

*(Parker Palmer)*

We will glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ:

***In whom is our salvation, our life and resurrection.***

Let us pray. *(pause)*

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

[Inside St. Mark's]

## **1) First Station - Jesus is condemned to death**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

Sister Judy Flowers from El Paso Texas shares the following story:

“Daniela, a woman in her 40s, worked successfully as a lawyer for the government of Venezuela for many years. When a new government took over the country, her cases were controlled by the new government officials. She was told to go against the laws and falsify or outright lie to win the cases against the government or face serious consequences, even death. This went against her conscience and all she believed. Being threatened, she knew she would have to leave everything: family, home, country and profession.”

Let us reflect on this station *(silence)*

Words to contemplate:

*There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest. – Elie Weisel*  
*(silence)*

Let us pray. *(pause)*

Lord, you were condemned to death by the powers of your day, though you were innocent and gentle. Help us to remember immigrants in our communities who fear certain death as they face deportation. We pray that they might know your loving presence with them always and that they might find hope and a path forward.

***Amen.***

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to 4185 Fairmount Ave, La Maestra Homeless Outreach & Reentry Dept]

## 2) Second Station - Jesus takes up his Cross – La Maestra Homeless Outreach & Reentry Dept

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

Lack of land and opportunities force many into migration. Our migrant siblings take up their crosses: They are looking for work and a better future for themselves and their families. What the land yields is not distributed with fairness; thousands sink into despair. While some relocate within their countries of origin, others cross international borders. They carry the crosses of abuse, loneliness, discrimination, racism, sexism, xenophobia, exploitation, and restrictive migration policies.

Let us reflect on this station (*silence*)

Words to contemplate:

*It is not the actual physical exertion that counts toward one's progress, nor the nature of the task, but the spirit of faith with which it is undertaken.* – St. Francis Xavier  
(*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*)

O God, we can be so wrapped up in our own lives that we fail to notice the pain of those around us. Help us to be more aware of the problems that burden our City Heights neighbors as they carry their crosses. Give us the desire to journey with them and help carry their load. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to 4147 Fairmount Ave, Immigration Services, La Maestra]

## 3) Third Station - Jesus falls the first time – Immigration Services, La Maestra

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah: “He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces, he was despised, and we held him of no account. Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.” (Is 53:3-5)

There is nothing more cruel than betraying those who put their trust in you. Migrants are betrayed— often by their own compatriots and “friends”. Migrants suffer countless violations of their human rights. They are treated with cruelty; they are arbitrarily detained and jailed; their right to circulate freely and choose where to live is not respected; and they are not paid fair wages because they are undocumented.

Let us reflect on this station (*silence*)

Words to contemplate:

*He will never let the trial surpass the strength He gives you, and at the very moment you think yourself overwhelmed by sorrow, He will lift you up and give you peace.* – St. Rose Philippine Duchesne  
(*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*)

God, grant us the gift of sensitivity to act with kindness and compassion to all people. Teach us to love unconditionally and to offer support to those who fall. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to 4129 Fairmount Ave, Garden of Life, La Maestra]

#### **4) Fourth Station - Jesus meets his afflicted mother – Garden of Life, La Maestra**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

Fr. Flavio Bravo with the Del Camino Jesuit Border Ministries tells the following story (which occurred before 2024): “At the Pumarejo shelter in Matamoros, Mexico, many of the newly arrived migrants were sitting on the metal benches in front of the altar table we use for Mass. Marisol held a worn and slightly torn backpack in her arms, as though it held her most precious treasure. After Mass, Marisol began crying inconsolably. She placed the backpack in my hands. “These are my daughter’s ashes,” she choked out. “This is all I have left.” Marisol kept holding her backpack out to me while she shared her story. “We were on a small fishing boat crossing the ocean to the shore close to Nicaragua, when the boat began to sink. My daughter and others on the boat drowned. I am now hoping to enter the USA with my CBP One appointment. I cannot return to my country. I am taking my daughter with me.” There were no words I could say or anything I could do to console Marisol. I hugged her and cried with her. We placed the backpack with her daughter’s ashes on the altar. I blessed the urn and said a prayer. Like Mary in the gospel,

encountering Christ along the way, we keep all these things, reflecting on them in our hearts.”

Let us reflect on this station (*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*)

Lord Jesus Christ, as a child you witnessed examples of love and sacrifice by your mother the Blessed Virgin Mary: Help us be aware of the sacrifices made by all migrant women. May their ordeals be like a sword piercing our souls. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to 4077 Fairmount Ave, Southern Sudanese Community Church]

#### **5) Fifth Station - The Cross is laid on Simon of Cyrene –Southern Sudanese Community Center**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

Courtney Greene from Catholic Charities of Central Texas shared the following story: “Brought to this country as a preschooler by his parents, my client J. lived in Texas for many years without any lawful status. He had a difficult adolescence, falling into the company of other struggling youth and eventually committing robbery. Sentenced to years in jail, the experience was life changing for him. He was released from jail several years early due to his impeccable behavior and the advocacy of many adults who recognized his promise, but was then immediately taken into immigration detention. After being released from detention, J. has continued to develop his life alongside his loving wife and children. I met this amazing family for the first time in 2023. From the very beginning, J.’s criminal history forced me

to question my assumptions. It was impossible to match the person described in the police report with the person seated in front of me. His story is one of the beauty of redemption, when we embrace the difficult twists and turns of life, turn toward love and hope, and reject bitterness and resentment. Every day, J. and his wife carry their cross of uncertainty and fear of his potential deportation, yet they step forward with perseverance and trust in the future. To walk alongside them has been alternately inspiring and fear-inducing, as I cannot guarantee that he will be able to stay here with his beloved family. And so I continue to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide the heart of the judge who will decide my client's fate — that (s)he will see with the eyes of God, judging my client for who he truly is and for all he has the potential to become."

Let us reflect on this station (*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*)

Lord, teach me to be generous.

Teach me to serve you as you deserve;

to give and not to count the cost,

to fight and not to heed the wounds,

to toil and not to seek for rest,

to labor and not to ask for reward,

save that of knowing that I do your will. (*Prayer of Generosity*

*attributed to Ignatius of Loyola*)

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to 4061 Fairmount Ave, City Heights Plaza de Sol]

**6) Sixth Station - A woman wipes the face of Jesus – City Heights Plaza Del Sol**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

Sr. Patricia Muderick says the following: "In the migrant camps of Reynosa, Mexico, there are many "Veronicas" who risk their comfort, security and even lives to wipe the face of Jesus in their neighbor who struggles as they carry the heavy cross of their migrant journey. I recall:

- Camila, who wept as she washed the feet of her companions during Holy Thursday Mass because she truly felt as though she was washing the feet of Jesus.
- Countless women who console one another and wipe the tears of their fellow migrants when they feel as though they just can't bear the wait in the camp any longer, struggling under the weight of the harsh conditions there.
- The women who share some little extra morsel of food "because we all need a little extra."
- The risk and love of the women and men who wiped the face and body of the little girl who lost her legs last week as she tried to jump onto "*la Bestia*," the train that many migrants risk life and limb to board to get closer to that border that means new life to them.

So many Veronicas ... so many who bear the face of Jesus on the way of the cross."

Let us reflect on this station (*silence*)

Words to contemplate:

*Compassion asks us to go where it hurts, to enter into the places of pain, to share in brokenness, fear, confusion, and anguish.*

*Compassion challenges us to cry out with those in misery, to mourn with those who are lonely, to weep with those in tears. Compassion requires us to be weak with the weak, vulnerable with the vulnerable,*

*and powerless with the powerless. Compassion means full immersion in the condition of being human. – Henri Nouwen (silence)*

Let us pray. (*pause*)

O God, we remember all those medical and social workers, lawyers and other professionals who, like Veronica, “wipe” the faces of others by way of their attention to physical and psychological need. We pray for them as they accompany our immigrant siblings. Give us courage to always give the loving attention needed to the stranger and the migrant. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to the Intersection of Fairmount & University Avenues]

### **7) Seventh Station - Jesus falls a second time – CrossRoads of Fairmount & University Avenues**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

A lawyer at an immigration office tells the following story: “My client, Manuel, was an asylum seeker living in the D.C. area. He had a partner and young son and was slowly building a new life in the United States after fleeing danger in South America. He was complying with all court requirements and appointments – but one day he was randomly picked up by ICE and has been detained ever since, separated from his family. He has no criminal history. We filed a bond case for him, and right as I was finalizing the bond case to get him home to his family, a decision from the Board of Immigration Appeals was released that made most noncitizens ineligible for bond. It broke my heart to break that news to him and his partner. He has another attorney now working to get him out of detention, but he needs many prayers for his release.”

Let us reflect on this station (*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*)

Let nothing disturb you,  
Let nothing frighten you,  
All things are passing away:  
God never changes.  
Patience obtains all things  
Whoever has God lacks nothing;  
God alone suffices. **Amen.**  
(*St. Teresa of Avila*)

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to the other side of the intersection and look across at 4305 City Heights Center on University Ave, look for National Conflict Resolution Center]

### **8) Eighth Station Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem – National Conflict Resolution Center**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

The Holy Trinity Migrant Familia in Washington DC shares the following: “Jesus looks with compassion on the steadfast women who stand with His people at great personal risk:

- Hadia, who stood with the women of Afghanistan, fighting for the right to education and self-determination, even as her fellow movement leaders were murdered by the Taliban.
- Bernadette, who withstood prison and torture when she spoke up about political infanticide in Gabon.

- Jeymy, who never wavered in her search for her nine-year-old daughter, Yajaira, separated from her at the U.S.-Mexico border.
- Hakima, who never lost faith as she traveled through 13 countries, seeking medical care, safety and education for her disabled three-year-old, Aslihan.”

Let us reflect on this station (*silence*)

Scripture to contemplate:

*Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.* (2 Corinthians 4:16) (*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*)

O God, you noticed the suffering of those who watched you suffer, recognizing the ripple effects of sin and violence. We pray for all legal advocates for immigrants who suffer significant secondary trauma as the result of moral injury and nearness to injustice. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk around the corner onto 43rd Street to the City Heights Square mini park]

### **9) Ninth Station - Jesus falls a third time – City Heights Square Mini Park**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and

humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:28-29) (*pause*)

Their faces reveal their harsh circumstances: They miss loved ones they had to leave behind. They lose their identity, their culture, their customs, their religious values. Like Jesus, they are despised, mistreated, and sidelined. Jesus invites us to love those who suffer. True solidarity means acknowledgment, respect, understanding, allyship, friendship, support, and striving for truth and justice.

Let us reflect on this station (*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*)

God of life, we ask you to protect your migrant children as they walk dangerous roads. Help them to overcome their obstacles and find honorable work, to rise every time they fall and continue their journey. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to 4065 43rd Street: Serving Seniors Senior Center]

### **10) Tenth Station - Jesus is stripped of his garments – Serving Seniors Senior Center**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew: “And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him.” (Matthew 11:28-29) (*pause*)

The bodies of migrants (men, women, girls, and boys) are treated as commodities. They are sold and smuggled by gangs, “polleros” or coyotes operating outside the law in the countries where migrants travel. Many suffer physical and sexual abuse: They are pimped or forced to do demeaning work; while in detention their daily needs are often ignored including living in overcrowded and dangerous conditions. Like Jesus, they are robbed of their human rights, their belongings, even their lives. Mistreating and abusing children is evil. These are victims whom we must lift up and protect.

Let us reflect on this station (*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*)

Lord Jesus Christ, you watched soldiers cast lots for your clothes and drive nails through your body: Help us draw a sword to protect the weak from abuse as we await your cross’s final triumph over violence and hatred. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to the corner of 43rd & Polk Avenue; Mid-City Community Clinic at 4290 Polk Avenue]

### **11) Eleventh Station - Jesus is nailed to the Cross – Mid-City Community Clinic**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

An Immigration Lawyer relates the following story: “Yemi, a young man from Nigeria, was lured into a human trafficking scheme that brought him through many countries until he eventually arrived in the United States. Forced to provide backbreaking and ultimately illegal work by his captors, he wound up in the U.S. prison system and then

in immigration detention. Throughout this time, he learned that several of his family members, including his brother and parents, had been murdered back in Nigeria by the trafficking gang. The pain of these deaths almost killed him. He eventually found legal help, gained a temporary visa, and is fighting his case to remain in the United States long-term and find hope and healing.

Let us reflect on this station. (*silence*)

Words to contemplate:

*Let us not forget that Jesus not only suffered, but also rose in glory; so, too, we go to the glory of the resurrection by the way of suffering and the Cross. – St. Maximilian Kolbe (silence)*

Let us pray. (*pause*) Oh God, we see your face in all those who face torture and abuse today, including victims of trafficking. You endured crucifixion for love of us; help us to know that and remember it in our darkest days. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to the intersection of Fairmount and Orange]

### **12) Twelfth Station - Jesus dies on the Cross – Fairmount & Orange Intersection**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

In February 2026 a legally blind, non-English-speaking 56-year-old refugee from Myanmar was found dead in Buffalo New York after being released from federal immigration custody. Nurul Amin Shah Alam was found dead after US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) dropped him off at a coffee shop miles from his home, where

temperatures were below freezing. CPB said that the department had dropped him off at the coffee shop which was closer to his home compared to being released "directly from the Border Patrol station" and it was determined to be "a warm, safe location". Shah Alam was found dead nearly 6 miles from the coffee shop, according to Buffalo police. Shah Alam's family has said they weren't notified of when or where he had been dropped off.

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke: "It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last." (Luke 23:44-46)

Let us reflect on this station. (*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*) Loving God, your death on the cross felt like a moment of utter darkness, when all was lost. We hold in our hearts so many immigrants in detention who wait in misery to see if they will lose everything they hold dear. Help us – and them – to recall that, because of your cross, death and misery are followed by resurrection. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk to the front gate at St. Mark's]

**13) Thirteenth Station - The body of Jesus is placed in the arms of his mother**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

Jamillah was a Ugandan migrant who died in the Mexican border town of Ciudad Juarez while hoping to find safety in the United States. Her death alone in a public hospital halfway across the world from her family was unexpected, unnecessary, and unjust. Her body laid in the morgue in Ciudad Juarez for 9 months while her family and local advocates collaborated so that she could have a proper Muslim burial. Muslim communities and nonprofits who had never even met her mobilized to raise funds and advocate for release of her body. When it became impossible to repatriate her remains, communities in Juarez and El Paso came together to honor her life and family's wishes. Under the scorching sun, people across continents gathered in person and via Zoom to say goodbye. "It was a powerful moment, one I will carry with me forever," writes Edith Tapia, an advocate present at the burial. "I was overwhelmed by the solidarity and kindness of everyone who was present, and everyone who made the moment possible."

Let us reflect on this station. (*silence*)

Words to contemplate:

*Christ cannot be understood and loved without seeing the ongoing crucifixion done to his sisters and brothers. – Dorothee Soelle (silence)*

Let us pray. (*pause*)

Lord, we are filled with sorrow thinking of Mary cradling your lifeless body. Too many mothers and fathers today suffer the deaths of children due to the forces of injustice, including the violence of forced migration. Help us to remember and honor the countless, unnamed many who die on their attempted journey to safety. We remember especially the parents who mourn. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Walk inside St. Mark's to the 14th station marker]

#### **14) Fourteenth Station - Jesus is laid in the tomb**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

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

Joseph Nolla shares the following story: "Sonet was a young Haitian asylum-seeker suffering from pancreatic cancer. He lived in a migrant shelter in northern Mexico. With inadequate treatment unavailable in Mexico, humanitarian organizations urged him to present himself at the port of entry, where Customs and Border Protection officers would decide whether to let him into the United States for treatment. The officers denied him entry, and Sonet died in the shelter that evening. Sonet's death and the injustice of it hurt the migrants in the shelter, especially the other Haitians. When our team arrived at the shelter, we offered Mass for Sonet and for all the migrants who had died along the way. To offer hope and to show solidarity with the Haitian migrants, we prayed Psalm 23 in Haitian Creole, reminding them that the Lord is their shepherd – and that Sonet has been led to still waters, where he will finally be received, not rejected."

Let us reflect on this station. (*silence*)

Words to contemplate:

*For Christians hopelessness is not an option.*

--Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde (*silence*)

Let us pray. (*pause*)

Lord Jesus Christ, you promised your disciples that even though the world would hate them, you would abide in them. Please abide in us when we feel that our dreams have been shattered and entombed, and give us hope in your eternal and glorious kingdom, where you live and reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.***

[Take a seat in front of the altar]

#### **CONCLUDING PRAYERS BEFORE THE ALTAR**

Savior of the world, by your cross and precious blood you have redeemed us: ***Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech you, O Lord.***

Let us pray. (*pause*)

God of amnesty and forgiveness: We thank you that you have delivered us from the dominion of sin and death and brought us into the kingdom of your Son; and we pray that, as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his love he may raise us to eternal joys; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Let us pray together:

***To Christ our Lord who loves us, and washed us in his own blood, and has called us to be heralds of good news, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.***

Let us bless the Lord.

***Thanks be to God.***

Sources:

-*The Way of the Cross from the Office of the Latino/Hispanic Ministries of the Episcopal Church and Forward Movement.*

-*Stations of the Cross: Walking with Immigrant Stories.* [Cliniclegal.org](http://Cliniclegal.org)

-*The Stations of the Cross with Migrants, Feb. 2025. Jesuits Central and Southern.* <https://www.jesuitscentralsouthern.org/stories/the-stations-of-the-cross-with-migrants/>

Compiled & edited by Thérèse Carmona, Lent 2026