



Stations of the Cross, Stations of LOVE

HOLY WEEK 2024 - Deacon Ryan Adams, KCHS

Every time we walk into a Catholic Church, we are surrounded by the reality of the Love that our Lord has for every one of us. Whether we sit in a pew, or serve in the Sanctuary, the Crucifix, our Lord upon the Cross, the greatest image of Love the world has ever seen is a focal point for us. But we are also literally surrounded by the events of our Lord's Passion, where Jesus shows us, through the Stations of the Cross, just how much He truly Loves us. And we also find such great examples of Love from those who experienced the first Way of the Cross with our Lord.

If you're reading this, I now ask you to join me on a Pilgrimage of the mind to Jerusalem, where we journey through the old city, walking the Via Dolorosa and meditating on the Love of our Lord.

The First Station - Jesus is condemned to death

Let us think about how in leading up to this moment, Jesus was betrayed by someone He knew and loved, that in itself must have broken our Lord's heart. Then there were all the lies testified against Him. Yet our Lord allowed all this to happen out of the great Love he has for every one of us.

The Second Station - Jesus carries His Cross

Right here, Jesus is saying to us, I go First! When Jesus tells us that we must pick up our crosses daily and follow Him, our Lord is letting us know that we do not do it alone. Those two words, follow him, speak to the relationship of Love that our Lord invites every one of us into. Yes, we are always called to follow the Lord, but the reality is, sometimes our Lord is walking right beside us as we carry our Crosses, and in those most difficult moments, our Lord picks us and our crosses up, and carries us.



The Third Station – Jesus falls the first time

When Jesus was here walking amongst us, we know He was Fully Human and Fully Divine. But think about what our Lord went through for us, in that Full Humanity aspect. We know how people spit on Him, how He was whipped and beaten, how they placed that crown of thorns upon His head, just so they could mock Him. Our Lord endured all of this, and so much more, for us.

The Fourth Station – Jesus meets His afflicted Mother

We know that Jesus is our Lord, our Savior, the Messiah, but He was also Mary's child. I cannot even begin to imagine what Mary, as Jesus' mother, His Immah, went through watching her Son go through His Passion. But Mary shows us the great example of Love that we are called to live out. Even though her heart was breaking, she would never leave her Son's side. Mary shows us how we too must never leave her Sons side as well. In our joys and in our struggles, in our most difficult of moments, we need to be with Jesus. We need to live out the relationship of Love that our Lord calls us into.

The Fifth Station – Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry His Cross

Here Simon shows us the importance of how we must treat one another. I fully believe that if we could see the various crosses that people carry in their lives every day, we would be humbled to our knees. Here Simon models for us how as children of God, disciples of Christ, sisters and brothers to one another, we must step in and help one another in carry our crosses, upholding the dignity of one another, and loving one another.

The Sixth Station – Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Here Veronica shows us such a beautiful act of Love. She sees Jesus, in such pain, blood running down His face from that crown of thorns, and she gently and lovingly wipes His face. As I envision it, wiping away the sweat and blood that was running into our Lords eyes. This my friends is precisely the way we are called to treat one another. When we encounter someone suffering, someone in pain, someone in need, we must follow the example of Veronica, and be present to one another through acts of Love and Service.

The Seventh Station – Jesus falls the second time

Again, in seeing Jesus fall a second time, we must continue to meditate on the fact that Jesus Loves each one of us that much. There was nothing Jesus was not prepared to endure for every one of us.

The Eighth Station – Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

Even as He was going through so much pain, Jesus never made it about His sufferings. Jesus tells these women crying and lamenting Him, not to weep for Him, but to weep for themselves and their children. The reality is that we live in a world that can sometimes get quite dark, right now there is war raging in the Holy Land, and other places around the world, there is injustice, racism and hatred in the world. But again, we do not go through this life's struggles alone. We have a loving Father who never abandons His children, a Father who loves every one of us so much that He literally Loved us into existence. We have a loving Lord who is there for us in every moment of our lives. And we have each other to love and support one another.

The Ninth Station – Jesus falls a third time

Again we mediate on the Love that our Lord has for us. There is nothing that our Lord would not endure for us. Every step, each fall, was done out of the Love that Jesus has for every one of us.

The Tenth Station – Jesus is stripped of His clothes

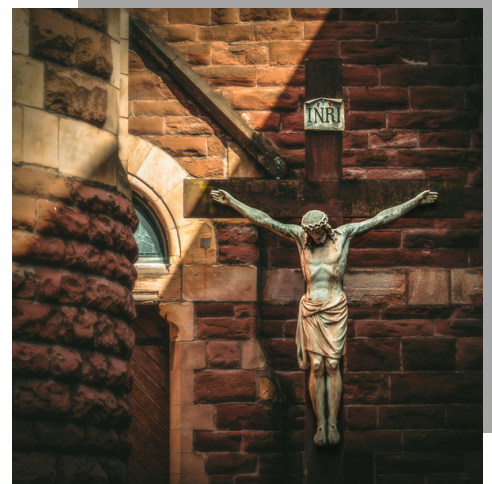
Here we see what a humble, loving Lord we have. This moment makes me think to the Solemnity of Christ the King. We see how Christ's Kingship was a Kingship of Love and Service, it was never about having power over others. Jesus allowed that crown of thorns to be the crown He wore out of Love for us, they stripped Him of His clothes and the rag He was crucified wearing became the royal garment He wore for us. That Cross He was carrying became the Throne He allowed Himself to be hung upon. All of this, out of the Love He has for us.

The Eleventh Station – Jesus is nailed to the Cross

Our Lord who came here to be with us, to teach us, to Love us, to Save us, went through everything we are trying to visualize and feel, and allowed them to hammer nails into His hands and feet, all out of the great Love He has for every one of us.

The Twelfth Station – Jesus dies on the Cross

We see how Jesus' Passion is all about the transforming power of the Love that Jesus has for us. It's that Love of Jesus on the Cross that is the very foundation for the Sacraments of the Church. The Love of Jesus on the Cross, is so great that it's almost incomprehensible, because it knows no bounds. But that is the Love that our Lord has for us.





The Thirteenth Station – The body of Jesus is taken down from the Cross

Here Joseph of Arimathea shows us what love, respect and reverence for Jesus looks like, lived out. He goes to Pilate to ask that He may take the body of Jesus. That in itself was a brave act, but Joseph was not going to let the body of Jesus just be tossed aside. He knew that Jesus’ body must be treated with love, respect and reverence. Just like we treat Jesus in the Eucharist. We prepare ourselves to receive the Precious Body of Jesus through the Penitential Rite, we take our place at the Table of the Lord as that bread

and wine, through the miracle of God’s Love, becomes our Lord’s Precious Body and Blood, and then we receive our Lord with love, respect and reverence.

The Fourteenth Station – Jesus is laid in the tomb

This Station makes me think to the Tabernacles that we all have in our Churches. Because we are a people who truly believe in the true and full presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, we, just like Joseph of Arimathea, would never allow our Lord to be tossed aside, or just put on shelf in the Sacristy. Instead with love, respect and reverence, we place the Eucharist in the tabernacle, and light that Red candle to let all who see it, know that Jesus, our Lord is present.

Thank you my friends, my sisters and brothers for taking that Pilgrimage in the mind to meditate on the great Love that our Lord has for each and every one us.

In love, service and friendship,
Deacon Ryan Adams



Please use click on the play button below to be directed to the musical video presentation.

The Passion of Our Lord according to the Gospel of St. John

