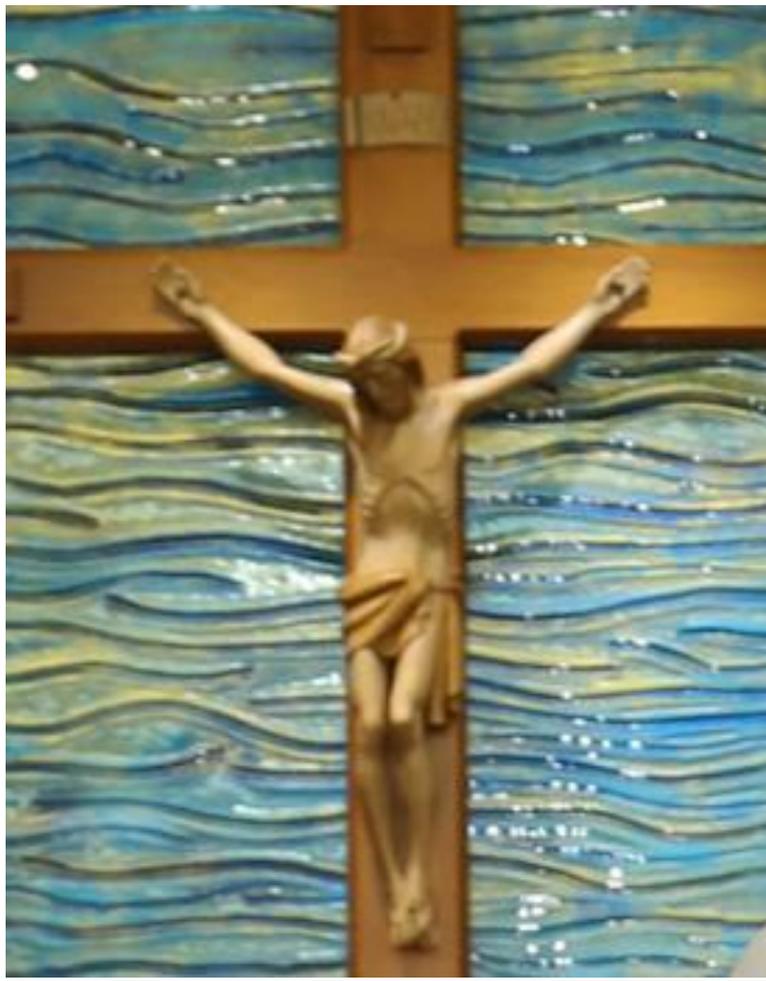


## REVERSE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

*Remembering the passion of Jesus  
through the eyes of his mother and his  
beloved disciples*



*The Reverse Stations are a spiritual reflection based on the Stations of the Cross but in reverse order. After Jesus was buried in the tomb Mary must have returned home at some point and as the Beloved Disciple took her into her home, they would probably have walked together. In the Reverse Stations we walk this journey with them and attempt to share in what must have gone on in their mind as they recall what happened along the Via Dolorosa.*

*The Reverse Stations was introduced to the Archdiocese of Singapore by Malaysian Seminarians. Several Parishes have used their reflections. These only looked through the eyes of Mary. Mike Arents, while the Pastoral Worker at the Church of the Holy Spirit, rewrote the Reversed Stations, adding to Mary's reflections also reflections from the Beloved Disciple.*

*The Reverse Stations of the Cross are very suitable for reflection in the evening of Good Friday, after the Liturgy of Good Friday. Or on the morning of Holy Saturday.*

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*© Reflections and asking for intercession written by Mike Arents, 2011  
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## **REVERSE STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

*Remembering the passion of Jesus through the eyes of his mother and  
his beloved disciples*

Leader: In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

### **Introduction**

### **Song**

### **Prayer**

Leader: Let us pray.

All: Lord Jesus, You have descended to the dead to bring to them the Good News of the redemption through your cross. As we walk down from Calvary, together with your mother and your beloved disciple, fill us also with hope and faith. Amen.

*Antiphon:* **Keep in mind that Jesus Christ  
Has died for us and is risen from the dead  
He is our saving Lord, He is joy for all ages**

## **Fourteenth station: Jesus is laid in the tomb**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

Mary: There we sat opposite the entrance of the tomb. I was happy that John was there and some of the women. But even though they were there with me, I had never felt so alone in my life. My Son, my Son, why did you need to die? Now we cannot even properly balm you with ointment and spices, because of the Sabbath, but we will come back on the first day of the week. I wish to stay here longer at your grave, but I will have to go now, because it is getting dark. Thank You that You gave me John as a son. He has offered me a place to sleep in his house. I wouldn't know where else to go on this cruel day, so thank You for him.

Asking for Mary's intercession:

Mary, often we also feel like everything we did was for nothing, almost forgetting that God has a plan beyond our own. Pray for us that we may keep hope like you did, despite all your sorrows.

**At the Cross her station keeping,  
stood the mournful Mother weeping,  
close to her son to the last.**

**Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,  
all His bitter anguish bearing,  
now at length the sword has passed.**

## **Thirteenth station: Jesus is taken down from the cross**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

St. John: In the midst of all our misery, the Jews were still concerned about the Sabbath rules, so they asked Pilate to have the legs of Jesus broken. But when they wanted to do so they saw that He had already given up his Spirit. When they pierced Him, to be sure, blood and water poured out from his side. Strangely enough a peace came over me as I saw that happen, I wonder what that meant. Then we had to take Him down from the cross. At first I did not know how we were going to do that, since I was only surrounded by women. All the other disciples had run away. I understand though, they were all scared of their lives. But I just couldn't, I had to stay with Him. But then Joseph and Nicodemus came to help taking Him down from the cross. I had heard of the last one from Jesus that he had come to visit Him in the night. How everything feels like night now as well.

Asking for St. John's intercession:

St. John, sometimes we are also scared to witness of our faith publicly. When we meet new people we rather talk about anything else, than to talk about Jesus. Teach us by your example to follow Jesus all our lives, even when it is risky for ourselves. Pray for us that Jesus will give us the strength to be his witnesses.

**O how sad and sore distressed  
was that Mother, highly blest,  
of the sole-begotten One.**

## **Twelfth station: Jesus dies on the cross**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

Mary: I remember that Simon had said to me that He will be a sign that is opposed and that a sword will pierce my soul too. Little had I expected that it would be so painful. I could hardly look at my precious Son. His pain was so great and it broke my heart. I heard Him say that He was thirsty. How I longed to climb up that ladder that was laying on the ground, to give Him some water, but instead the soldiers gave Him vinegar. Why God, why did your Son need to suffer so much. And what did He mean by: "It is fulfilled"? Was this your will Father? To say 'let your will be done' was so much easier when the angel Gabriel visited me, and even then I didn't understand much of it. Father, let me understand it now, for your plans are above my own.

Asking for Mary's intercession:

Mary, mother of sorrows, we cannot half imagine the pain you must have felt when you saw your Son die, such a horrible death. Pray for us, that we may also say: 'Let your will be done' to the Father, especially when we don't understand the suffering we face.

**Christ above in torment hangs,  
she beneath beholds the pangs  
of her dying glorious Son.**

**Is there one who would not weep,  
whelmed in miseries so deep,  
Christ's dear Mother to behold?**

## **Eleventh station: Jesus is nailed to the cross**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

St. John: Here they hammered those nails in his hands and feet. How painful was that sight. I was filled with anger against the injustice being done to them. How was He able to say: "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing"? Then they lifted the cross from the ground. Is this what He meant when He told us: "When I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all men to myself"? But how? And now He is dead? I don't understand.

Asking for St. John's intercession:

St. John, so often we also don't understand God's ways in our life. Pray for us that we may be able to follow Him anyway, like you did, trusting that his plan is the best.

**Can the human heart refrain  
from partaking in her pain,  
in that Mother's pain untold?**

## **Tenth station: Jesus is stripped of his garments**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

Mary: Here they stripped Him from his garments. That beautiful undergarment, which He was wearing, they divided by letting the dice decide who will get it. It had cost me days to make it for Him. It was such a precision work, because I made it seamless, woven in one piece from neck to hem. It fitted Him perfect and He wore it with love, because He knew all the love I had put in it. And now they stripped it from his body. The wounds of the scourging opened again and the blood flowed everywhere. How I wanted to stop them, but nevertheless: "Let your will be done".

Asking for Mary's intercession:

Mary, your work of love towards your Son, was stolen from Him, but the love itself no one could ever steal. Pray for us that we may never stop showing love to people around us, because He said: "Whatever you do for the least of my brothers you do for Me".

**For the sins of His own nation,  
She saw Jesus wracked with torment,  
All with scourges rent:**

**She beheld her tender Child,  
Saw Him hang in desolation,  
Till His spirit forth He sent.**

## **Ninth station: Jesus falls the third time**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

St. John: Here He fell a third time. The cross fell right on his back, I thought He died. I wanted to take it from his back, but the soldiers wouldn't let me near. I thanked God for Simon who was helping Him carry the cross. He was able to lift the cross from his back. Then I saw His wounded body move. I relieved a sigh. Mary was crying. She couldn't take the sight of the pain anymore. I tried to console her. Then He stood up. I guess He knew his mission was not yet fulfilled.

Asking for St. John's intercession:

St. John, how difficult it must have been to see your Rabbi suffer and yet you couldn't do anything to help Him. Pray for us that we will always help those in need around us whenever are able to, and not allow excuses to let them down.

**O thou Mother! fount of love!  
Touch my spirit from above,  
make my heart with thine accord:**

## **Eighth station: Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

Mary: There He met some women. They were crying for Him. They saw the goodness in Him. He had healed the sick and casted out the demons from many. But did they really know who He was, did they know He was the Son of God? He knew them and He cared for them. That was my Son, always there for the other, never thinking of his own needs. Consoling them, calling them to pray, to trust the Father's plan. Now He is gone; who will console me? But Father let your will be done.

Asking for Mary's intercession: Mary, mother of Him who consoles us in our pain and sorrow, pray for us that we may always be there for those who mourn and those who are in pain, that we may console them. Mary, consolation of the afflicted, be near us when we need consolation.

**Make me feel as thou hast felt;  
make my soul to glow and melt  
with the love of Christ my Lord.**

**Holy Mother! Pierce me through,  
in my heart each wound renew  
of my Savior crucified:**

## **Seventh station: Jesus falls the second time**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

St. John: There He fell a second time. His body just couldn't carry the weight anymore. I wondered how He would ever get up again. The scolding and kicking of the soldiers made it only harder. But yet He did it. As He stood up, I saw his eyes. They were tearing, but not because of the pain, but out of love. His determination got Him up again. He seemed to know what He was doing and He continued till the end. Was this the hour He had always been telling us about? Was this His hour?

Asking for St. John's intercession: St. John, often we live our lives the way we want, hardly being concerned with the plan that the Father has with us. No wonder we find it hard to keep trying when things get difficult and when we are discouraged, because we have no Divine goal we are heading for. Pray for us that we may discern God's plan for our lives and that God will give us the grace to continue when discouragement is making us fall and stop.

**Let me share with thee His pain,  
who for all my sins was slain,  
who for me in torments died.**

## **Sixth station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

Mary: Who was that woman? All of a sudden she was there next to my Son, wiping the face of Jesus. How I longed to come close to Him, to ease his pain, but the soldiers kept a close I on me. They wouldn't let me come near at all. I could see the gratitude in his eyes as He looked at her. The soldiers pulled her away with force. But she didn't seem to feel anything. The love in his eyes had penetrated her heart.

Asking for Mary's intercession: Mary, often we don't want others to help us. We push them away. Pray for us that we will not reject their works of love and that in accepting their help we might show them the face of Jesus.

**Let me mingle tears with thee,  
mourning Him who mourned for me,  
all the days that I may live:**

**By the Cross with thee to stay,  
there with thee to weep and pray,  
is all I ask of thee to give.**

## **Fifth station: Simon helps Jesus to carry the cross**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

St. John: All of a sudden the soldiers pulled a man from the crowd to help Him carry the cross. I had noticed him because he was standing there with his two sons and a lamb. He must have been on the way to the temple for his offering. Obviously he didn't know what was happening, otherwise He wouldn't have brought his sons. Before he could do anything he became part of it all. An innocent man had to carry the cross of my innocent Rabbi. At first out of fear for the soldiers, but along the way I saw something changing in this man. The love for the innocent Jesus gave him the strength to carry the heavy would. What I gift he was this man. I wanted to thank him on Golgotha for helping Jesus, but he must have left to find his sons.

Asking for St. John's intercession: St. John, how often we get into situations of other people's lives in which we didn't want to get involved. But somehow God places us in their lives. Pray for us that we will not let them down and be there for them to help them carry their cross. Pray that we will always keep in mind that Jesus has already carried that cross for us all.

**Virgin of all virgins blest!,  
Listen to my fond request:  
let me share thy grief divine;**

## **Fourth station: Jesus meets his mother**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

Mary: I had tried to come closer to my Son ever since I saw Him appear next to Pilate. But the soldiers seemed to know who I was and they kept an eye on me. They wouldn't allow me to come close. How I wished to comfort Him, to be there for Him. Here it was where I finally managed to come a bit closer. When He passed by He recognized me and looked into my eyes. Mine were full of tears, his pain seemed to be my pain. His eyes were full of love, as they had always been, ever since He was born. How I loved to look in his eyes when He was still a baby, they made me feel warm inside. But now, how could his eyes still be full of love? But then, I wouldn't expect any other look in his eyes. I wanted to console Him, but in the end He consoled me. Then the soldier pushed Him to move on and I couldn't get any near Him again, until I stood under his cross.

Asking for Mary's intercession: Mary, often our eyes are filled with hatred and condemnation, and we find it difficult to forgive. Pray for us that the loving eyes of Jesus will fill us with mercy, joy, love and forgiveness and that his eyes may change the way we look at others.

**Let me, to my latest breath,  
in my body bear the death  
of that dying Son of thine.**

**Wounded with His every wound,  
steep my soul till it hath swooned,  
in His very Blood away;**

### **Third station: Jesus falls the first time**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

Mary: Here He fell for the first time. Often I had seen Him fall before when He was young and I would console Him by rubbing his knee. But I could do nothing here. The soldiers kept me away. His body was so weak and full of blood from the scourging. Why did He get a double punishment? Wasn't that against the Roman law? And now they make Him carry the heavy cross Himself. I didn't know how He would ever make it to Golgotha. Thank God that later someone was ordered to help Him. I wished they let me help Him carry the cross for Him.

Asking for Mary's intercession: Mary, your heart was filled with compassion. Pray that we will not look away when friends ask us for help. Pray that we will be filled with compassion as you were.

**Be to me, O Virgin, nigh,  
lest in flames I burn and die,  
in His awful Judgment Day.**

## **Second station: Jesus takes up his cross**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

Mary: Here He appeared again publicly after we had not seen Him since He was captured. Here they gave Him the cross. He seemed to embrace it as if it was a friend. I didn't understand. How could He accept that instrument of torture and death with such love? I remembered how we had lost Him when He was twelve. Joseph and I returned to Nazareth, but He remained in the Temple. When we found Him again, He told us: "Didn't you know I must be about my Father's business?" I have thought about that remark for many years. What did He mean? Is carrying the cross his Father's business? If so, then let your will be done, Father.

Asking for Mary's intercession: Mary, your Son called us to carry our cross and follow Him. Pray that we may embrace our cross as He did and carry it with love.

**Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,  
by Thy Mother my defense,  
by Thy Cross my victory;**

## **First station: Jesus is condemned to death**

Leader: That I may come to know Him and the power of his resurrection.

**All: And partake in his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, striving towards the resurrection from the dead.**

St. John: Here at the Pavement, He was condemned to die. The people shouted all around me: "Crucify Him". Then Pilate brought Him out again. What was Pilate going to do? He needed to make the final decision. Then something happened that has puzzled me until now. Pilate had Jesus seated on the chair of judgement. Why didn't he sit on it himself as he would normally do? What was he trying to say? Was he trying to wash his hands clean of the blood of my innocent Friend? I remember that Jesus had told us: "No one is taking my life from Me, I lay it down of my own free will, and as I have the power to lay it down, so I have the power to take it up again". It seemed to be true here. He sat in the seat of judgement and accepted the cross, the cross He was lifted up upon. Was this what He meant when He said: "The Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in Him will have eternal life"? And what about the power to take his life up again? Is this not the end?

Asking for St. John's intercession: St. John, you proclaimed in your Gospel the glory of Jesus. Pray that we may accept Him as our Saviour, knowing that He has carried our sins on the cross and thus reconciled us with the Father.

**While my body here decays,  
may my soul Thy goodness praise,  
Safe in Paradise with Thee.**

## Song

## Prayer

Leader: Let us pray

All: Lord Jesus, we have walked with your mother and your beloved disciple down the road of your passion. Transform our hopelessness into faith, hope and love. That we may be people who live the new life that You have given us by the blood and water that flowed from your side. Amen

Leader: In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**