

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

The 'Stations of the Cross' are part of the furnishings of churches and of most chapels. They are usually mounted on the walls, on both sides of the nave, presented in the form of paintings or low-reliefs. In some cases, they may also be found outdoors on the grounds of churches, sanctuaries or in cemeteries in the format of large sculptures or large low-reliefs. Typically, the 'Stations of the Cross' are placed several feet from each other in order that, while doing the devotion called the 'Way of the Cross', after pausing in front of each station to pray silently we walk a few steps to the next station, **as Our Lord walked His Way to the Cross**. There are **fourteen 'Stations of the Cross'** (sometimes fifteen), and they represent the **Passion and the Death** (and the Resurrection) of **Our Lord Jesus Christ**. The Stations are titled and numbered as follows:



1st Station: **Jesus is condemned to death.**

2nd Station: **Jesus takes his Cross.**

3rd Station: **Jesus falls for the first time.**

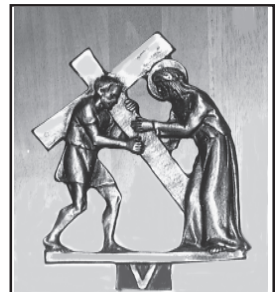
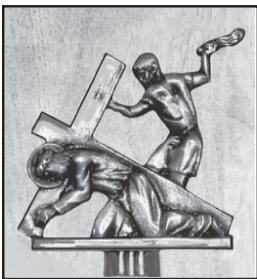


4th Station: **Jesus meets His Blessed Mother.**

5th Station: **Simon helps Jesus carry His Cross.**

6th Station: **Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.**

7th Station: **Jesus falls for the second time.**





8th Station: **Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem.**

9th Station: **Jesus falls for the third time.**

10th Station: **Jesus is stripped of his garments.**

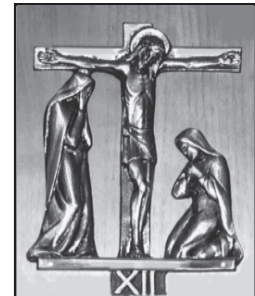
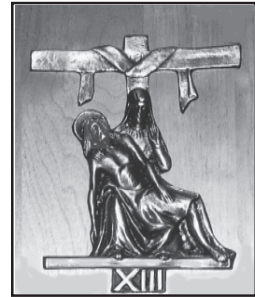


11th Station: **Jesus is nailed to the Cross.**

12th Station: **Jesus dies on the Cross.**

13th Station: **Jesus is taken down from the Cross.**

14th Station: **Jesus is placed in the tomb.**



Each station is engraved with its **own roman numeral** and usually adorned with a small **cross on top**. When pausing in front of each station, we recall its title, sign ourselves and/or genuflect, and **pray**: *"We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world."* After the last station, we pray one 'Our Father', one 'Hail Mary', and one 'Glory Be.' The 'Way of the Cross' may be done before the Mass as a preparation for the celebration of the memorial of Our Lord's sacrifice. This spiritual work, which gives **plenary indulgences**, may be done at any time when visiting a church.

The vestiges of what seems to be the oldest 'Stations of the Cross' were found near 'Mary's house' near Ephesus, inspiring us to think that Mother Mary started this devotion. This house, where Mother Mary lived for the last nine years of her life, and these 'Stations of the Cross' were discovered through the writings of the visions received by the stigmatized mystic Sister Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774-1824).