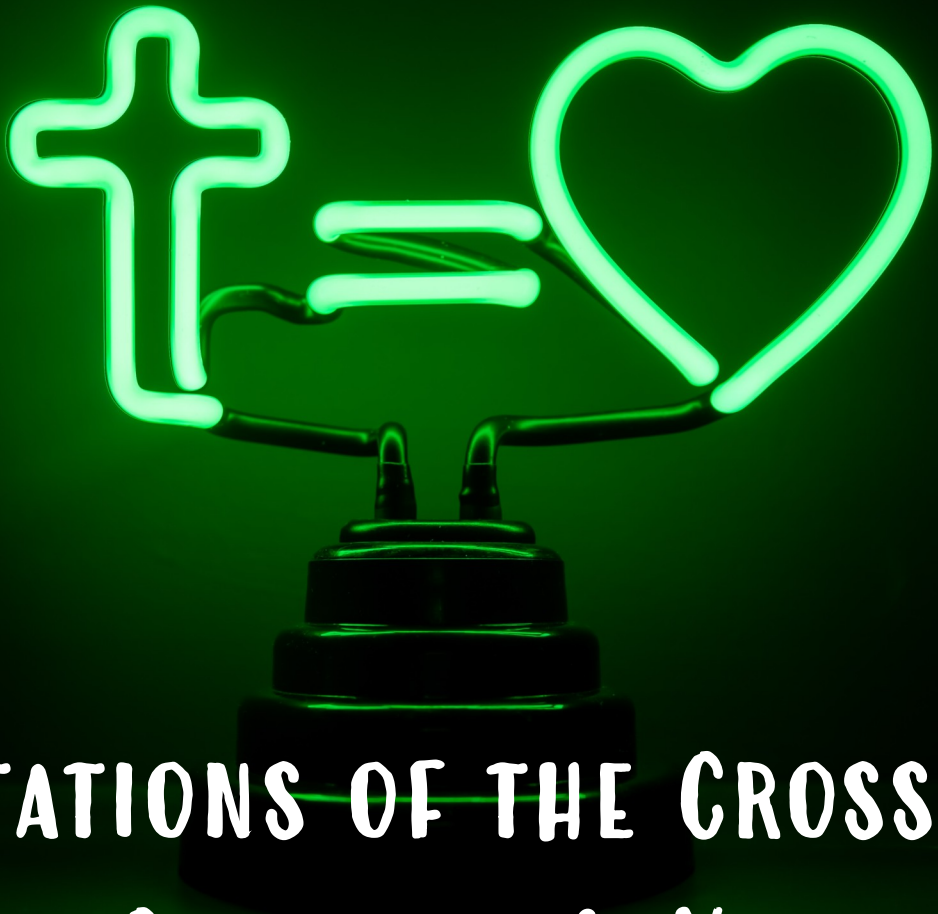


ST. GABRIEL'S † SAN GABRIEL
EPISCOPAL CHURCH



STATIONS OF THE CROSS
FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

VIA CRUCIS

For Children & Youth

This service is adapted from the book *Stations of The Cross For All: Places to Wait With Jesus; Meet With Jesus; and Talk With Jesus* by Emma Major. Copyright © 2015 by Emma Major. Copies may be purchased from Amazon.com, or on Kindle. The church owns copies if you'd like to borrow one.

+ THE FIRST STATION + JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

**The crowd are loud.
The priests are angry.
The rulers are confused.
The disciples are scared.
Jesus is calm, quietly accepting what's about to happen quietly.**

Jesus models how he'd like us to behave when we are treated badly:

- Breathe, compose yourself, don't burst out.
- Rise above the person who is not treating you right, don't insult them back.
- Turn the other cheek – but keep your dignity; don't allow people to trample on your rights.
- Forgive with truth, not because someone tells you to do so.
- Forgive from the heart, not just an empty "I'm sorry"

Jesus knows we find this hard to do, but he's ready to help us because no matter what happens, Jesus is with us!

Stand at the station, say a prayer for God's strength and peace.

+ THE SECOND STATION +

JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

The soldiers put a huge, heavy wooden cross on Jesus' shoulders to carry. Still, Jesus keeps calm, accepting what he has to do for the world, for our salvation. He knows that he has to die so that we can have life forever in heaven when it is our turn. Jesus knows that carrying the cross is a matter of life and death for him and for the world. Jesus knows this his death will be especially hard for his family and for the friends he's made along the way. Jesus trusts that God will help him bear the cross.

We all have hard times. Times when we are overloaded with anxiety, insecurity, sadness, and fear. At these times we carry our crosses just like Jesus did. Jesus models how he'd like us to behave when we have to carry our cross:

- Trust that God will help us every step of the way.
- Do not panic about the road ahead.
- Just put one foot in front of the other.
- Ask for help, someone will be willing to help, you just have to ask.

Jesus knows that understanding unconditional kindness, love and compassion are not easy to do or to understand. Understanding the way of Christ is called the mystery of God. We may not understand what we have to do even when it is the right thing to do. It may feel uncomfortable to try to be more like Jesus because it requires our commitment to making God a priority in life.

Think about how Jesus carried his cross. We ask you to please put together a cross with the string and sticks you've been given. This is a reminder of Jesus' journey to the Cross and his Resurrection on Easter Sunday.

+ THE THIRD STATION +
JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

**Jesus is carrying a heavy, hard cross – his body hurts.
Jesus is walking barefoot along the streets of Jerusalem,
the cobbles are made of stone, it is dusty and hot too.
Jesus doesn't say much along the way.
The soldiers and spectators shout at him.
The soldiers want him to move faster,
to stand up straight. But the cross is heavy,
and he stumbles. Jesus is calm through it all.**

When he falls I imagine it was because of a variety of things, all the people watching him, weakness, tiredness. Maybe he just wanted to disappear under the weight of the cross, so he lost his balance and fell.

How do you feel when you stand at this station?

- Have you fallen or tripped recently? Sometimes when we trip and fall in front of others we feel embarrassed. In life there are times when our load is too heavy, we stumble, we fall. Jesus reminds us that when we fall he is with us, and he certainly knows how it feels to fall.

Jesus invites us to pray and walk with him when we feel unstable or imbalanced, stumbling or falling.

***What do you do or what do you use when you are hurting
to heal yourself or others who are hurting?***

+ **THE FOURTH STATION** +
JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

**Jesus got back up on his feet.
Jesus continued walking.
Jesus carried his cross.
Then he saw his mom come closer.
Mary, his mother was there.**

This was when things got emotional for them both. It is only human for them to feel sad as they watched how this walk of shame to the cross affected them both. Seeing himself in his mother's eyes must have been tough for Jesus. Mary has always known that her heart would break over her boy. The very wise and prophetic old man called Simeon told her so when Jesus was a baby being presented at the temple to God. Being presented to God in the Jewish tradition is almost like a Baptism but without the water. The Gospel stories don't say what happened in those last hours leading to the crucifixion other than that he tried to stay calm every step of the way.

- How do you feel when you stand at this station?
- Think about your mom...How would she feel if you were in a crisis?
- Have you ever helped someone else in their pain or sadness? Do you think you were helpful?

Jesus knows sadness, he helped people who were hungry, sad, sick, mistreated, and misunderstood. He had compassion for people in those moment and he helped them. We all have times of sorrow and grief in our lives, Jesus listens, he feels it all because he is God.

***Can you think of something special that you have shared with a role model
(Parent, teacher, friend, relative) in a difficult time?***

+ THE FIFTH STATION +
SIMON OF CYRENE CARRIES THE CROSS

**Jesus is really tired and by now he is almost unable to walk.
The soldiers knew that he wouldn't make it without help,
so the soldiers called a man from the crowd over to help.
This man's name was Simon from the town of Cyrene.
Some might think that Simon had bad luck,
being at the wrong place at the wrong time.**

On the other hand you might wonder if Simon had the best luck in the world. He got to help Jesus! How great was that!

- You have probably had to help someone even when you didn't want to. Why do you think you didn't want to help at first?
- What changed your mind in the end?
- How do you feel when you ask for help?

We all need help at times, even Jesus could not manage without help. Is there someone that you might lend a hand to in the next week? Someone who might not ask for help but could surely use a hand?

When have you been asked to give a helping hand? How did you feel when someone unexpectedly gave you a hand? Sometimes a small thing can make a big difference. (Prayer squares, dolls we send to the border)

+ THE SIXTH STATION +
VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

**Jesus was not only exhausted and hot from the burning sun,
but he was also dirty and he was in pain. Remember that
the weather in Jerusalem is hot and dry, it's a desert.
Jesus didn't give up, he continued walking with the cross.
Just then a woman he knew came out of the crowd
wanting to wipe the sweat from his face with her veil.
The grime she wiped left an image, it was like a picture on her veil.**

When someone cares for another, they are capable of doing the impossible.

We are reminded once again that Jesus is God, and that Jesus left a mark in the world, a mark that cannot be removed or washed away. Even after Jesus ascended to heaven he said he would leave us someone, something, it's called the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would be with humanity until the end of time.

Remember that when you help someone, you help Jesus because we come from God and Jesus is God. When you share yourself with others, you share yourself with God.

Jesus showed the world how to love another human being, not like a boyfriend or girlfriend, but like a friend who respects and protects their best friend.

+ THE SEVENTH STATION +

JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME

**Jesus can barely take another step even with the help of Simon.
He stumbled again, but he was able to get up and continue on.
It's just that the cross felt heavier and he was tired.
Jesus fell, the weight of the cross was too much,
he was probably hungry, he had been mistreated and
pushed around all day, betrayed by the people who said loved him.
But that didn't stop him from moving on.**

Have you ever felt that exhausted? Maybe it was after a party, a long game, a long day at school, after taking two tests on the same day or when you got sick with the flu. Did you know someone who got Covid?

- How would you describe the feeling of complete exhaustion?
- We all have things in life that are difficult to handle. Give an example of something that you find challenging.
- How do you handle challenges?

There is a Bible verse where Jesus said to those who felt tired and overwhelmed, "Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest." What do you think that means today when Jesus isn't around to give you a hand?

***Jesus fell but we know he didn't stop trying, as we sit with him,
ask him to bring his strength to you in something you're finding hard.***

+ THE EIGHTH STATION +
JESUS MEETS THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

As he continued walking the way to the Cross Jesus passed so many people. Some were there to mock him and ridicule him for claiming to be God's son, others were there because they learned so much and believed that he was the Messiah who God sent to the world.

Suddenly he saw his friends, the women that he knew so well, and they were crying. Jesus knew that they were very sad because of what was happening to him, and he also knew that they loved him profoundly, but he couldn't let their sadness go unacknowledged, so he stumbled in their direction and said something quickly to let them know how much he appreciated their love and support, despite their pain.

- What comes to mind as you imagine those friends encouraging each other and Jesus as he walked by?
- What do you think you would have done if you saw Jesus walking with the cross surrounded by your own friends?

When we are sad or stressed or worried it can be easy to only think of ourselves, but Jesus didn't do that. He showed the importance of thinking about others. Jesus taught by his actions that we can feel better about ourselves when we help others to have hope.

Ask Jesus to give you the courage to support someone in their sadness.

+ THE NINTH STATION +
JESUS FALLS A THIRD TIME

**Jesus could barely move by now, he's beyond exhausted.
He was panting out of exhaustion, it was hard to breathe.
He felt that he might be able to continue but no,
he stumbled and fell for the third time.**

**He asked God for help in his prayer. He asked for:
strength.
courage.
energy.
and the ability to get up again.**

God answered. Jesus got up.

- Have you ever felt God helping you about something you wanted or needed for yourself or family member?
- What do you think when your prayer doesn't get answered? Do you think God doesn't care about you?

Ask God to be there for you. Remember however, things happen in God's time, not our time. That means you can ask for something and not get it when you want it. God always takes care of you; it might take time for an answer!

+ THE TENTH STATION +
JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Jesus is finally at the hill where he will be crucified.

**The place was called Golgotha,
it is said to be the town dump, so it wasn't a nice place at all.
The horror is coming to an end.**

**The soldiers had plans for Jesus, not good ones.
They removed his clothes in public, which is so shameful.
They stole his clothes except for his underwear.**

- What emotions do you feel for Jesus as you stand before this station?

+ **THE ELEVENTH STATION** +
JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Jesus was nailed to the cross.

**The pain was unbelievable.
Somehow Jesus knew that he was at the end of his physical pain,
perhaps that was why he was able to put up with it all.**

**He would soon be in heaven with God the Father.
Jesus didn't get angry.**

Get this - when Jesus looked at the soldiers who were present he asked God to forgive them.

When he looked over to his mother, Mary, he asked her to look after his disciples and he asked the disciples to look after his mother.

Even at his last moments Jesus was thinking about everyone else and forgiving people who did wrong to him.

Do you find it easy or difficult to forgive? Even after you forgive, the mark is still there on you. Is there someone you would like to forgive? Is there someone you would like to hear say I'm sorry for something they did to you? Please write the person's name on a Post It and place it on the cross.

+ THE TWELFTH STATION +
JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Jesus was....
blamed
spat at
fallen
tired
helped
beaten
loved
fallen again
stripped
nailed to a cross
And now, Jesus bows his head
It is done!

- Jesus died. Why did he have to die?

The Bible says that Jesus had to die, he knew it and God has already known that even before he came into the world.

The Bible says that Jesus had to die, he knew it and God has already known that even before he came into the world. God puts us in this world, we are born into the world, but we are on "loan". God calls us back and we never know when that will be. It shouldn't matter, we leave this world to be reunited with God.

- What needs to happen for your soul to go to heaven?

We have to do our best to learn more and more about God. If you don't have a Bible, ask Fr. Daniel for one and read it, that's one way to learn. Think about ways that good people around you act. See how you can make a difference. Ask the people you respect and love to help you make a difference in the world.

+ **THE THIRTEENTH STATION** +
JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

**We will come to know that His death is our life
because he died so that we can choose heaven and have eternal life**

We call this day Good Friday.

This is the day that Jesus gave his life as a gift for us to receive eternal life.

This is one of many ways that we can thank God for our lives and the lives of those we love.

And, ... this is not The END of Jesus' life.

This is just the BEGINNING of a new life.

Hmm, new life? What might that mean.

+ **THE FOURTEENTH STATION** +
JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

We have a prayer called the Apostles Creed and also one similar to it called the Nicene Creed. A creed is a statement of what one believes.

Sometimes one doesn't believe every part of the prayer because life helps us understand things little by little. Maybe we start believing things at different times of our lives because of our experiences.

That is okay, belief happens a little bit at a time.

Your belief and mine can be different, but God asks us to have faith. When you don't understand something about God, God wants you to ask questions and gradually learn more about his love!

Please share what you think the NEW LIFE with Jesus will be like in the kingdom come!

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