

The Stations of the Cross

Reflections Written and Illustrated by the 8A Religion Class

The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

I push myself through the chaos of the crowd, fighting for an open space. At last I see You, standing alone before the screaming people. There are cuts everywhere on your body and the pain that you went through is only the beginning. You stand calm and silent, waiting for whatever is to come. You are God and can free yourself from your chains. You could prove to everyone that You're truly God's Son. Instead your head is bowed, but not given up. The call is announced and You are led away to what lies beyond. Stumbling as you go but keeping your faith strong.



The Second Station: Jesus Takes Up His Cross

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

I am a bystander in the crowd. I have been present at some of Jesus' teachings. I even witnessed the feeding of the 5,000 when Jesus fed all of us from just a few loaves of bread and a couple of fish. I don't understand why Jesus was just condemned to death. I am still trying to figure out who He really is myself. Is He a prophet? Will He save us from the Romans? Is He the Messiah? If Jesus really is the Messiah, then why is He letting the soldiers push a heavy, wooden cross onto His bleeding and bruised shoulders? People are yelling at Him and there is so much commotion in the crowd. As the soldiers shove the cross onto Him, Jesus looks into my eyes for just a moment. It feels like the world has stopped and His loving eyes are staring into my worried and confused eyes. All of a sudden, everything comes back into focus. He takes up the cross willingly upon His shoulders even though people are shouting at Him and the soldiers are whipping Him. He has done amazing things for people and has performed many miracles yet He still takes up His cross willingly and walks all the way to Calvary where He must die.



The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

There I was tucked between the crowd. I heard people yelling. I could feel the dust in my mouth. After getting shoved around for several minutes I finally made it to the front of the gathering. There I saw Jesus fall for the first time. He laid there for several seconds until the soldiers forced him to get up. The gravel was still stuck in his knee. Looking at Jesus, I ignored the crowd. I focussed on his face for a moment and held back the tears. I could see the pain in his eyes, but there was also hope, bravery and determination. I knew what he was doing. He was making this sacrifice for me, for all of us. I never felt so loved. The feeling was overwhelming. He was Jesus.



The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

There's a crowd shouting at you with anger and hatred, yet you keep walking only to save them. Your face is dripping with blood, sweat, and dirt from falling. You feel the heaviness of the cross and the thorns of the crown piercing through your skin. With each step you take the cross becomes heavier and heavier. You struggle to stay on your feet but you choose to walk towards your death out of love for all, even Pontius Pilate. You hear a faint yet familiar voice coming from the crowd, it's your mother. As your eyes meet for a quick second the sharp pains across your body go away. She is there for you with the sweet face she's always had. She knows you need to do this and can't stop you. She wants to come to save you and carry the cross for you but first, you must save her. The sight of your mother gives you the motivation to keep going, her soft eyes looking into yours helps you to keep fighting.



The Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

He is in pain. I watch as Jesus falls on the beaten path. I just want to go home. I can feel his pain as he gets up and passes me, and the crowd is yelling at him. He can barely keep going, so the soldier looks out to the crowd. I try to walk away, but I hear my name being called out. I look at Jesus, and for a second our eyes link. As I walk towards him, the soldier orders me to help him carry his cross. The crowd boos and yells, and as I pick up the back of his cross, I can feel his pain and suffering. As I help him along the path, I feel uncomfortable, but near the end, I was happy that I helped Jesus. After I helped him, I learned who he was, and it made me proud that I helped him carry his cross. I was blessed to be chosen to help our Savior.

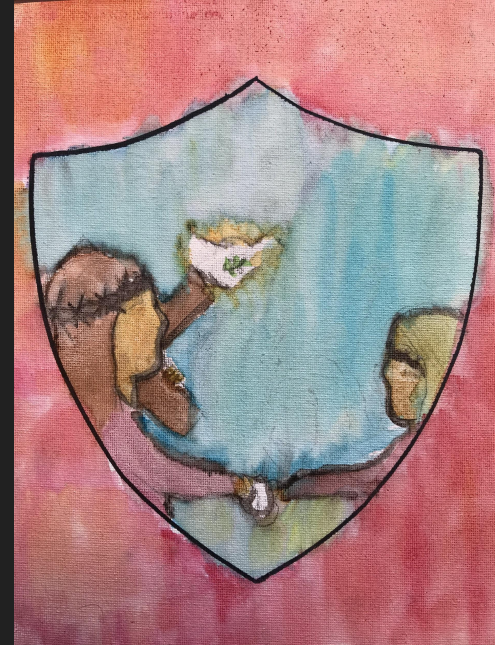


The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

I close my eyes. The horror of the scene follows me and it haunts me. I can hear the people, blood is in the air. I feel the tears as they drip down my face unable to be stopped. I have a presence behind me. I turn to see and I see no one. I tremble as I remember my loneliness. My head is lifted and I drift back into reality. This man trails in his own blood. His tears are dried, his mother screams, his body trembles. There is nothing a person can do that is of comfort to him. I scream as he walks. I know he feels my pain. His eyes are as blue as the sea but his pain is not hidden deep within. How could people treat such a gentle being with this much hate. Do they envy what they are not and what he is? The man is in pain. He cannot speak for the blood drips out of his mouth in clots. His beautiful blue eyes are wrecked with tears as he cannot see where he steps next. His feet are sore and they long for no more rocks. His skin is no longer the color of a human. He is bruised, cut, and bloody. The men laugh as they cast money. What has he done to deserve this? Here I stand, in my finest white, tears in my eyes, but my arms still. He walks past me in a slow time. He looks at everyone with kind eyes. No hate is in his eyes. I run for him. I run and I will never stop. I rip my veil with no regret. I have pushed through the crowd and my heart stops. I fall. I fall down to him and I reach up with my garment that is no longer in its proper place. He smiles and I break. I wipe his tears, barely unable to hold my arms up. His blood drips on me, but I care not. He trembles and I try to stand strong. How, HOW could someone do something to this man. All he wishes is to care for every other but himself. Everyone seems to be still in this moment as Jesus says "thank you." I am pulled away with a grip of unkindness. I am ripped away and in the crowd I fall to the ground. I hold the cloth to me. Jesus has left his image upon the cloth. I shall never again doubt my lord, for I have seen him.



The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Jesus falls the second time. As he falls, the weight of the cross pushes the crown of thorns deeper into his head. Although the pain and suffering is overwhelming, he pushed through for love of us.

When we fall, who are we supposed to trust in?

Heavenly Father, give us the perseverance to trust that You will help us move forward. Even through difficult times.



The Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

I am journeying on my way to die and restore my temple. As I struggle to carry my own cross I have come along women who look very sad to see me as I walk by, trembling each step I take. I decide to stop and reassure them everything will be okay. It's hard to see them weeping as I see tears of extreme despair run down their cheeks. Everyone else keeps on shouting at me to move on, but seeing these women crying I had to comfort them. I know I am close but I am struggling step after step and I just keep my mind on the fact that I am fighting for victory. Although it is hard for these women and myself right now, the end goal is not just myself having eternity in heaven, but everyone on this planet to have eternal life. This helps me to keep on walking and breathing slowly. My Father has given me the strength to conquer this very difficult journey.



The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

As I stand in the crowd, I watch Jesus fall for the third time. The rough dirt cuts at his legs and his arms and he begins to bleed. The sun beams down on his back turning what's left of his skin red. The soldiers push and shove him, growing more impatient by the second. Jesus tried to get back up, but with the heavy cross crushing his back and the sand going into his cuts, it looks impossible. Blood from his crown of thorns and sweat drip down his face. He looks broken and exhausted but I know that He is willing Himself to live. He will not die when He is nearing the end. With the little strength that is left in His body, Jesus pushes the cross up and stands up. He grunts and stumbles as He tries to regain balance in His feet. Once Jesus is stable, He makes the last stretch to Calvary.

Part 2 of this Station is included on the next slide, and is written and illustrated by another student...



The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

Continued...

I fall yet again. I have no choice, my head is throbbing from the thorns in my head. My head is hurting and throbbing from numerous gashes from the scourging at the pillar, I fall because it hurts all over. I wish it didn't, I wish I didn't need to go through this. But I have to. When I fall I feel the dirt enter my wounds and it stings. I attempt to get up but I can't, as I try a soldier kicks me in the side and I fall flat under the cross. I can taste the gritty gravel from the street in my mouth. I try to get up again, this time the soldiers let me up without a kick. Once I am up, I stagger under the weight of the cross and continue my journey up Cavalry.

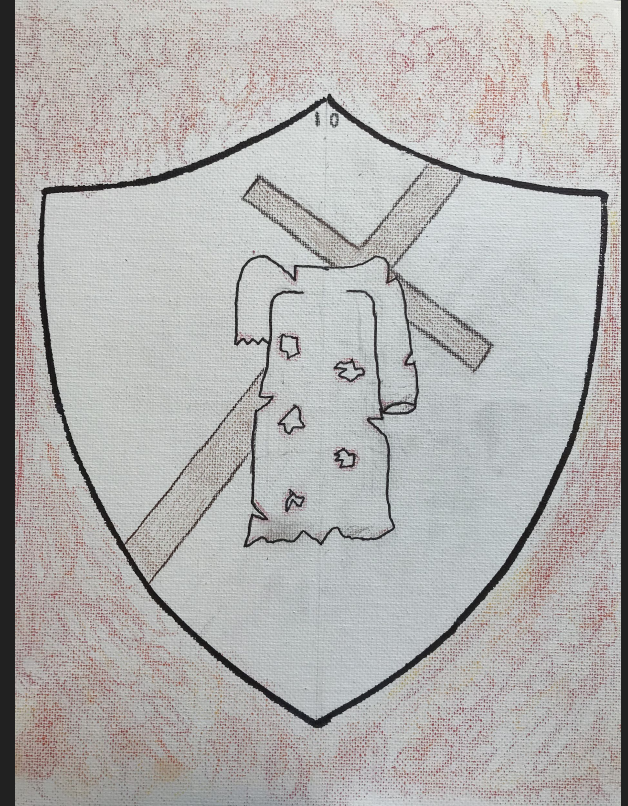


The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

At this point Jesus has been through so much and the worst is still to come. He perseveres onwards, forgiving all who wrong Him. The soldiers rip off Jesus' clothes, reopening old wounds. They try to break Jesus' spirit but it's unbreakable. They humiliated Jesus as a man but His godliness was untouched. This really shows Jesus' strength and love for us. He wants us to turn to Him with our troubles.



The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Confusion, That's all I feel. It was a hot & humid Friday afternoon, the sun was high in the sky and glaring down on me and the people on the top of the mount. I was walking home when I got caught in a crowd watching a man stumble down the road with a heavy wooden cross on the shoulder. The man looked beaten half to death yet he never complained, not when the soldiers whipped him, not when the people spit at him, not when he fell over and laid flat on the ground with the weight of the cross crushing him. I asked the people what he did, why he deserved such a painful punishment of nails through His hands.



The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

The scene when Jesus dies on the cross is a very powerful scene. There were many things to witness being in the presence of this scene. I picture Jesus on the cross suffering while everyone around him is watching him die for our sins. I can hear the soldiers and people shouting at him while he struggles to breathe. As I'm on the hill of Mount Calvary on a dark day I feel the breeze brush by. I smell the burning fire from the torches that the soldiers carry. I see myself in the crowd of people watching Jesus die and as he looks up to the Father praying for everyone around him. Everyone around Jesus is struck by this powerful scene. I feel shocked as I pray with this station.

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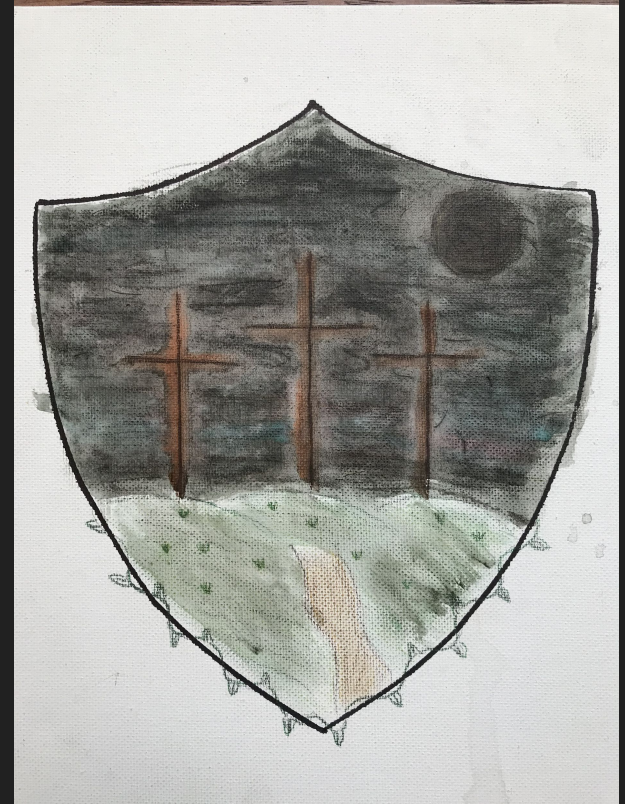


The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Continued...

I stand there from a distance. The crowd goes silent. I see people weeping and some rejoicing. I can hear droplets falling from the cross. I can't tell if its blood or sweat. His mother weeping watching her son as he hangs gasping for air from the cross. Not to mention the guards auctioning off his clothing. I don't understand why we are doing this. Why condemn the King from Nazareth? But I wanted to fit in so I stand there and watched. I did nothing. I watched this King bow his head and die.

(Please kneel for a moment.)



The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

I am the one who chose to Crucify The Messiah. As I look up and watch him get stripped of his cross, his mother grabs him lovingly. I realize the sinful thing I've done to this innocent man and to his mother. Looking up once more at the Mother of God and watching as she stays strong with hope and doesn't cry. A tear streamed down her cheek with sadness and love. She lifts her head and nods as the guard grabs the Son of God and lays a white linen over him, giving a sign to the others to carry him to the tomb.

Dear Jesus, help us to stay strong on the path to heaven. Help us to not struggle, fall, or give up on you. Help us to follow you and your gifts that you have given us so we don't give up on the path of faith.



The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All: Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Sorrowfully we tread across this bed of grass,
Among the fireflies and under dark blue skies,
It's not too hot or cold but perfect, calm and cool,
Too perfect a night for an act so cruel,
I'm holding His hand while I carry Him aloft,
But it feels somehow like He's leading me along.

Silent tears stream down our faces,
As we walk to the tomb in disbelief,
His mother trembles and shakes with mute tears,
Gently laying Him on His stone resting place.

We stand around as they anoint Him with spices,
Like we were waiting for Him to wake and gaze upon us,
His body remains cold and still,
One by one we left Him lying there,
Till only His mother and I remained.

She kneels next to Him while a sigh escapes her mouth,
I watch as she kisses His head with utmost love and gentleness,
She walks out the entrance and I follow,
The disciple whom Jesus loved.

