



Way of the Cross



WITH BLESSED CLELIA
MERLONI



1st STATION



JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: We consider how Jesus Christ, after being flogged and crowned with thorns, was unjustly condemned to death on a cross by Pontius Pilate.

You tell me you feel no love of God in your heart. Do you not realize that He is our Father, our Creator, the Redeemer who redeemed us at the price of His passion and death, that He showers copious graces upon us and that He loves us with an infinite love? Don't you realize, that love for God is the most efficacious means of arriving at perfection? When one truly loves God, one has no other desire but His, has no other love than that which God loves, is ready to do all He asks and refrain from that which He forbids. Doing this, one fulfills the law completely; and fulfills it with love. (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR 72)

Hymn: At the cross her station keeping / Stood the mournful Mother weeping / Close to Jesus to the last.



2nd STATION



JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: We consider Jesus Christ walking to Calvary, with the cross on his shoulders. He thinks of us and offers himself to God, for our salvation, through the death that he will suffer.

If the blasphemies, insults, sacrileges and many other iniquities that flood the fact of the earth, find you indifferent; if the evils that rage against our Religion, or the sufferings that trouble the Church do not weigh heavily upon your soul, then you must beat your breast and admit; "Oh, how miserable I am. I thought I loved God and now I realize how little love I have for Him" (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR 75).

Hymn: Through her heart, His sorrow sharing / All His bitter anguish bearing /
Now at length the sword had pass'd.



3rd STATION



JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: We consider that the flesh of his Body is torn by the scourges, his head crowned with thorns. His blood flows in abundance. His weakness is so great that it is very difficult to take a step.

Be prepared to dig into your soul, with the spirit of sacrifice and obedience, a deep groove in which grace will sow the seeds of virtue destined to bear fruits of charity and peace. Beware that the devil will often make you feel the weight of tiredness, will often torment you with doubts that you are doing a useless job. (cf. Letter written by Blessed Clelia Merloni, 02/08/1912)

Hymn: Oh, how sad and sore distress'd / Was that Mother highly blest /
Of the sole-begotten One!



4th STATION



JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

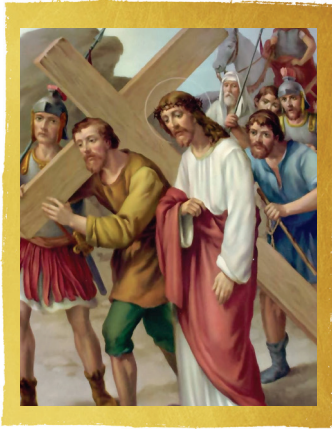
L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider Mary's encounter with Jesus on this path of pain. The Son looks at his mother and she looks at her Son. These looks that they exchange, pierce, like many arrows, their loving hearts.

Holiness consists in a person having no will of her own, but only the will to do and suffer whatever pleases the Lord. Such is the disposition of the Heart of Mary; she is not exalted, thinking of the dignity and joys of the Mother of God, nor does she regret the sacrifices that await her and that would make her the Mother of Sorrows and Queen of Martyrs, rather than Mother of Consolations and Queen of Heaven; in the perfect tranquility of the spirit, she abandons herself to the dispositions of God (Blessed Clelia Merloni).

Hymn: Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled / She beheld her tender child /
All with bloody scourges rent.



5th STATION



SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS TO CARRY HIS CROSS

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider how weak Jesus is that his enemies fear that he will expire at any moment. So they compel a certain Simon Cyrene who was returning from the field, to help Jesus carry the Cross.

I am certain, that if you apply yourselves diligently in being of mutual help to each other and in living harmoniously day after day, you will have nothing but great admiration and imitation from the children. Of what value and good is it to sacrifice yourselves continuously, if in the end they bring no reward because they are lacking in merits?...Be obedient, respectful, understanding, sympathetic, forgiving, and ready to come to each other's defense; ready to overlook each other's faults. Who is free of these?...Oh, if I could only have the consolation of knowing you are striving for all this, of knowing you enjoy at least a little tranquility. If you only knew how your Mother suffers and sacrifices for each of you! Oh, give me the comfort of knowing that you are good; that you enjoy peace! Can I hope for this? (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 60).

Hymn: Is there one who would not weep / Whelm'd in miseries so deep /
Christ's dear Mother to behold?



6th STATION



VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider how Veronica, seeing Jesus very exhausted, with a face bathed in sweat and blood, presents him with a towel.

How true it is that sorrow and sufferings draw us close to God. Sorrow draws us to God in a way that eclipses even the most comforting words and help of creatures. It is only God we need. He alone knows the secret of alleviating our troubled hearts. In Him only will we find true comfort in time of suffering. (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 30).

Hymn Can the human heart refrain / From partaking in her pain /
In that Mother's pain untold?



7th STATION



JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider that our Lord was already suffering a lot and this new fall makes His pain even more acute, renewing all the wounds on His head and His sacred body.

The Sacred Heart has sent you this cross so as to help you acquire merits, and because He wants you to suffer as He does with all His chosen souls. Courage, then, and trust in the Lord who permits all for our good, even through the same sufferings and crosses. He will assist you and give you the needed graces and strength whereby you can store up for paradise. Yes, our only consolation, amidst the poverty of life, is the thought of an eternal reward, a reward that is measured according to the intensity of one's sufferings (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 10).

Hymn: Make me feel as thou hast felt / Make my soul to glow and melt /
With the love of Christ our Lord.



8th STATION



JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider Jesus, watering the way of Calvary with his Blood. To the women, Jesus says: "Do not weep over Me, weep over yourselves and your children".

...Go out of yourself. Silence for a moment the voice of nature in you, and ask yourself: "Who am I? ...Consider that Jesus, urged by a thirst for souls which consumes Him, has ascended and ascends even today both Tabor and Calvary. He glorifies Himself and He sacrifices Himself. He lives perpetually in the beatitude of Heaven and He dies perpetually in the Holy Sacrifice of the altar. Do you want to be close to Him forever? Then it is necessary that you should be at times consoled and at other times torn; that you pass from light to shadow, from calm to anguish; that you say always and lovingly: "Fiat!" (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 387).

Hymn: For the sins of His own nation / Saw Him hang in desolation /
Till His spirit forth He sent.



9th STATION



JESUS FALLS A THIRD TIME

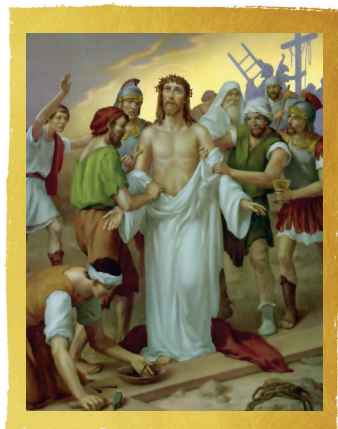
L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider that His weakness is excessive and no less excessive is the cruelty of the executioners, who force him to hurry his pace, so that He, at a cost, can stand up.

Just think that not one breath or one tear goes without reward. Our Lord gathers them in order to have them benefit some soul. Would you refuse Him this? Would you tell Jesus that your cross is too heavy knowing that it can alleviate the sufferings of millions upon millions of creatures deprived of peace, comfort and pardon? Meditate upon this and you will sense a great force of energy rising within you and the will to sacrifice yourself with great generosity which the good Jesus asks of you. Life is short; sorrows and tears could continue until you reach the beautiful paradise. (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 87)

Hymn: O thou Mother! fount of love / Touch my spirit from above /
Make my heart with thine accord.



10th STATION



JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

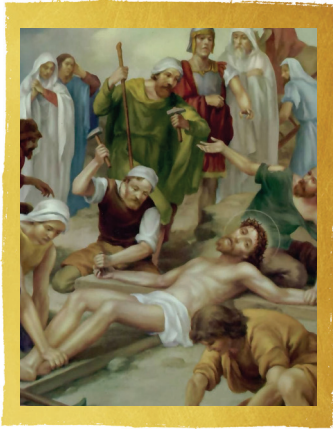
L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider with what violence the executioners strip Jesus, how the tunic is taken from Him and how His Body, wounded by the flagellation, is being prepared to be nailed to the Cross.

From now on, I shall consider every humiliation as symbolic of Our Lord's garment and I shall press it to my heart as if it were a precious relic. I shall look at humiliations like the habit I wear, as that which makes me known as a follower of Christ. With this aim in mind, I will perform any action that is despicable, any action that will injure my pride and which will humiliate me in the eyes of others, for love of Christ (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 444).

Hymn: Let me mingle tears with thee / Mourning Him who mourn'd for me /
All the days that I may live.



11th STATION



JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

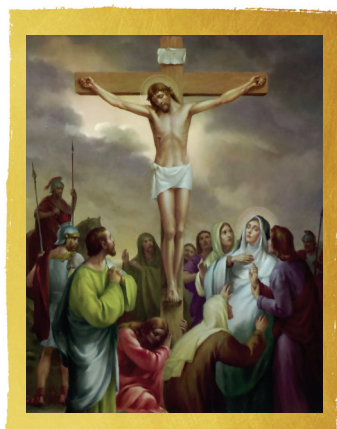
L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider how Jesus, nailed violently to the Cross, stretches out his hands and offers to the Eternal Father the sacrifice of his life for our salvation.

Do not fear the cross. God is our Father, and He always measures our strength. Aside from being the source of the drop-by-drop flow of Divine Blood that regenerates us, it is also the font of all the joy that is reserved for us here below (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 24)

Hymn: Holy Mother! pierce me through / In my heart each wound renew /
Of my Savior crucified.



12th STATION



JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider Jesus dying on the Cross for three hours. Finally, exhausted from pain, he abandons himself with the weight of his Body, saying: "I am thirsty". He bows his head and dies.

Place yourselves at the foot of the Crucifix... See if you are able to recognize within your own souls the image of our Divine Redeemer. See if, like Him, you have remained and have the firm intention of remaining, hanging on your cross even to death, by the nails of your holy Vows, with your head crowned with the thorns of any interior anguish which it may please Him to send you! And don't get up from the foot of Crucifix until you have made one of those resolutions which brings peace to the soul. This is a magnet of graces for the Institute for the souls God confides to you, and a source of joy for the Heart of Jesus. (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 356).

Hymn: Let me share with thee His pain / Who for all my sins was slain /
Who for me in torments died.



13th STATION



THE BODY OF JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

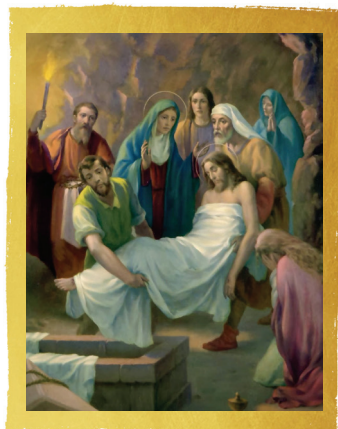
L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider how, after the Lord's death, two of his disciples, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, remove Jesus from the Cross and place Him in the arms of His sorrowful Mother, who receives Him with love and draws Him tenderly to her heart.

How can it be that you do not wish that the Lord send you suffering when you yourself chose a Crucified God as your Spouse? Look, lower your eyes for a moment to the Crucifix which you wear around your neck, and then tell me if you would still refuse the cross which the Sacred Heart sends you. Remember often that he who suffers remains in the arms of God. If He did not make you suffer, it would be a sign that He finds you unworthy of His embrace, and undeserving of His graces which are precisely "to suffer" (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 204).

Hymn: Christ above in torment hangs / She beneath beholds the pangs / Of her dying glorious Son.



14th STATION



JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider the disciples taking the body of Jesus to His grave. Maria accompanies them. They bury the inanimate Body of Jesus with their own hands.

...Since you wish to know the interior dispositions which we should have on going to rest, I am ready to satisfy your holy desires... On going to rest, you should honor Jesus, who did the same, and render homage to the mystery of His death and of His burial. You should enter into the sentiments in which you would want to be found at the moment of death (Blessed Clelia Merloni - WTR, 369).

Hymn: By the cross with thee to stay / There with thee to weep and pray /
Is all I ask of thee to give.



15th STATION



JESUS RISES FROM THE DEAD

L: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

R: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

L: Consider the courage of the women who go to the grave. And how they received with joy the words of the angel: "Jesus Christ who was crucified, has already risen!"

At the end of the Via Dolorosa, and not before, you will be permitted to look back. Then, with joyful wonder, you will see the soil behind you, dug with so much pain, all in flower, and you will rejoice in having persevered, in finding yourself among those who with endurance have won for themselves the joy of the immortal Nuptials (Letter written by Blessed Clelia Merloni, 02/08/1912).

Hymn: Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence / Be Thy Mother my defense /
Be Thy cross my victory.

Way of the Cross



WITH BLESSED CLELIA
MERLONI



APOSTLES
OF THE
SACRED HEART
OF JESUS