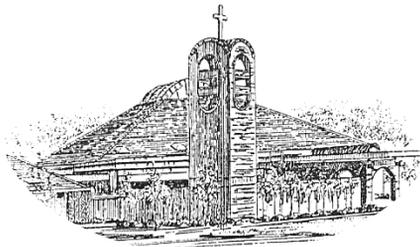




©LPI

Stations of the Cross



St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
Folsom, CA

Opening Prayer

Jesus and Mary, we are walking with You now, following you, mother and son, on the way of the cross. In this way, we desire to show You our love and devotion. We confess that, on many occasions, we were not only far from You while you were suffering, but we also have caused the heavy blows You received by our words and actions, and inflicted wounds in Your heart, just as we, in the same way, have inflicted wounds in the hearts of our brothers and sisters.

Accept us - unite us with your pain so we can, by your own wounds and sufferings, contribute, not only to our personal salvation, but to the salvation of mankind.

N: Have Mercy on us, O Lord!

All: **Have Mercy on us!**

N: O Mary, Mother of Sorrows,

All: **Intercede for us.**

**"At the cross her station keeping.
Stood the mournful mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last."**



1st Station

Jesus is condemned to die

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

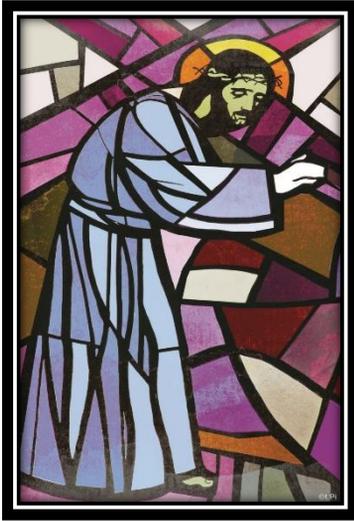
All: **Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.**

N: Jesus, His body bruised and bleeding, from the many beatings, a crown of thorns on His head, is standing between Pilate and the soldiers. The angry mob all around Him - influenced by their leaders are shouting, "Crucify Him!" Jesus stands silently - He directs His gentle sad look towards those condemning Him. The only comfort to Jesus is the presence of His mother. Her presence is discreet but real: their hearts blending into one pain.

All: **My Jesus, You are unjustly accused, judged and condemned to die. It is hard to imagine the anguish your mother felt at Your condemnation. We still condemn You today every time we refuse the teachings of the church or to conform to Your law. We often find Pilate in ourselves, turning away from our responsibility, yielding to the pressures around us. Lord Jesus, forgive us for what we have done to You and are continuing to do today. Have Mercy on us.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword has passed."**



2nd Station

Jesus carries the cross

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

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

N: Jesus, bruised and bleeding, a crown of thorns on His head, was led out to the square. A heavy wooden cross was placed on His shoulders. People were all around-some hurrying the sad procession on with curses and threats. Some bowing before Jesus and mocking Him- trying to provoke Him. But Jesus is gentle and keeps silent: Leaning on the wood of the cross, He is ready to take His first step to Calvary.

All: **Lord Jesus, You did not just take up your cross - You reached out and embraced Your cross with love, with joy. You were reaching out for us, embracing us with an infinite love, just as we are - with all our miseries and failings - appealing to us to return your love. Jesus, forgive us for the many times we have added more weight to Your cross by closing our eyes to the pain and loneliness of our neighbor. Forgive us for refusing to embrace the crosses of our life for the purification and healing of all mankind. Lord Jesus, we adore You, as we contemplate the strength, the courage, that You displayed in taking up Your cross. Grant us the grace to bear our cross with joy.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"Oh how sad and sore distressed
Was that mother, highly blest
Of the sole-begotten One!"**



3rd Station

Jesus falls the first time

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

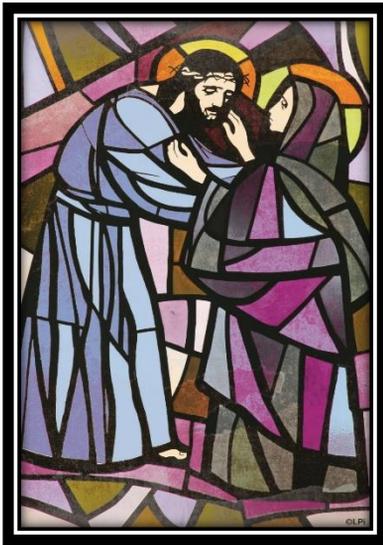
All: **Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.**

N: The weight of the cross is terrible; it is digging into His shoulders. After only a few steps, Jesus falls - the heavy cross landing squarely on His back. The unmerciful beatings have weakened Him. Jesus tries to push Himself up. It appears He wanted to rest awhile. But the guards kicked Him. He rose slowly and began to walk again.

All: **Lord Jesus, forgive us for the many times we have seen others fall and left them, without concern. For the times, we have failed to offer our support to those in need. Mary offered you her support through Your entire passion. Help us to do the same for You by the support we give to others. Lord Jesus You know how often we fall trying to follow You. Yet You are always there to lift us up. Help us always to trust in Your loving care for us.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"Christ above in torment hangs;
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying glorious Son."**



4th Station

Jesus meets his mother

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

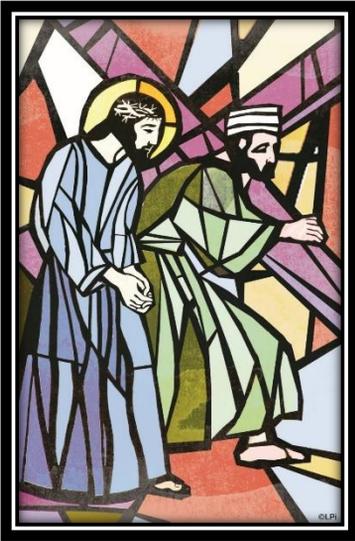
All: **Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.**

N: Mary was following close behind her Son as He stumbles toward Calvary. Somehow she manages to break through the crowd and is walking side by side with Him. She calls to Him. The guards try to prevent this moment by hitting and pulling Jesus. Mary's eyes, full of tears of anguish, meet her Son's - full of pain and confusion. This is a moment of profound suffering and tender emotion.

All: **Lord Jesus, we notice how deep is the understanding between You and Your sorrowful Mother - so profound that no words or assurances are necessary. Lord, help us to be like Mary in our family relationship. Grant us the grace to be gentle, sympathetic, loving and understanding in our home. Forgive us for the times our eyes met and we turned ours away.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"Is there one who would not weep
Whelm'd in miseries so deep
Christ's dear mother to behold?"**



5th Station

Simon helps Jesus to carry his cross

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

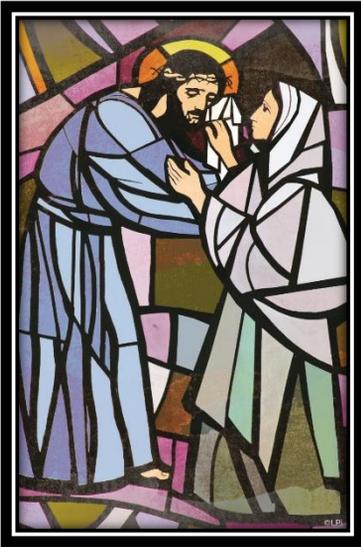
All: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

N: Jesus' strength is gone. He seems to be falling to the ground by His own weight. His head is tilted to His left with fatigue. His face shows complete helplessness. Each step looked as if it would be His last. Then there was some commotion near Jesus. The guards had pulled a protesting man from the crowd and forced him to help Jesus carry His cross.

All: Lord Jesus, like Simon, we many times hesitate, even refuse to help others with their burdens. And, in doing so, we know we refuse to help You. Lord, forgive us for the times we have failed to support our neighbors and loved ones. Help us to be more like You, willing and generous. Grant us the grace to be cheerful in our service to You.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain
In that mother's pain untold?"**



6th Station

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

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

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

N: Veronica, leaving a group of women, pushes past the guards to go to Jesus. He turns towards her - she takes off her veil and begins to wipe Jesus' sweating, bloody face. But the guards use whips and sticks to impede and brutalize the tender, affectionate and brave gesture of Veronica. Her face seems to say, "Why are you doing this to Him?"

All: Lord, so many opportunities arise every day for us to give to You by giving to others, but we pass them by. In fact, we often take more than we give. My Savior, never let us ask why again; but help us to give all we have to You. Lord, we thank You and pray for the "Veronicas" in our life.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender child,
All with bloody scourges rent."**



7th Station

Jesus falls the second time

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

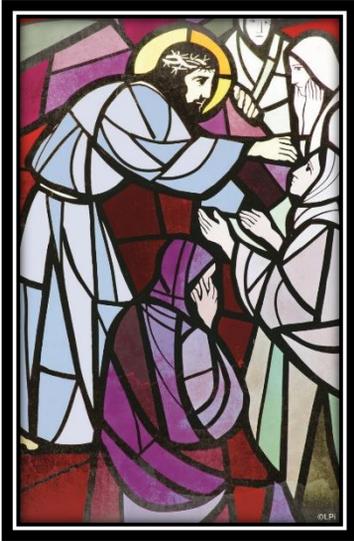
All: **Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.**

N: Jesus drained of His strength falls again. His knees on the ground, His hands and His blood are in the dust. This second fall was certainly harder and more painful than the first. Again, the crowd is over Him shouting and threatening. Hatred was all around Him. The weaker they saw Jesus, the more they raged, but Jesus continued His suffering and His journey in silence.

All: **Jesus, we are ashamed to say this to You: Thank You for all the suffering You accepted for us. Thank You even more for getting up and showing us that You are prepared to love until the very end. Forgive us for falling again and again into the same offences, increasing the weight of Your cross. Lord, grant us the grace to control our unruly will.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"For the sins of His own nation,
Saw Him hang in desolation,
Till His Spirit forth He sent."**



8th Station

Jesus meets the weeping women of Jerusalem

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

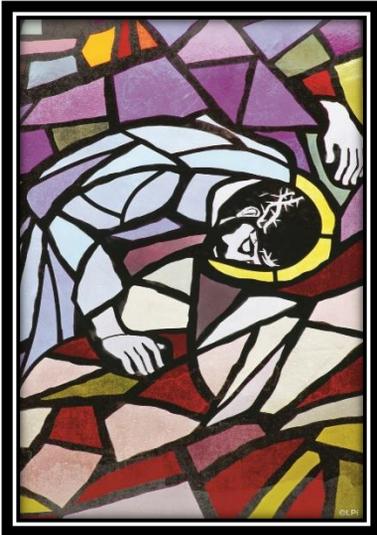
All: Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

N: As Jesus climbs Calvary, He meets a group of women from Jerusalem. They were crying for Him and pitying Him. He told them, "Do not weep over Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." These are the only words uttered by Jesus on His journey to Calvary.

All: Jesus, many times have we acted like these women, always seeing the faults of others. Yet, very rarely have we seen our own sinfulness. Lord, You have taught us through these women. Forgive us for our blindness. Help us to surrender our life to You and to receive the life-giving power that flows from Your word.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"O sweet mother! Fount of love,
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with yours accord."**



9th Station

Jesus falls a third time

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

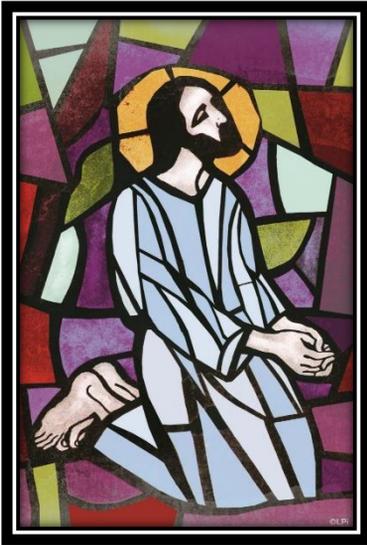
All: **Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.**

N: Completely drained of strength, Jesus collapsed upon the cobblestones. His body is reduced to a heap of rags. They try to lift Him up, but He is exhausted, crushed by the weight of His sufferings. The virgin seems wrapped in her grief. Never has Jesus been seen like this, the man of pain, despised, trampled and rejected by mankind. Jesus suffered and didn't say a word.

All: **Jesus, we are humbled at this sight in front of us. We see You take a moment's rest, then rise and stagger on. When all our strength is gone and guilt and self-reproach seem to hold us fast, protect us from the sin of Judas. Save us from despair, O Lord, grant us the strength to continue our fight for virtue. Please help us especially to overcome our habitual sins.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"Make me feel as Thou hast felt:
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ our Lord."**



10th Station

Jesus is stripped of his garments

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

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

N: Jesus has arrived at Calvary and the soldiers started to rip his clothes off His blood-clotted skin. In spite of His pain and exhaustion, Jesus is still able to stand up. This is the moment that the face of Christ shows all the suffering, the pain of the vicious beating and cruel humiliation. The fury of the crowd seems to have subsided.

All: Lord in our own way, we too, have stripped You. We have taken away the good name of another by gossip. We have stripped people of human dignity by our prejudice. Lord, detach us from the craving for prestige and wealth. Root out of us all trace of envy and pride. May we be poor in spirit so that we can be rich in You.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**“Holy mother, pierce me through.
In my heart each wound renew
Of my savior crucified.”**



11th Station

Jesus is nailed to the cross

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

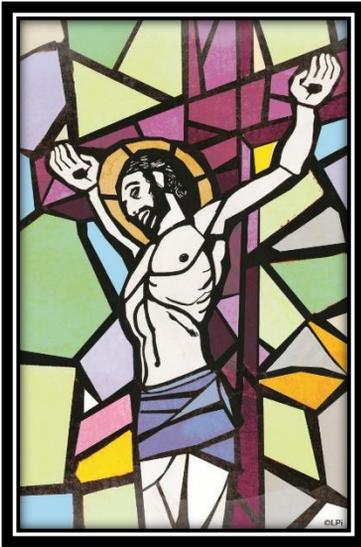
All: **Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.**

N: Everything is still – everything is silent. The loud blows of the hammer set the scene. Even, the guards have finally quieted down and help silently. Three executioners nail Jesus to the cross. Jesus doesn't move. He doesn't cry. From His mouth, dry from His suffering not a word is uttered.

All: **Jesus, you willingly allowed Yourself to be crucified on the cross for love of us! You opened a new way of salvation when You did not respond to insults, when You did not seek revenge for what they did to You, Your suffering redeemed us. O Jesus, thank You for all that You wanted to accept and bear for us. Open our hearts and touch, within us, all that still remain obstinate, mean and insensitive. Create a new heart within us.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

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



12th Station

Jesus dies on the cross

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

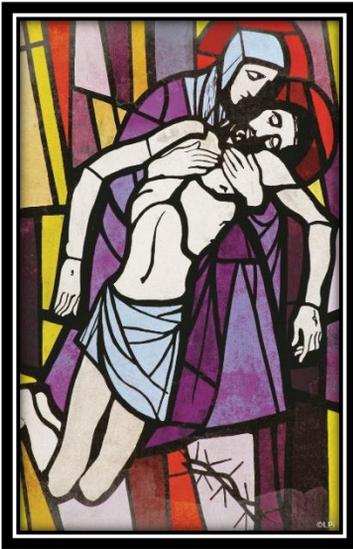
All: **Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.**

N: For three hours Jesus hung on the cross and the soldiers continued to mock Him. At the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?" After a last, deep breath, Jesus dies. Mary kneels down, embraces the cross and kisses the feet of her Christ in an extreme show of love.

All: **Lord Jesus, You did not die in the bitterness of hatred, but clothed Your tremendous passion with forgiveness and love. Thank You for loving us so much that we cannot even understand it. Thank You for opening a new road to humanity – the road of peace and love. Lord, teach us to live our life for others, and not fail You again.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"Let me mingle tears with thee
Mourning Him who mourned for me,
All the day that I may live."**



13th Station

Jesus is taken down from the cross

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

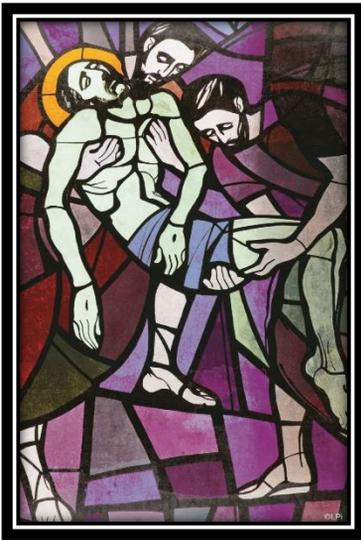
All: **Because, by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.**

N: The crowd has gone; the noise has stopped. Only His Mother and a few close ones remain under the cross. Jesus is lowered carefully, His body taken from the cross and is placed in His Mother's arms.

All: **My Jesus, Your passion has ended. Under the cross, Your faithful Mother continued to suffer. O Mary, Mother of Sorrows, your heart was not icy with vendetta and hate, but was warm and welcoming. We thank you, dear Mother, because, by your suffering, you helped to redeem the world. Lord, forgive us for what we have done to You and Your Mother. Have mercy on us.**

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"By the cross with thee to stay,
There with thee to weep and pray,
Is all I ask of thee to give."**



14th Station

Jesus is laid in the tomb

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

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

N: Now it was evening, there came Joseph of Arimathea, a high ranking official who was, himself, looking for the kingdom of God. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered the body to be given up. And Joseph, taking the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock. Then he rolled a large stone in the entrance of the tomb, and departed.

All: **Jesus, while we are standing over Your tomb, we are also thinking about our life and our end. We know neither the day nor the hour. But now, again, we give our life and our death over to You. We give over to You our fear of death also. Let the moment of our passing away be consecrated by Your presence. Give us the consciousness that we always live in Your light so that nothing in this world can stop us on our way to You. Grant that we may find rest in the Father's bosom forever. Mary, be with us at the hour of our death. Take our life in your motherly embrace.**

Our Father, Hall Mary, Glory be to the Father

**"Virgin of all virgins blest,
Listen to our fond request:
Let me share your grief divine."**

Closing Prayer

Thank You, Jesus! Thank you, O Mary! We were able to reflect on the passion with which You united in love, saved the world.

Thank You because, with new faith, with new joy and with renewed love, we can set out on the road to meet our brothers and sisters, to soften human sufferings and anguish. Do not let us forget this experience. Make us a witness of the resurrection.

O Lord Jesus, keep us close to You.

Amen.

